



Clapham Junction station – What passengers want

November 2010

Management Summary

Passenger Focus is the independent passenger watchdog, set up by the government to get the best deal for passengers. London TravelWatch is the official watchdog organisation representing the interests of transport users in and around the capital.

Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch have been working closely with the rail industry in order to understand how Clapham Junction station might better serve the needs of passengers and commissioned BRDC Continental to carry out research in order to establish passenger satisfaction with 5 key areas highlighted below and passenger priorities for improvement at the station.

There were four key objectives for this research:

- 1) To understand current passenger satisfaction with Clapham Junction station.
- 2) To identify the passenger priorities for improvement at Clapham Junction station.
- 3) To determine whether there were any specific differences in the satisfaction/priorities for improvement between passengers using South West Trains, Southern or London Overground services to/from the station.
- 4) To undertake the research in such a way that the methodology could be used to assess the impact of any future station improvements on passenger satisfaction.

Key Findings:

Passenger Profile

- 68% of the passengers surveyed were commuters travelling, on average, 4 times per week. 25% of passengers were leisure passengers with the remainder travelling for business.
- 7% of passengers stated that they had a disability or long term illness. A specific consultation exercise was undertaken to seek the views of disabled passengers.

Access to and from Clapham Junction

- The main way passengers accessed Clapham Junction was either on foot or by bus. A considerable number of passengers (two thirds of those interviewed) were changing trains at Clapham Junction and this should be considered when looking at the way any improvements, particularly around the provision of information.
- Most passengers were satisfied with their method of travel to and from Clapham Junction (Bus -73% satisfaction and walking 64% satisfaction).

- One key area passengers felt could be improved is better protection from the weather, particularly amongst passengers who walked to the station.

Passenger Information

- Passengers want clearer information about what platforms to catch trains from. This would assist the flow of passengers through the station and help ease congestion, particularly in the subway.
- The relatively large percentage of interchanging passengers at Clapham Junction need to be considered in this context and information provided within the station as well as at the main entrance points.
- Improved real time train information on the platforms was another area highlighted as requiring improvement, especially by commuters.

Station amenities/key areas of the station

- Over a third (35%) of passengers were dissatisfied with the seating, waiting and toilet facilities at Clapham Junction. Despite being one of Britain's busiest stations, the amenities were seen by many passengers as being of a poor standard.
- In particular, the availability and condition of the toilets and the poor provision of seating on the platforms were criticised.
- A round a third of passengers (32%) were dissatisfied with key areas of the station, including the entrance halls, lifts and subways. The congestion in the subway was the largest concern with passengers expressing anxiety about safety during busy periods. The problem was further compounded with the subway not being considered a particularly pleasant environment.
- The gap between the platforms and the train was also a safety concern raised by passengers.

Safety and security

- The key area passengers wanted to be addressed is the visibility of station staff at night, which was the key priority for all groups of passengers. Leisure/business passengers also wanted to see improved staff visibility during the day whilst commuters second most important factor was to address overcrowding on the platforms.

Retail outlets

- Passengers were asked about the retail facilities they wanted to see at Clapham Junction, regardless of whether those facilities exist. Cash machines and newsagents were the most requested outlets however passengers felt that addressing a number of other issues should take priority (see below).

Passenger Priorities

Passengers were given a set of paired statements and asked to select the improvement they felt was most important. The greater the score, the more importance passengers place on the improvement.

Priorities for improvement arising from Stated Preference analysis

	Rank (all passengers)	Commuters	Leisure/ Business
Level of congestion in the subway	1	1	1
Real time information	2	2	5
Toilets	3	4	2
Canopies covering the whole length of the platform	4	3	6
Information about which platform trains depart from	5	5	3
More station staff	6	6	4
Smaller stepping distance between the train and the platform	7	7	7
Waiting rooms	8	8	8
Ticket selling facilities (ticket office and machines)	9	9	9
Step free access from the booking office to the platform	10	10	10
Information/wayfinding on buses from the station	11	11	11
Interactive help points	12	=12	12
Retail/catering facilities on the station	13	=12	13
Bus links	14	14	14

Base: All passengers 572

The level of congestion in the subway was identified as the key priority for improvement amongst all passengers. Commuters would like to see better real time information on the station and as noted above this is particularly on the platforms, rather than at the main station entrance.

