



West Midlands and Chiltern  
Route Utilisation Strategy  
Research Findings  
September 2011

# West Midlands and Chiltern Route Utilisation Strategy

## Research Findings

In September 2010, Passenger Focus surveyed over 2700 train passengers travelling within the West Midlands and Chiltern area. The survey was undertaken to understand passengers' views on current services, and on potential changes and improvements. The findings have been used to inform Passenger Focus's submission to Network Rail's West Midlands and Chiltern Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) in March 2011.

### The research

Fieldwork was undertaken by Continental Research on behalf of Passenger Focus. Questionnaires were distributed to passengers on board trains between 3–16 September 2010. To ensure a representative sample, shifts were carried out at weekday peak and off peak times as well as weekends.

- 2786 passengers were surveyed in total, split across three main routes:
  - between Birmingham New Street and Northampton (1090 passengers)
  - between Birmingham Moor Street and Leamington Spa/Stratford-Upon-Avon (710 passengers)
  - between Birmingham Moor Street and Worcester via Stourbridge Junction. (888 passengers)

### How passengers currently use these routes

- The majority of passengers on these routes were not frequent travellers - over a third (39%) were making their first trip on the route when given this questionnaire and a third (30%) had made this journey between two and five times in the last two weeks.
- Just under half (49%) of passengers used these routes for leisure purposes, 40% to commute, and 6% for business.

### Station facilities

The top three most important facilities to have at stations, as chosen by passengers were:

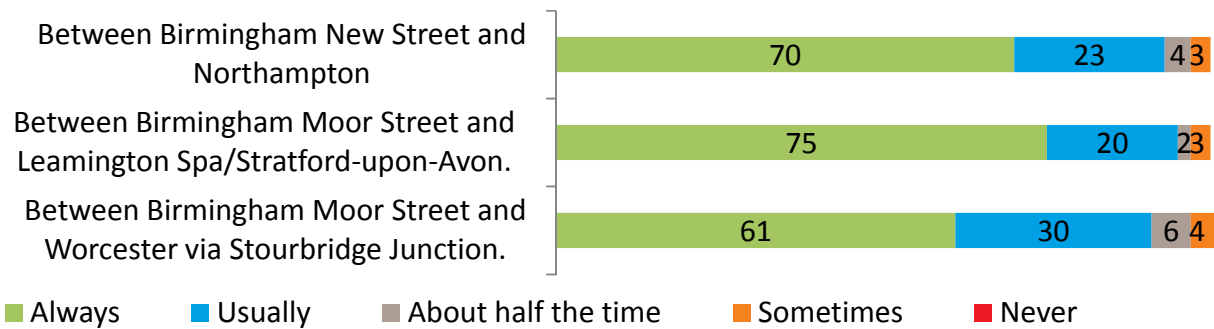
1. accurate visual information as to when trains will actually arrive (22%)
2. car parking (12%)
3. toilets (12%)

### Being able to get a seat on the train

We asked passengers who had travelled on this route more than once how often they were able to get a seat. Leisure passengers stand a better chance of being able to get a seat 'always/usually' than commuters (who are more likely to be travelling during the peak). In particular commuters travelling on the Birmingham Moor Street to Worcester via Stourbridge Junction route are least likely to get a seat with just over half (53%) always getting a seat.

As can be seen in the chart below, showing passengers using all routes, passengers travelling on the Birmingham Moor Street to Leamington Spa and Stratford-upon-Avon route were most likely to get a seat, with 95% always or usually getting a seat.

**Frequency of being able to get a seat (all who have travelled on the route more than once)**



**Current timetable (based on the timetable in September 2010)**

Most passengers were satisfied with the service provided during weekdays and on Saturdays. However, when it came to Sunday services satisfaction dropped significantly across all three routes. This applied particularly between Birmingham Moor Street and Worcester via Stourbridge junction, where only 45% of passengers were satisfied with the service frequency. Passengers travelling between Birmingham Moor Street to Leamington Spa and Stratford-upon-Avon were least satisfied with the frequency of service on weekdays and Saturdays.

