

3 August 2022

27 July rail strikes: passenger experience and information survey



Introduction



Each weekend Transport Focus asks a representative sample of 2000 people from across Great Britain about their public transport use.

This report shows how everyone who travelled or was affected by the strike disruption on 27 or 28 July rated the information provided about services and tickets and refunds. We obtained responses from around 242 people (although some said don't know/not applicable).

Impact of strikes:

Many people found another way to complete their journeys



I had to change to taking my car into work as I didn't trust the rail network to get me there.

It didn't affect me much, I can go to work either by bus or by train, just took me longer.

Plans couldn't change as I had a flight to catch, so instead I had to do a 2.5 hour drive instead. Added on more stress and ended up being more expensive after petrol costs, parking etc.



My sister and I had flown into Manchester Airport [we] had to get a taxi back to Bolton as there were no trains running at all.

I was chairing an interview panel on both days so still has to travel for work. I had to leave home almost two hours early to manage my journey by bus instead.

Impact of strikes:

Others had to cancel their plans due to the strike



I was supposed to work in London on Wed and meet some friends in the evening. I've had to cancel.

We were going to go to Durham for the day but couldn't as next to all the trains were cancelled. It was just for a day out but never mind.

It was only a shopping trip which I put off until another day.

Had to completely change my plans because of the strikes and now think less favourable about the rail network.

I planned to watch the concert of Lady Gaga this weekend in London. Because of the strike, I had to cancel.



Impact of strikes:

Some worked from home, but for others the impact was significant



Was meant to go to work had to work from home.

I was forced to work from home which was inconvenient as we had to cancel a face-to-face meeting.

Had no impact as I stayed at home and used Zoom.

They lost me money because I could not get to appointments.

I couldn't get to work and so lost my pay and put my job in jeopardy.

I had exams and couldn't get to them.



Impact of strikes:

Those travelling by train had mixed experiences



No impact - my train ran as usual but it was maybe busier than usual.

I had booked a ticket with no changes [of train] but it was instead a very crowded shorter later split train (there was a change). Next day [Thursday] was even more stressful as everything was cancelled.

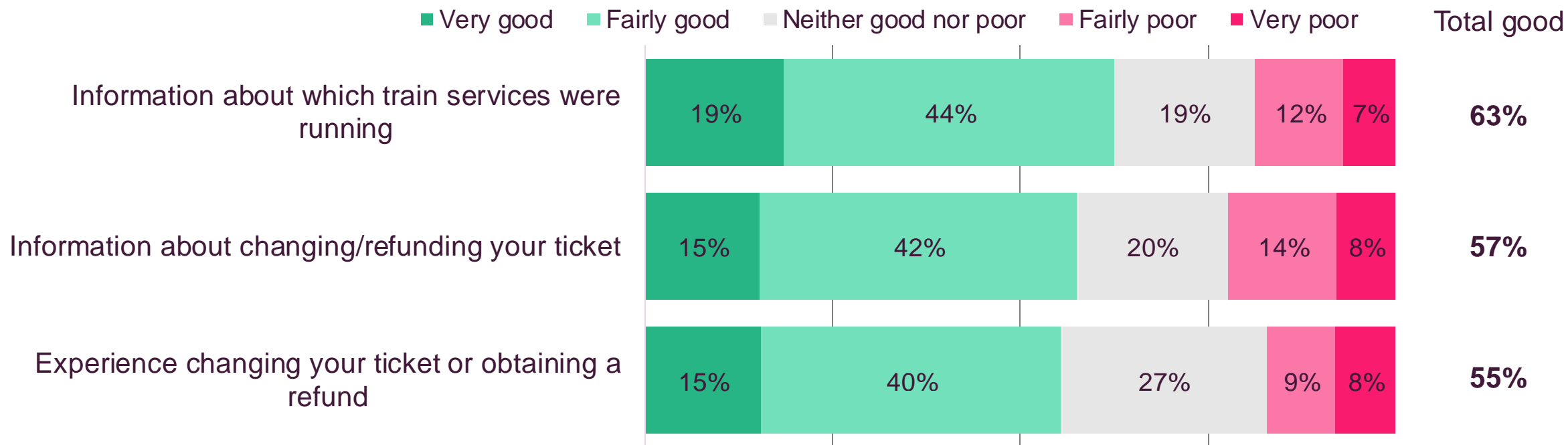
I was delayed coming in on Thursday as when the train turned up it was full as first train of the day.



Was late for a meeting on the Thursday because of limited service. They said on the day it was a Sunday service but it definitely wasn't!