Leisure/business passengers would also like to see improvements to the toilet facilities on the station.

Research context and objectives

Passenger Focus is the independent passenger watchdog, set up by the government to get the best deal for passengers. London TravelWatch is the official watchdog organisation representing the interests of transport users in and around the capital. London TravelWatch is the official watchdog organisation representing the interests of transport users in and around the capital.

In November 2009 the 'Better Rail Stations' report¹ highlighted a number of areas for the improvement of Britain's railway stations, including a recommendation that ten Category 'B' major interchanges, including Clapham Junction, required additional funding in order to bring them to the minimum station standards outlined in the report.

17.4 million passengers used Clapham Junction to start or end their journey in 2008/09. An additional 16.3 million passengers² used the station as an interchange point, making it the busiest rail interchange in Great Britain.

Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch have been working closely with the rail industry in order to understand how Clapham Junction station might better serve the needs of passengers and commissioned BRDC Continental to carry out research in order to establish passenger satisfaction and priorities for improvement at the station.

The current economic climate makes it more important than ever that passenger priorities for improvement at the station are considered in the development of any schemes, in order to ensure that these address the primary concerns of those using the station.

There were four key objectives for this research:

- 1) To understand current passenger satisfaction with Clapham Junction station.
- 2) To identify the passenger priorities for improvement at Clapham Junction.
- 3) To determine whether there were any specific differences in the satisfaction/priorities for improvement between passengers using South West Trains, Southern or London Overground services to/from the station.
- 4) To undertake the research in such a way that the methodology could be used to assess the impact of any future station improvements on passenger satisfaction.

¹ Better Rail Stations : An independent review presented to Lord Adonis, Secretary of State for Transport – November 2009

² Office of the Rail Regulator Station usage data 2008/09

Methodology and sampling

Passengers using Clapham Junction station were approached by a BDRG Continental interviewer at random and asked if they would fill in a self-completion questionnaire about the services and facilities provided at the station. To encourage participation, the interviewer explained the purpose of the survey and the importance of hearing their views.

Those that agreed were given a questionnaire to take away and complete, a pre paid envelope was also supplied to enable it to be returned to BDRG Continental for analysis. A full copy of the questionnaire is included in appendix 1.

All surveys at Clapham Junction were distributed between 15th and 28th March 2010. To ensure a good spread of passengers the interviewers rotated between different platforms on the station and the shifts worked covered the following times of day:

- 06:00am to 10:00am
- 11:00am to 15:00pm
- 16:00pm to 20:00pm

On some occasions these shift times varied by up to 1 hour.

Shifts took place both during the week and at the weekend in order to ensure a range of passengers were able to complete the questionnaire.

Passengers were asked how satisfied they were with a range of facilities/services at Clapham Junction. The scale used to rate each facility/service was: Very satisfied; fairly satisfied; neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; fairly dissatisfied and; very dissatisfied. Passengers were then asked about the things they would most like to see improved about each facility/service.

In order to produce a list showing the highest overall priorities at Clapham Junction, a 'paired statements' question was asked. Working with South West Trains and Network Rail a total 14 attributes that might benefit passengers were identified. These were an amalgamation of previously identified passenger priorities for improvements at other stations³ and ideas for improvement being considered at Clapham Junction.

³ Passenger Focus National Stations Improvement Programme Research, December 2009

Using the paired preference question technique, comparisons were made between each to identify which were the most important (see Q24 on the attached questionnaire). For each pair passengers had to say which one of the two was the improvement they would most like to see. This information was then analysed to provide an importance factor for each attribute.

In total 2,154 questionnaires were handed out at Clapham Junction and 755 (35%) fully completed questionnaires were returned for analysis. Figure 1 below shows the operator of the train services that passengers were using on the journey where they were handed the questionnaire. These percentages add up to over 100% due to the passengers who were changing trains and therefore used more than one operator.

Figure 1: Train company used to travel to/from Clapham Junction

	All
South West Trains	73%
Southern	49%
London Overground	18%

Base: All passengers (749)

Two thirds of passengers who responded to the survey were changing trains and the needs of these passengers should be considered when looking at the passenger priorities for improvement.

Passengers were also asked about the purpose of their journey. 68% of passengers were commuters, making an average of just over 4 journeys per week. 25% of passengers were leisure passengers with the main journey purpose being to visit friends and relatives (11%). The remaining 7% of passengers were travelling on company business.