**Satisfaction with frequency of service between station boarded and station alighted (% very/fairly satisfied)**

	<i>Between Birmingham New Street and Northampton (Base-993)</i>	<i>Between Birmingham Moor Street and Leamington Spa/Stratford-upon-Avon (Base-693)</i>	<i>Between Birmingham Moor Street and Worcester via Stourbridge Junction. (Base-857)</i>
Weekday	85%	74%	89%
Saturday	80%	73%	81%
Sunday	57%	50%	45%

**What improvements passengers would like to see?**

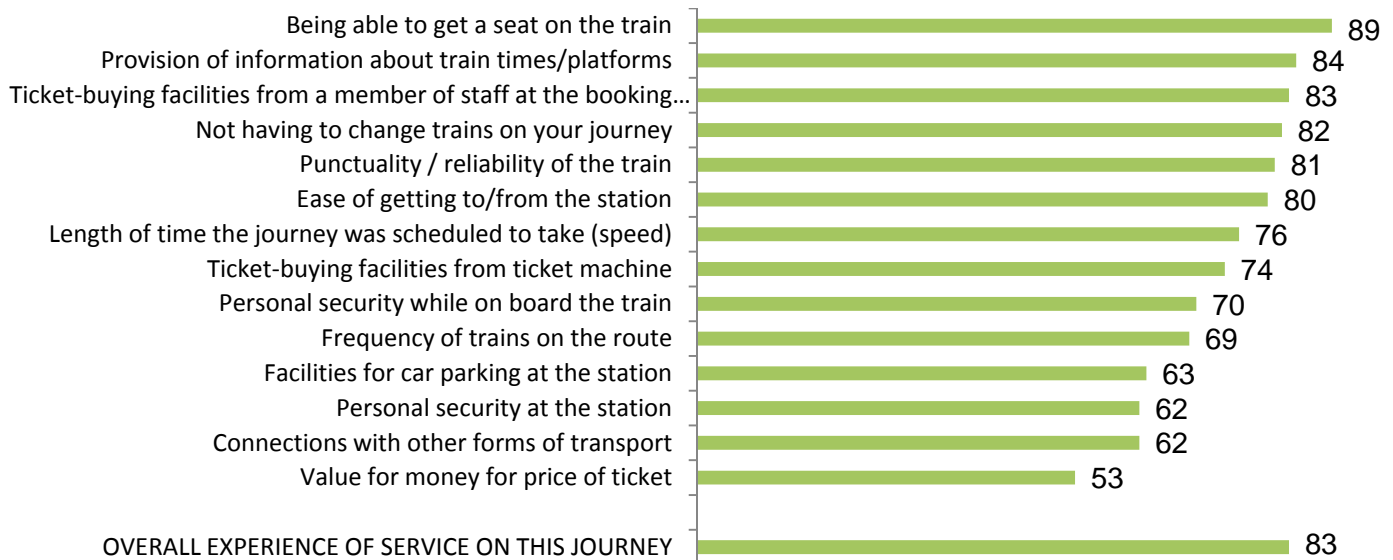
We asked passengers to tell us their priorities for improvement along the West Midlands and Chiltern routes. The top five were as follows:

1. Punctuality / reliability of the train
2. Frequency of trains on the route
3. Value for money for price of ticket
4. Being able to get a seat on the train
5. Provision of information about train times/platforms

### Satisfaction with aspects of their journey

83% of passengers rated their overall experience of service on this journey as very or fairly good. Being able to get a seat on the train, and provision of information about train times/platforms are the top two rated areas of satisfaction. However, they are also in the top five priorities for improvement. This highlights the importance of these aspects of the journey to passengers. Passengers were least satisfied with the value for money for price of ticket, which is also the third highest priority for improvement.

#### (% who rated the aspect as very/fairly good)





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