

Dear Friend

I hope you are staying safe.

I invite you to our meeting on **Wednesday 29th July at 19:30 on Zoom**; I am targeting a finish by 20:45; definitely by 21:00.

Our subsequent meetings are then:

- **Thursday 27th August at 19:30 on Zoom.**
- **Saturday 26th September in person from 11:00** at St Paul's Church, Hatfield Road, St Albans, followed by a 'social' lunch.
- **Tuesday 27th October at 19:30 on Zoom.**

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88450315544?pwd=d3krdCtiUHlrMExQcGtMWm1zVU9Qdz09>; alternatively join manually via <https://zoom.us/join>, then Meeting ID: 884 5031 5544 & Passcode: 910342.

If your PC doesn't have a microphone, then use the link above to open (and download, if needed) the software and, once connected, click the up arrow next to the microphone or join audio icon (bottom left) and follow the "switch to phone audio link". If you don't have a PC, tablet or Smartphone available, call one of the 3 numbers below, enter the Meeting ID [then '#'] at the first prompt; at the second prompt just press '#' and at the third prompt, enter the password [then '#']. Phone numbers to dial: 0131 460 1196 | 020 3481 5237 | 020 3481 5240.

Topics for meeting

1. Welcome
2. GTR Stakeholder session
3. GTR Ticket Vending Machine reductions
4. East West Rail (more below)
5. TfL & GN Inners (more below)
6. Contactless Fares
7. Performance (more below)
8. Railfuture update
9. Round table

Newsletter content

Topics for meeting	1
GTR stakeholder session	2
GTR reductions in Ticket Vending Machines	2
The list of reductions	2
Other operators	3
East West Rail	3
All change in the Industry	3
TfL seeking control of GN Inners	3
Fares	3
Performance	4
Cancellations over time	4
Cancellations year on year	5
Spread of cancellations	5
Cancellations by week / day of the week	6
Railfuture update – National AGM & Board structure	6
Chair and Vice Chair	6
A reprise of local campaigning topics	7

Can I forward this email to others?
Privacy, including GDPR.

7
7

GTR stakeholder session

GTR have a stakeholder session on Friday. I'll be referring to my priorities list ([here](#)); not yet added to the list is the TVM reductions being actioned by GTR (see below).

If you have other issues, you would like me to raise, please let me know. There's no guarantee I'll be able to do this, as quite a bit depends on who I manage to speak to during the session – but I will try.

GTR reductions in Ticket Vending Machines

GTR are in the midst of reducing the number of active TVMs at their stations. They point towards significant reductions in their use. They have data on use by time of data, but I have recently discovered that this data is not by specific TVM.

I think our response is in 4 parts:

1. The idea that all of the current estate of TVMs is still needed can't really be supported – they are expensive to operate and realistically money spent on these TVM's can't be spent elsewhere. So, that some reduction is planned, is acceptable in principle.
2. Question reductions from 2 to 1 TVM at any location (or a specific entrance), mainly on a reliability basis – ie to increase the likelihood that one TVM is working at any point. GTR have told us that there will be one card and cash machine present.
3. Call out specific reductions – or switches between TVMs to retain where we think there is good evidence that more than planned need to be retained.
4. Encourage reductions in the need to have paper and mag stripe tickets.

On 4, for instance I went to Portsmouth the weekend just gone and had to have a magnetic stripe ticket so I had the option to take the underground – in practice I walked from Blackfriars to Waterloo and back, and the main alternative was to take Thameslink all the way to East Croydon or Three Bridges and change there for the Southern service to Portsmouth.

My own thought is that we want e-tickets to be available in three phases where paper tickets are currently required to cross London:

1. Where TfL services are only likely to be used during disruption – eg travelling to Gatwick on Thameslink services. This requires Underground staff to have access on their App a ticket checking functionality.
2. For a handful of really high volume gatelines such as at Paddington and Liverpool Street on the Elizabeth line.
3. More generally.

And of course, Railcards on Contactless.

The list of reductions

GTR have provided this:

- **Great Northern:** Arlesey (1), Baldock (1), Biggleswade (1), Finsbury Park (2), Hertford North (1), Hitchin (2), Huntingdon (1), Kings Lynn (1), Knebworth (1), London Kings Cross (3), Royston (1), Sandy (1), St Neots (1), Stevenage (2), Welwyn Garden City (2).
- **Thameslink:** Bedford (2 with 2 remaining), Elstree & Borehamwood (1 with 2 remaining), Farringdon (1), Flitwick (1 with 2 remaining), Harpenden (3 with 4 remaining), London Blackfriars (1), London St Pancras (2), Leagrave (1 with 3 remaining), Luton (2 with 4 remaining), Luton Airport Parkway (1 with 2 remaining), St Albans (5 with 8 remaining).
- **Southern:** Ashted (2), Balham (1), Barnham (1), Bognor Regis (1), Brighton (7), Dorking (1), East Croydon (8), Eastbourne (2), Epsom (1), Haywards Heath (1), Horsham (2), Hove (1), Lancing (1), London Victoria

(12), Norbury (1), Peckham Rye (1), Polegate (1), Purley (2), Redhill (1), Reigate (1), Shoreham by Sea (1), Streatham (1), Streatham Hill (1), Sutton (2), Thornton Heath (1), Three Bridges (1), Worthing (2)

Other operators

I've not heard of plans from other operators to reduce numbers, but no doubt they are coming, as the cost pressures are similar and no doubt demand is also reducing.

East West Rail

I have no news on East West Rail – neither the developments east of Bletchley, nor the start of the train service between Oxford and Milton Keynes.