The ticket types used by passengers are shown in the table below:

Figure 2: Type of ticket used

	All
Weekly or monthly season	41%
Anytime ticket	17%
Other	12%
Freedom pass	9%
Off peak ticket	8%
Oyster Pay As You Go	7%
Day travelcard	6%

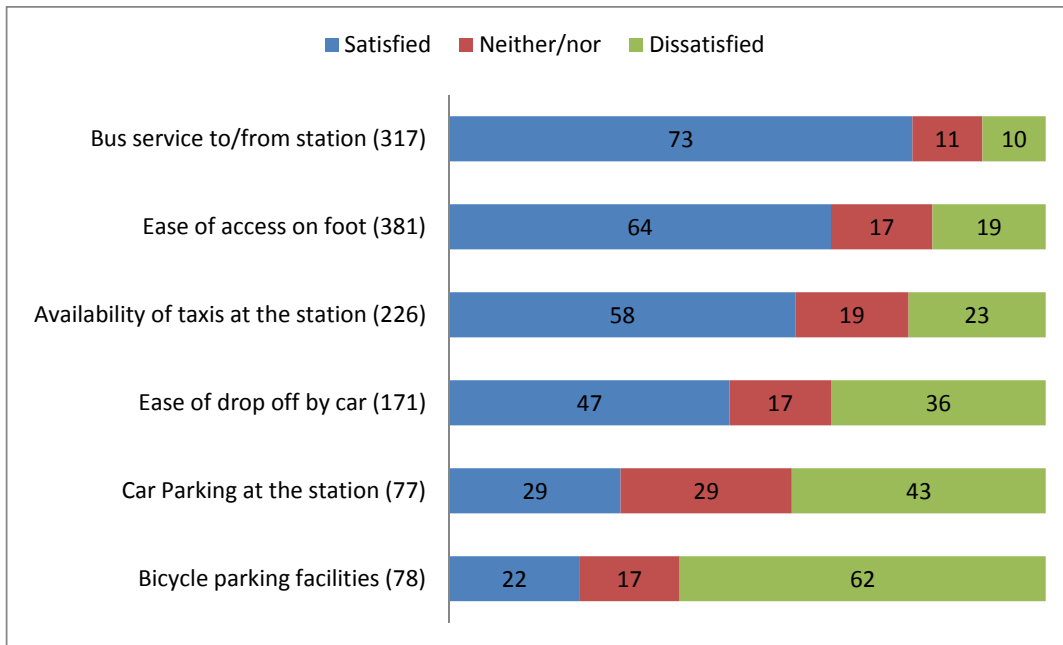
Base: All passengers (711)

Findings

Travel to and from the station:

31% of passengers surveyed were arriving at the station to start their journey. Of these passengers, 54% walked to the station, 38% used the bus. Only a few passengers used other modes of transport to arrive at the station.

Figure 3: Satisfaction with arrival modes at Clapham Junction



It should be noted that the low response rates and satisfaction levels for car and bicycle parking are likely to be due to the lack of facilities at Clapham Junction, and consequently the low numbers of passengers who stated they arrived at the station by car/bike.

Only 17% of passengers arriving at the station to start their journey stated that they would like to use an alternative mode of transport to get to the station. This may reflect high levels of satisfaction with walking and using bus services to get to the station.

Passengers were asked to note areas which they felt would most improve their journey to/from the station. Passengers were given free-text box to record their views and the main factors mentioned are noted in figure 5 below. Passengers were able to record as many observations as they wished so the percentages in the table total more than 100%.

Figure 4: Improvements passengers would like to see; getting to/from the station

	Percentage
Better protection from weather when waiting	49%
Secure, well lit areas when waiting for lift/bus/connection	32%
Better information of transport services to and from the station	26%
Better signage to buses/information about buses	23%
Less pedestrian congestion at the bus stops	21%
A safer walking route to and from the station	21%
Better lightning on approach to station when arriving on foot	15%
More frequent buses	15%
Better taxi queuing arrangement	14%
Better cycle routes to and from the station	13%
Better signage to find taxis	11%
Better parking/waiting areas for cars meeting you	11%
Ease of car access to and from the station	8%

