

South Western Railway – Timetable Refresh

Below is the response from Railfuture Wessex to the preliminary consultation on [southwesterntimetable.com](https://southwesterntimetable.com).

In this response, we are primarily commenting about South Western Railway timetables as they affect stations in our area which encompasses: Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight, plus fringes of neighbouring counties.

| Route  | Answers to SWR's two questions  |  |
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|  | What works well in our current timetable?<br>(and what doesn't work well in red font)   | What could be improved in our future timetable?  |
| <b>Portsmouth Direct</b><br>(...Haslemere-Havant-Portsmouth) | <p>The pre-Covid timetable was reasonably robust and any alteration should not compromise reliability. Reductions since Covid have resulted in longer journey times due to poor connections and instances of overcrowding.</p> <p>The stopper service was cut back to terminate/start from Haslemere with the result that one of the semi-fasts had to make additional calls.</p> | <p>As a minimum, re-instate the pre-Covid timetable of 2 semi-fast tph Waterloo-Portsmouth Harbour, 1 stopping tph Waterloo-Portsmouth &amp; Southsea and 1 semi-fast tph Waterloo-Haslemere.</p> <p>We would like to see the semi-fast Waterloo-Haslemere service extend to Portsmouth as before but appreciate this may be difficult now that Southern services through Havant have been revised.</p> <p>The additional calls at Godalming introduced post-Covid should be retained. Strengthen service at certain times to cope with crowds attending special events.</p> |

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| <p><b>SW Main Line</b><br/>(...Basingstoke-Southampton-Bournemouth-Weymouth)</p> | <p>The pre-Covid timetable was reasonably robust and any alteration should not compromise reliability. <b>Reductions since Covid have resulted in longer journey times due to poor connections and instances of overcrowding.</b></p> <p>The 2 tph skip-stop service through the New Forest and Dorset achieves reasonably quick journey times <b>although trains are not spaced half hour apart and there's a lack of connectivity between some minor stations.</b></p> <p><b>The stopping service now runs between Bournemouth and Winchester only, meaning loss of connectivity across the Bournemouth conurbation and a reduced service for stations through Hampshire to/from Waterloo.</b></p> <p><b>Eastleigh and Farnborough now have only 1tph to/from Clapham Jn &amp; Waterloo (was 2tph).</b></p> <p><b>Basingstoke now has only 5 fast tph to/from Waterloo (was 6).</b></p> <p><b>Shawford now has no off-peak service to/from Clapham Jn &amp; Waterloo.</b></p> <p><b>The above cuts have put additional strain on CrossCountry services through Hampshire, leading to overcrowding.</b></p> | <p>As a minimum, re-instate the pre-Covid timetable of 4 semi-fast tph (2 Weymouth, 1 Bournemouth &amp; 1 Southampton).</p> <p>Also as a minimum, all stations between Winchester and Poole should have an hourly stopping service; extension to Poole is important for cross-Bournemouth connectivity.</p> <p>The service between Winchester and Waterloo needs strengthening in view of the loss of the hourly continuation of the Poole stopper (particularly important for growth towns such as Fleet and Farnborough).</p> <p>Consideration should be given to introducing the proposed "Dorset Metro" hourly stopping service between Brockenhurst and Wareham, although we recognise that paths west of Southampton are limited by sub-optimal signal spacing.</p> <p>Additional semi-fast Sunday trains in the summer season would be popular to cater for increasing leisure travel.</p> <p>The Southampton semi-fasts should call additionally at St Denys in view of the high population density around the station. Also there should be additional calls at St Denys on "Saints" home match days.</p> <p>One of the Weymouth semi-fasts could stop additionally at Totton in view of the large and growing population on the west side of Southampton.</p> <p>There are many special events and cruise-ship calls in the South that warrant strengthening of service at certain times to cope with crowds.</p> <p>Summer Saturday excursion trains to Corfe Castle were very popular and could be reintroduced.</p> |
| <p><b>Lymington Branch</b><br/>(Brockenhurst-Lymington)</p>                      | <p>The 30-minute-interval shuttle works well.</p>  | <p>Liaise with ferry company to ensure optimal connections at Lymington Pier.</p>  |

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| <b>West of England Line</b><br>(...Basingstoke-Salisbury-<br>Yeovil Jn...)   | The 2tph Waterloo-Salisbury service with 1 tph continuing to Exeter is the best that can be achieved without infrastructure enhancements. Capacity is just about adequate provided all trains are 9-car, then 6-car west of Salisbury.                                  | Any timetable refresh should ensure service remains robust, especially west of Salisbury where long single-line sections can lead to severe disruption.<br>Any service uplift should achieve as a minimum: 2tph Waterloo-Yeovil with 1tph continuing to Exeter, plus an additional 1tph between Axminster and Exeter as part of Devon Metro. |
| <b>Alton Line</b><br>(...Woking-Alton)   | Having to change to a faster train at Woking for journeys to Waterloo is not liked.   | There is an aspiration for faster direct trains to Waterloo, although we recognise that paths east of Woking are at a premium.   |
| <b>Solent Local, East</b><br>(Portsmouth-Fareham-<br>Southampton &<br>Portsmouth-Fareham-<br>Eastleigh-Basingstoke-) | The current timetable is reasonably robust. Having three operators on the route via Netley has created odd instances of inconvenience (eg: GWR omitting Cosham stops and throwing crowding issues onto other operators) – something that GBR should be able to rectify. | The Portsmouth-Southampton stopper could run on beyond Southampton to improve cross-city connectivity.<br>A second Southampton-Portsmouth stopper each hour would be popular, although we recognise that paths are limited due to sub-optimal signal spacing.  |
| <b>Solent Local, West</b><br>(Salisbury-Southampton-<br>Eastleigh-Romsey)  | The hourly “figure of 6” service works well and has bedded in with rail users.  | If the Alliance Rail open access bid fails, a Marchwood-Southampton shuttle could be trialled by SWR with a view to extending to Hythe.  |
| <b>Island Line</b>   | The 40-minute interval timetable is robust, although not easy to remember since it is not clockface; also ferry and bus connections are hit & miss.   | Need to restore a 30 minute interval service, either by increasing line speeds (perhaps omitting minor station stops) or by having 3 units in service. A third unit in service would enable the frequency to be increased to every 20 mins at busy times such as summer Saturdays.   |

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