



# Strikes feedback to stakeholders

20 June 2022

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# Omnibus survey – representative sample 2,000 people across Britain

We spoke to a representative sample of more than 2,000 people across Britain between 17 and 19 June, to find out how strikes were affecting their travel plans. 16 per cent of whom had intended to travel by train this week

Of those people that had planned to travel by rail on affected days this week:

- approximately three in five said they won't be doing so because of the strike
- but around one in five still plan to travel on a strike day
- around one in 10 were unaware of the strike action until we asked them about it.

Of those people that had looked for information and were either still planning to travel by train or had changed their plans:

- Around half (49 per cent) rated the information about the train services that will and will not be running as good or very good and around one in three (35 per cent) said it was poor or very poor
- Around half (47 per cent) rated the information on arrangements for changing your ticket, or obtaining a refund if you are no longer travelling, as good or very good and around three in 10 (30 per cent) as poor or very poor

# Transport Focus user panel survey – interim findings (one of two)

## Numbers

- 2,196 responded
  - 1,733 said that they had planned to make a journey on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday
  - 1,203 said they had planned to travel on Wednesday, Friday or Sunday
- \* these sum to more than 2,196 because some people had planned to do both
- 23 per cent (501 people) intend still to make their journey by train
  - 32 per cent (700 people) intend to use a different mode of transport
  - 45 per cent (995 people) are cancelling their travel plans altogether.

## Themes from verbatim comments – full detail in appendix

- Inconvenience – and not just disruption to work and leisure activity, but things like hospital appointments. Extra costs to some, rearranging hotels at higher price etc.
- Some finding other ways to travel, but not straightforward – and illustration that they chose train in the first place for a reason

# Transport Focus user panel survey (interim) findings (two of two)

## Learnings for the industry

- “Change of plans due to strikes” / “not travelling due to strike” needs to be added to drop down lists of options on websites when applying for refunds/compensation for not travelling.
- If a passenger cancels a trip because either the outward or return portion is on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, they should have a refund on both the outward and return fare. Some retailers, including train companies, don’t seem to recognise if somebody hasn’t travelled out because of a strike they don’t need tickets to come back.

# Information on websites

- Transport Focus stakeholder managers have reviewed information websites today, Monday 20 June – train companies, National Rail Enquiries, some independent retailers.
- Overall, we found that most websites were showing the information passengers would expect to find and that it was consistent with the agreed policy.
- We identified areas for improvement, however, and are following up with the organisations concerned.
- Problems are mainly in two areas:
  - Clarity around how season ticket holders who don't travel should claim compensation – it needs to be better explained that the 'delay repay' process is being used, even though no delayed journey is involved (this is consistent with feedback from Transport Focus User Panel members)
  - Not all train companies have published a PDF of their contingency timetables to supplement what the journey planners are showing.

# **Appendix: comments from members of the Transport Focus transport user panel**



# Appendix: comments from those who have had to cancel plans (one of two)

'A birthday journey, so non-essential, but disappointing after 2 Covid yrs. A very local celebration now'  
Female. 65-70.

'A few trips to the office in London and one trip to London for leisure. I don't believe the trains will function well on any of the day from Tuesday onwards so have cancelled plans.'  
Male. 35-44.

'I had planned to travel to spend a few days with my family but in view of the uncertainty these have now been abandoned.'  
Male. 65-70

'I was going to a model railway show but cancelled because of the strike.'  
Female. 65-70

'I had planned to take a stay over break in Brighton on Tues/ Wed. I've had to cancel my plans. I could get to Brighton by bus- Portsmouth to Bognor then Bognor to Brighton. However, this would take many hours which would make the trip worth it.'  
Female. 55-64

'Was going to the office to meet newly appointed secretary general of organisation, now working from home. Meeting with new secretary general postponed by a week.'  
Female. 55-64



## Appendix: comments from those who have had to cancel plans (two of two)

'Had a hospital appointment for 9am on Tuesday. Travelling by car during the rush hour would be very time consuming and stressful, so intended to take the train and then bus. Still not prepared to drive, so have rearranged the appointment, but now have to wait for 7 weeks.'

Female. 55-64

'I do not drive. I live in Kirkby Stephen Cumbria where the train service on the Leeds Carlisle route is the only public transport option provided on a regular basis. There are few bus services, and these are irregular and there are none on Saturday. A journey planned for Saturday is now impossible to make.'

Male. 55-64

'My husband has mobility problems and we needed to use the train on Wednesday from Moor Street to Snow Hill as there isn't a bus option, we have had to cancel our plans. Similarly on Saturday we needed to get the train from Snow Hill to the Jewellery Quarter, we could use the Metro, but this would involve further walking, so we again have cancelled our plans.'