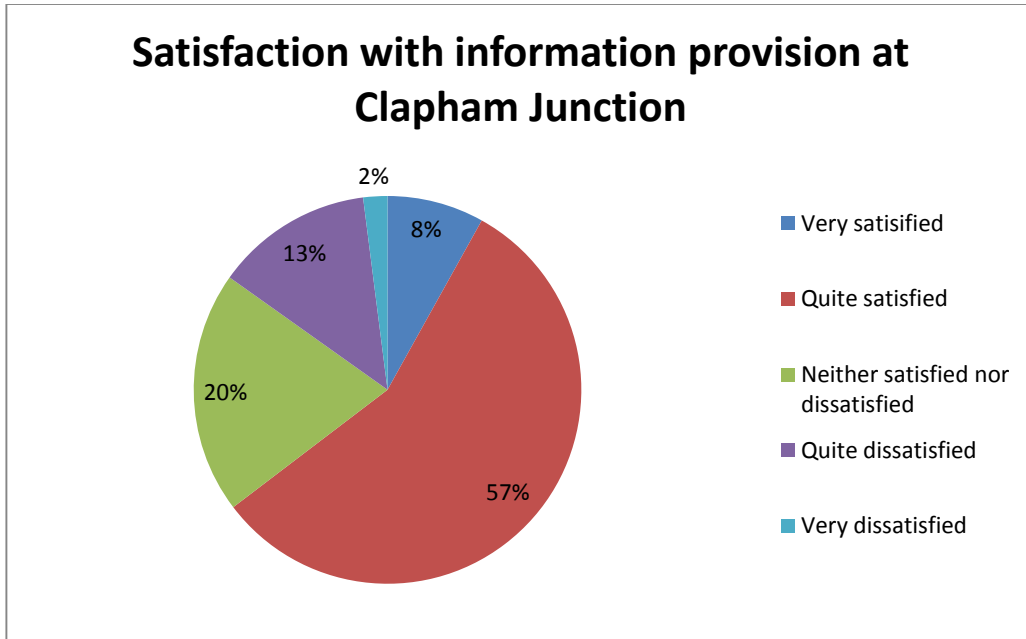
Base: All passengers (583)

Just under half of passengers stated that they would like better protection from the weather whilst waiting. Bus passengers would also like to see secure, well lit areas when waiting (47%), less pedestrian congestion at bus stops (46%) and better signage to buses/which bus stops to use (35%).

Provision of passenger information:

Figure 5 below shows passenger satisfaction with the passenger information services at Clapham Junction. 57% of passengers were satisfied with the provision of information and this figure was consistent across passengers using all three operator’s services.

Figure 5: Satisfaction with information provision



Base: All passengers (745)

Respondents were then asked: ‘thinking about the passenger information services at this station which, if any, of these do you think need to be improved?’ Figure 6 below shows passenger responses to this question. It should be noted passengers were able to select more than one option.

Figure 6: Improvements needed to information services at Clapham Junction

	All
Information about which platform to catch my train from	49%
Real time train running information on platforms	37%
Direction signs to find your way around the station	34%
Electronic train departure boards (on station concourse)	25%
Information about local bus services	23%
Public address announcements	20%
Local area information	15%
Up to date timetable posters	14%