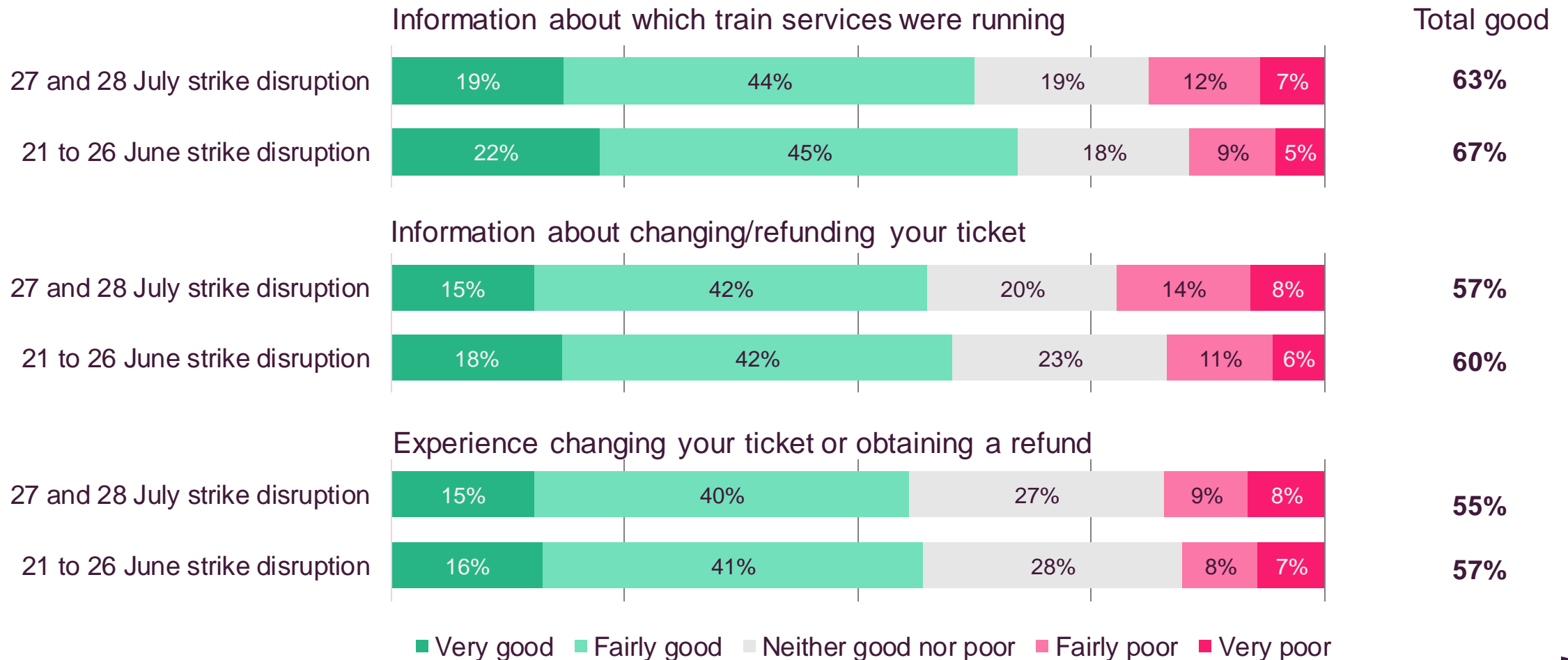
The impact was quite significant and I had to change my travel plans as the strike reduced the frequency of trains. It was supposed to be a relaxing trip, but it was a rush to catch the last train.

Rating of information about train services and arrangements for refunds/ticket changes for 27 July strike disruption



27July rail strikes: passenger experience and information survey. Asked of those whose travel went ahead as they had planned, intended but did not use the train as a result of the strike disruption. Excludes those who said: 'Don't know/Not applicable'. Base sizes from top to bottom = 242, 207, 155.

Ratings of information about train services and arrangements for refunds/ticket changes are similar to June



27 July rail strikes: passenger experience and information survey. Asked of those whose travel went ahead as they had planned, intended but did not use the train as a result of the strike disruption. Excludes those who said: 'Don't know/Not applicable'. Base sizes from top to bottom = 242, 401, 207, 341, 155, 280.

Those rating information 'good' often found it easy to find online or felt well informed on their journey



I use LNER app and also get emails regarding the trains.

Checked train times online and found information easily.

A communication was sent on how we can use our tickets for a later journey.

There was sufficient information given in advance for me to avoid buying tickets.

I could find everything I needed to know online.

There were announcements on the train and the station that the last train running would be at 5.30 and that there would be no trains after that time because of the strikes.

The service I used was reduced but the information was provided numerous times throughout the journey.



Those rating information 'poor' were often not aware of the disruption or reported information was inconsistent



I only heard about the strikes last minute. On the Thursday morning it said my trains were running but then cancelled them last minute.

I had no idea a more limited service would run on the Thursday, wasn't happy about it really as it made me late for meeting.

Online it gave me a different train time to the actual one in the station.



The app was either not working or out of date because nothing on that app matched the reality on the ground.

The information put out was confusing. At first, it was said that there will be reduced service but then there were no trains to book online.

The timetables were not published until the last minute and this meant I was unable to book anything with confidence too far in advance, therefore I stayed home.

Those rating the refund process 'good' tended to have found it easy



On the Trainline app it is very clear if there are issues with the train and what to do if I need a refund.

It was quite easy getting my ticket changed across.

I was pleased with the refund system. I bought my tickets far ahead of this date and when I found out that it will be strike that day I came to the rail station and they refunded it without any questions. I was very pleased.



I was informed that my ticket was cancelled and immediately contacted the staff for a refund and was successful.

The experience I had refunding my ticket was good. It was an easy process that was not stressful at all.

They offered me a refund proactively.

While some of those with a poor experience sometimes appeared to be unable to claim a refund or unsure of their rights



I had a flexi season ticket, and when you buy these for each day you use it's a discount, but when it comes to refunding they seem to go back to standard rate of travel, then plus a £10 admin fee, you get back so much less than what you thought. I think it's just money grabbing.

Was not able to change or refund ticket as rail company claimed it was circumstances outside their control.

It was difficult to get a refund on my ticket - I needed to travel that day so couldn't risk going via trains anymore. Ended up having to pay an admin fee for something that was out of my control.

Poor communication on ticket changes and no refund given.

It is very hard to obtain accurate and reliable information re ticket changes/refunds.



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Transport Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council

Transport Focus is the independent consumer organisation representing the interests of:

- rail passengers in Great Britain
- bus, coach and tram users across England outside London
- all users of England's motorways and major 'A' roads (the Strategic Road Network).

We work to make a difference for all transport users.

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