Female. 65-74

'We had booked train travel to London on Friday morning 24th June returning on Sat (25th June) evening. We had booked an hotel and theatre trip. I can/have moved both to September, but it has cost an extra £320 due to hotels increased charges.'

Male. 65-74

'Arranged a visit for 6 people to the British Museum to see a specific exhibition. Have cancelled tickets as 3 of the group have disabilities and cannot risk being stranded.'

Male. 55-64

## Appendix: comments from those still travelling, but not now by train (one of two)

'I still need to get to work in central London from Kent. I hope to drive part of the way and then use riverboat services or the tube (on the days it is running).'

Female. 45-54

'I commute by train, but the last train on at least one day (and possibly more when the timetables are available) will leave too early for me to be able to get home. I will probably drive or work from home if I can change my work schedule.'

Female. 45-54

'[I was] visiting my grandson by train which is easy and direct. Now using a bus service that doesn't take me the full way so will have to be met and rest of journey completed in car.'

Female. 65+

'I need to be sure I can get to my destination so I can't rely on the rail network on Tuesday. I often take a folding bike to assist in transfers but with no tube and no guaranteed Chiltern line running I have to drive and cycle.'

Male. 65+

'I have been having radiotherapy at the Royal Berkshire hospital, the machine has broken, and I have to travel to Bracknell hospital, this therapy cannot be interrupted so I have to find a bus to get me there, which means a longer journey and I have to leave earlier. Not looking forward to it.'

Male. 65-74

## Appendix: comments from those still travelling, but not now by train (two of two)

'We had planned to have a 4-day break in Edinburgh, travelling by train. Of course, we have now had to totally rejig our plans and go by hire car, causing us much additional expense for car hire, and also cost of overnight parking for 3 nights. Very disappointing, as this was a special occasion for us.'

Male. 65-70

'Due to chair a key meeting at a school which I can't miss. I don't drive. Is a 20 min train journey. My husband will need to drive me which means he can't look after our granddaughter which in turn means my son in law loses a day's income. There is a bus, but it is erratic and takes a very long time, particularly on my return about 18.30. On the other days, I will have to walk for over two miles rather than take the train for two stops.'

Female. 55-64

'A colleague who would also have travelled by train, but - unlike me - owns a car has agreed to make a (quite large) detour to pick me up and get me home.'

Female. 55-64

'As the train service is unlikely to run, I will have to make the journey by bus. This makes a 20-minute journey take almost an hour in each direction. Also, the timing of the train service is reliable (time wise) but the bus is likely to be delayed.'

Male. 55-64

'Was going to catch train to Manchester Airport for holiday overseas. As train strike is on, will now travel by car & use parking, incurring additional parking charge, not expected initially.'

Female. 45-54

# Appendix: comments from those who have had a ticket refunded (one of one)

'[The process was] complicated. It involved a long time holding on a customer service line at local rates and was only refunded because of a technical issue which could have meant a long hold on the line. The customer service agent took the decision that it would be better just to issue the alternative journey at no extra cost than keep me on hold for a relatively small excess.'

Male. 65-74

'I was notified, and the refund was automatic (GWR).'

Male. 55-64

'I rang the South Western Railway customer service very helpful. Then after I sent images of tickets got refund very quickly and rebooked for a different date.'

Male. 45-54

'Confusing as advance tickets are not refundable, and I am only affected on one leg of journey which left be stranded. The company I dealt with were really helpful though.'

Male. 25-34

'Although I booked online to go from Exmouth in Devon to London Paddington 20th June and return 23rd June. I went to my local manned station and had a refund for 20th June but have extended the return journey single ticket until 2nd September. The staff member at Exmouth was exceptionally helpful.'

Female. 55-64

# Appendix: comments from those who are in the process of obtaining a refund (one of one)

'I have just done it - a bit laborious with having to cut up and photograph the tickets - seems a bit primitive, but it has been acknowledged so fingers crossed.'

Male. 35-44

'I had booked the tickets through LNER. Went on their website and logged into my account and applied for the refund. Have had an acknowledgment but not got the refund yet. Assuming I get the refund, the process was relatively straightforward although the website was not immediately clear where you applied for the refund. Change of plans due to strike action was not an option so had to choose other.'

Male. 55-64

'Cross Country have agreed to refund the cost of the ticket travelling out as that train is cancelled but refuse to refund the cost of the return journey for the return journey on 25 because the train will run. However I cannot use that ticket as I will have to travel to my destination (cricket match at Headingley) on the 23rd by car. They have suggested I travel earlier although will not of course pay any overnight costs. I think they are the only company behaving in this unreasonable manner.'

Female. 55-64

'I couldn't find the category to refer to the cancelling of arrangements due to the strike. So had to select other to then write it the box. It would be helpful if that was a category to select rather than having to add text but otherwise was straightforward. After submission got an immediate email acknowledging my application.'

Male. 45-54