Base: All passengers 609

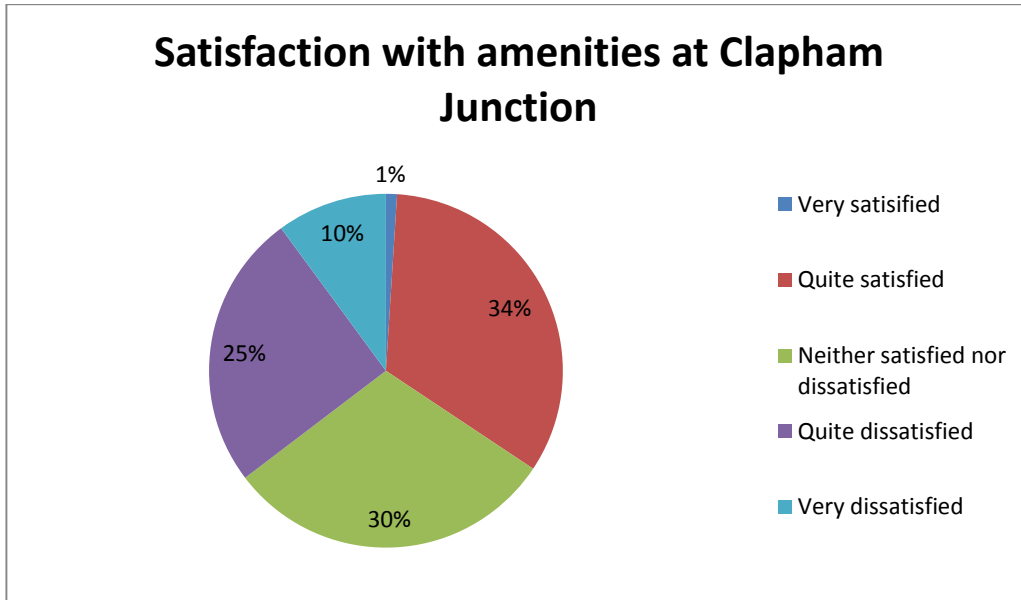
The main element passengers wanted to see improved was clearer information about the platform their train departs from. Due to the high percentage of passengers changing trains and the large number of destinations served by trains from Clapham Junction, it is important that platform information is replicated throughout the station, rather than just at main entrance points as would be the case at a smaller station.

All passengers, regardless of journey purpose, rated the need for information about which platform train depart from as their highest priority. Commuters also rated the provision of real time train running information as a priority (42%) whilst leisure/business passengers wanted improvements to directional signage around the station (36%). This is likely to reflect the frequency with which these two groups travel.

Provision of station amenities:

Figure 7 below shows passenger satisfaction with the amenities, namely toilets, waiting facilities and retail outlets at Clapham Junction. Dissatisfaction with the amenities was high with 35% of passengers stating that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This figure rose to 43% and 40% for London Overground and Southern passengers respectively.

Figure 7: Satisfaction with the station amenities



Base: All passengers (748)

Respondents were asked to consider which passenger facilities most needed to be improved at Clapham Junction. Figure 8 below shows the passenger responses to this question. As in previous questions, passengers were able to select more than one option.

Table 8: Improvements wanted to passenger amenities

	All
Availability of toilets	66%
Availability of seating on platforms	63%
Bins	45%
Availability of waiting rooms on platforms	44%
Condition of the toilets	40%
Canopies over the platforms	33%
Condition of seating on platforms	26%
Condition of waiting rooms on platforms	15%
Provision of retail and catering facilities	11%
Provision of retail / catering facilities	11%

Base: All passengers 706

A high percentage of passengers wanted to see improvements to the availability of toilets and seating on the station. Passengers using all three train operators at Clapham Junction stated this as their top priority.

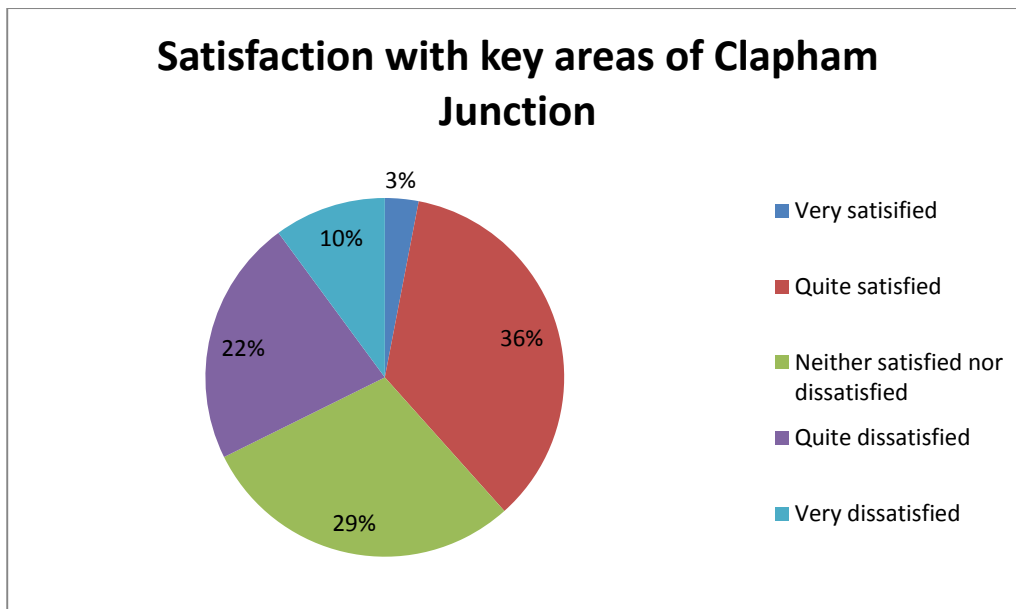
Whilst the provision of bins was rated highly as an amenity passengers wanted to see at Clapham Junction station, the current security constraints in providing them on the station are noted.

The provision of canopies over the platforms was significantly more important to commuters (37%) than to business/leisure passengers (24%). This is likely to be driven by busier platforms at peak times, when the full length of the platform is used by passengers.

Key passenger areas of the station:

The survey looked at the areas of the station that passengers commonly use and established which areas passengers felt were the biggest priority for improvement. The key areas of the station included the entrances and booking halls, key walking routes around the station and the platform areas. Figure 9 below shows satisfaction with these areas of the station is quite low (39% satisfaction), particularly amongst commuters (35% satisfaction).

Figure 9: Satisfaction with key areas of the station



Base: All passengers (744)

In order to understand which areas of the station were of greatest concern to passengers, respondents were invited to highlight areas which they felt were a priority for improvement. These are shown in figure 10 below. As for previous questions, more than one option may have been selected.

Figure 10: Key station areas needing improvements

	All
Subway(s)	51%
Platforms – size of gap between train and platform	42%
Footbridge(s)	35%
Access to the platform from the booking hall	33%
Lifts	29%
Cleanliness of platforms	22%
Track area free from litter/vegetation	20%
Main station entrances and exits	20%
Ticket office sales points	16%
Appearance of the booking hall	13%

Base: All passengers 644

Just over half of passengers felt the key area of the station requiring improvement was the subway which links the main station entrances and all platforms. Within the comments made by passengers, the key themes highlighted were the congestion in the subway, finding their way around the station and the general environment. Commuters, who are more likely to be travelling during peak times, rated the subway as a greater priority for improvement (55%) than business and leisure passengers (43%).

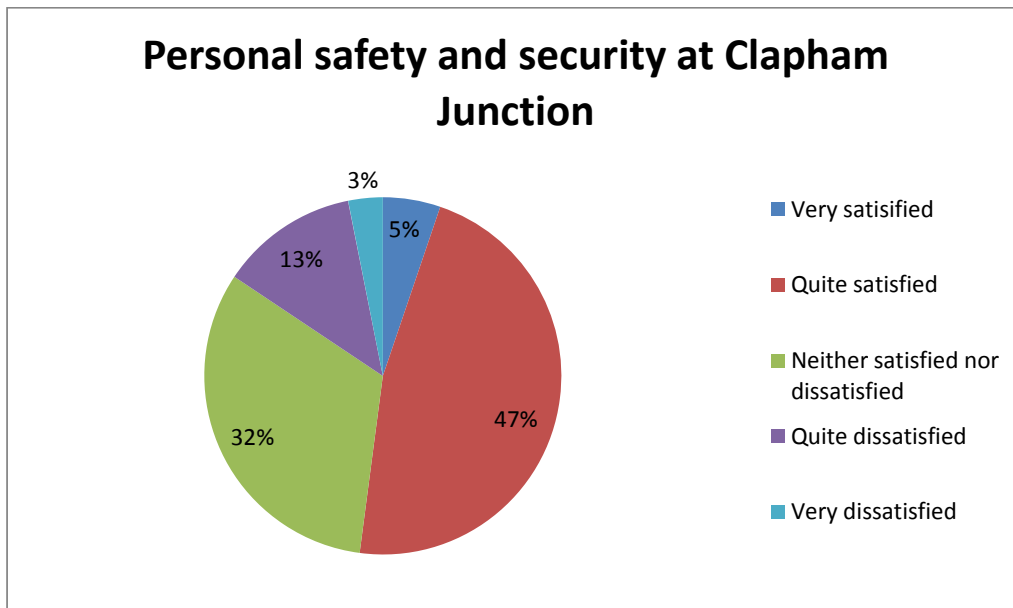
The gap between the train and the platform is a long standing issue at Clapham Junction, which is built on a curve, exacerbating the issue of the gap between the train and platform on some platforms. Addressing this issue was passengers second highest priority.

The need for lifts at the station was ranked as the third highest priority amongst leisure/business passengers (35%) and the second highest priority for those passengers who stated they had a disability (45%). The current construction of the lifts at Clapham Junction is welcomed although a number of passengers commented on the disruption caused by their installation, and the length of time construction has taken.

Passenger safety and security:

Passengers were asked to rate their satisfaction with safety and security on the station. Fairly low levels of satisfaction were seen across all passengers regardless of journey purpose or train operator used. Figure 11 below shows overall satisfaction with safety and security.

Figure 11: Satisfaction with safety and security



Base: All passengers (744)

Passengers were asked to note their key areas for improvement; the key issue for all passengers, regardless of journey purpose was the number of staff visible after dark (58%). Leisure/business passengers also wanted to see more staff presence during the daytime (36%) whilst overcrowding on the platforms was the second highest rated issue for commuters (53%). Figure 13 below shows the overall passenger priorities.

Table 12: Improvements wanted to safety and security at Clapham Junction

	All
Number of visible staff after dark	58%
Overcrowding on platforms	47%
Number of visible staff in the daytime	27%
Station lighting	25%
Provision of help points	19%
Level of CCTV provision	16%
Location of help points	11%

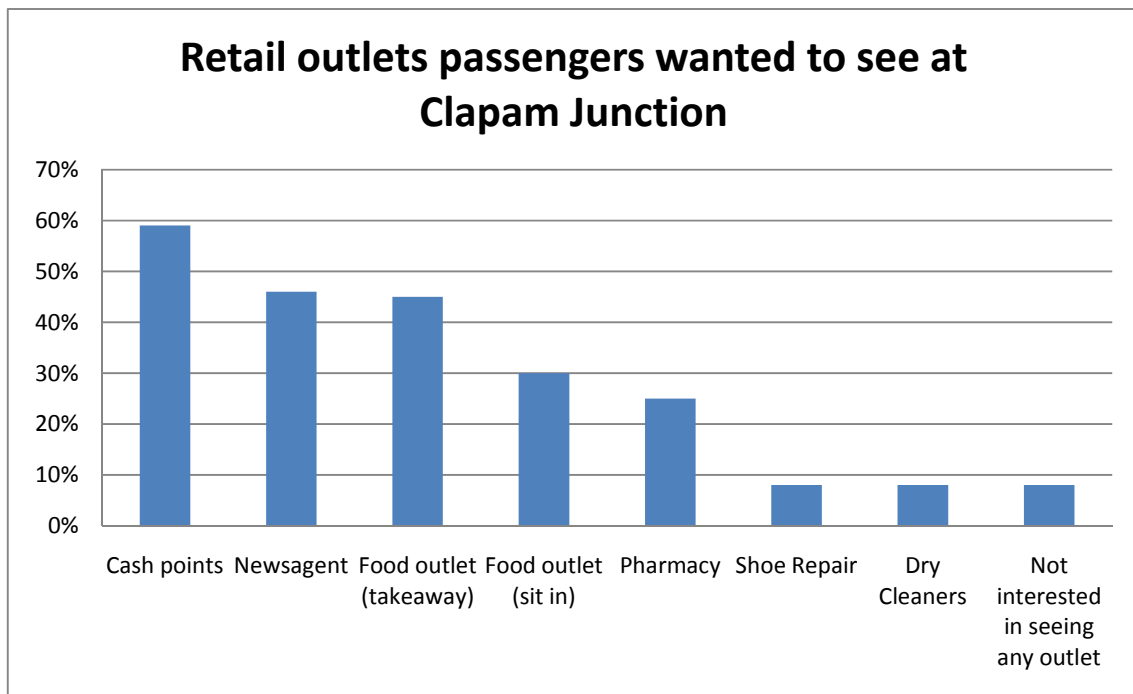
Base: All passengers 532

Retail outlets:

Passengers were asked which, if any, types of retail outlet they would like to see at Clapham Junction, regardless of whether the facility is already available at the station. Figure 13 below shows that cash machines were the facility passengers would most like to have at the station, particularly amongst commuters (63%). Commuters also ranked having a supermarket available as their second highest priority (48%) whilst newsagent (46%) and takeaway food and drink outlets (45%) were wanted by passengers.

Only 8% of passengers expressed no interest in having retail facilities on the station. This percentage was consistent across all passengers regardless of journey purpose or the train operator used.

Figure 13: Retail outlets wanted at Clapham Junction (regardless of whether the facility is already available at the station)



Passenger Priorities for Improvement:

Whilst looking at the 5 key areas of satisfaction with the station and passenger priorities provides a good indicator of the priorities in each area, it is important to consider which of these factors are the highest overall priority for passengers using Clapham Junction.

Passengers were given a set of paired statements and asked to select the improvement they felt was most important. These were analysed and the priorities shown in figure 14 were obtained. The higher the score, the greater the passenger priority for improvement.

Figure 14: Improvement priorities arising from Stated Preference analysis

	Rank (all passengers)	Commuters	Leisure/ Business
Level of congestion in the subway	1	1	1
Real time information	2	2	5
Toilets	3	4	2
Canopies covering the whole length of the platform	4	3	6
Information about which platform trains depart from	5	5	3
More station staff	6	6	4
Smaller stepping distance between the train and the platform	7	7	7
Waiting rooms	8	8	8
Ticket selling facilities (ticket office and machines)	9	9	9
Step free access from the booking office to the platform	10	10	10
Information/wayfinding on buses from the station	11	11	11
Interactive help points	12	=12	12
Retail/catering facilities on the station	13	=12	13
Bus links	14	14	14

Base: All passengers 572

The level of congestion in the subway was identified as the key priority for improvement amongst all passengers. It was significantly more important for commuters and this is likely to be driven by the likelihood of them using the station at peak times, when the subways are most congested. As noted above, passengers had difficulty finding their way around the station and improving information about which platforms trains depart from was the third highest priority amongst leisure/business travellers. This issue may also be exacerbating overcrowding in the subway.

Commuters would like to see better real time information on the station and as noted above this is particularly on the platforms, rather than at the main station entrance. This is likely to be driven by

the high percentage of passengers changing trains and any planned improvements to the realtime information need to consider this factor.

Leisure/business passengers would also like to see improvements to the toilet facilities on the station. Specific comments were made regarding the number and condition of the existing facilities.

Passengers with Disabilities

As Clapham Junction currently has no step free access from the main station entrance to the platforms and limited facilities for disabled passengers it was felt that the views of disabled passengers may be under-represented within the results.

With this in mind, we invited a number of external stakeholders to comment on the current facilities at Clapham Junction. A copy of the correspondence is included in Appendix II.

Responses relating to Clapham Junction were received from Epsom and Ewell Access Group, Guide Dogs, Wandsworth Council and Wandsworth Access Group.

Respondents noted a number of concerns highlighted by other passengers including the current lack of lifts, congestion in the subway and station facilities, particularly on the platforms.

All respondents welcomed the installation of lifts at the station, however they noted that there was a need for staff to be properly trained to assist an increased number of passengers requiring assistance once the lifts were operational. Wandsworth Access Group also noted the lack of lift provision to allow step free access from the Grant Road side of the station.

Guide Dogs noted the lack of tactile paving at the station and a number of the respondents asked for improved signage and wayfinding around the station as well as some specific features to assist disabled passengers, notably a 'Changing Places' toilet.

Next Steps:

We are pleased to note the ongoing 'Access for All' scheme which will provide both step free access to and between all platforms and a new entrance onto the station via Brighton Goods Yard and the existing overbridge. The research highlights the current subway as passengers number one priority for improvement and the new entrance directly onto the footbridge provides an opportunity to relieve overcrowding in the current subway. We would therefore encourage the station operators to ensure that all passengers, not just those who require step free access onto the station, are encouraged to use this new entrance.

In the current economic climate, it is imperative that any improvements works taking place at stations, reflect and address passenger priorities. Whilst the funding previously identified for Clapham Junction has been withdrawn, we are pleased that South West Trains and Network plan to fund £6m of improvements to the station which will commence during 2011/12. These works, which include improvements to the real time information, new toilet and waiting facilities and extended canopies on the station will address passengers key priorities for improvement at the station.

Passenger Focus and London TravelWatch will continue to put the voice of the passenger across in order to ensure the final schemes best represent the passenger priorities identified in this research.

Appendices

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX II: LETTER TO STAKEHOLDERS