On the start date, there is this Parliamentary written statement:

Chiltern worked with Network Rail, DfT and other operators on the December 2026 timetable and services have been timetabled between Oxford, Winslow, Bletchley and Milton Keynes. The Department continues to work closely with Chiltern Railways and other partners to confirm a start date for the first East-West Rail services between Oxford and Milton Keynes Central via Winslow.

Personally, I treat this as no more than an aspiration, rather than a definite plan. Chiltern will move to the DfT Operator on 20 September, and I suspect we will hear more around then, possibly even a date that is both credible and imminent.

EMR's recent problems with their Class 810 bi modes (albeit diesel and overhead) are a demonstration that despite the claimed cost savings from discontinuous electrification, these can easily turn into a mirage, so does encourage us as we campaign for full electrification of EWR.

All change in the Industry

It's all change in the top management layer for "our" TOCs.

1. Steve White is returning to GTR:
"DFTO and Network Rail have announced that Steve White has been appointed Integrated Managing Director designate for GTR Integrated Railway comprising GTR and Network Rail's Sussex route. The role will bring track and train together under a single leadership structure, forming one of the new Business Units being established as part of the Government's wider programme of railway reform.". I have not seen any date for this to happen. This doesn't seem to have generated media stories (yet).
2. Denise Whetton from Network Rail West Midlands is now the "Integrated Managing Director of GBR West Midlands" – Many media stories, including [Rail Business Daily](#). Hopefully tomorrow's meeting will give an opportunity to understand the reach of her role.
3. Will Rogers has left East Midlands Railway – see BBC story [here](#).

The 'interest' for us is how all this will work for mixed use railways such as the main lines that run through our area.

TfL seeking control of GN Inners

There is no new official news on this. A reminder that as regards milestones, a key one is around September when the window closes on bids for the May 2027 timetable (when shadow running is envisaged) – before then TfL will want to know if there will be enough drivers available, even after allowing for the segmentation of the available drivers between GN Outers/Thameslink and GN Inners. I suggested to Geoff Hobbs, TfL's Director, Public Transport Service Planning that we chat again, and I am following up on this.

Fares

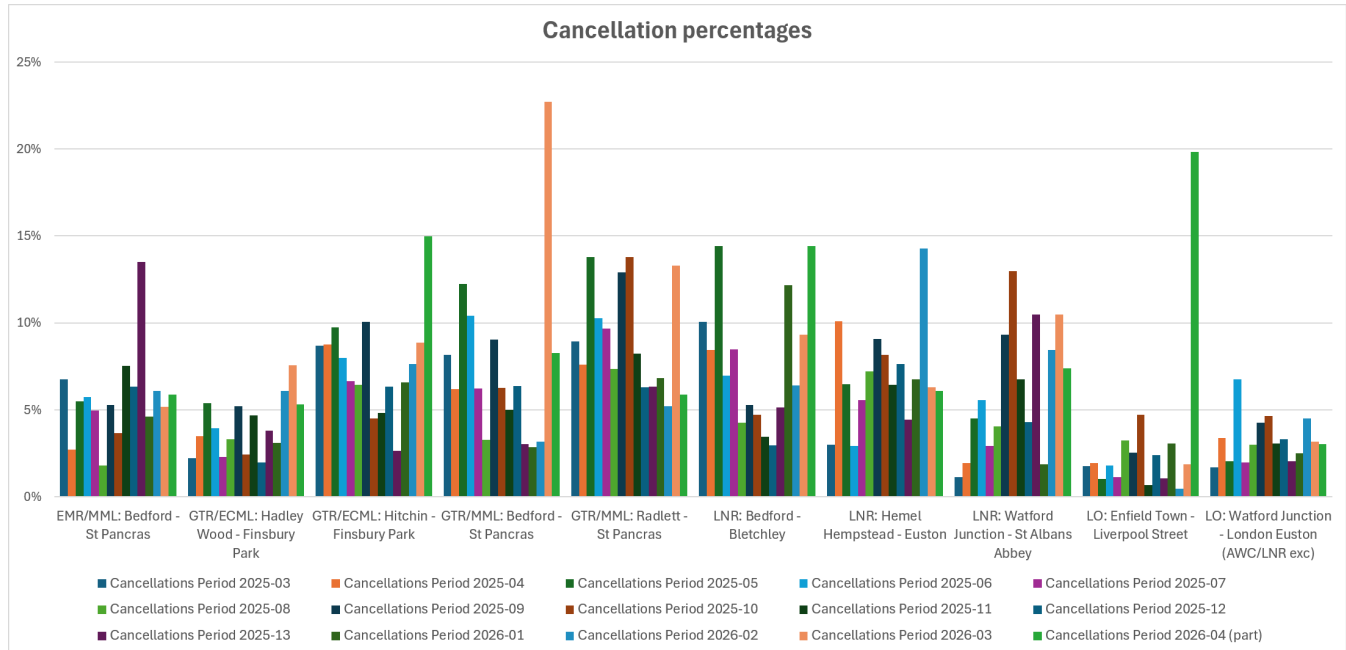
I've not been able to pursue moving the contactless debate on this month and am planning post meeting activity.

Performance

I have continued to collect the performance data for our main services via Recent Train Times. Recently, I've made a shift in time periods – I have been using 4 week periods since I started and have now switched to using Railway accounting periods (also 4 weeks), except around the railway's year end of 31 March, where instead I use the nearest Saturday. This should have no meaningful impact in the data but does mean it should more match the data we get from TOCs.

This month's data for the Midland Mainline is influenced by the Elstow train crash, which resulted in no trains for around a week. Thameslink left their services in the system, and EMR removed theirs from the schedule for some of the days. My inclination is to remove these days for future editions.

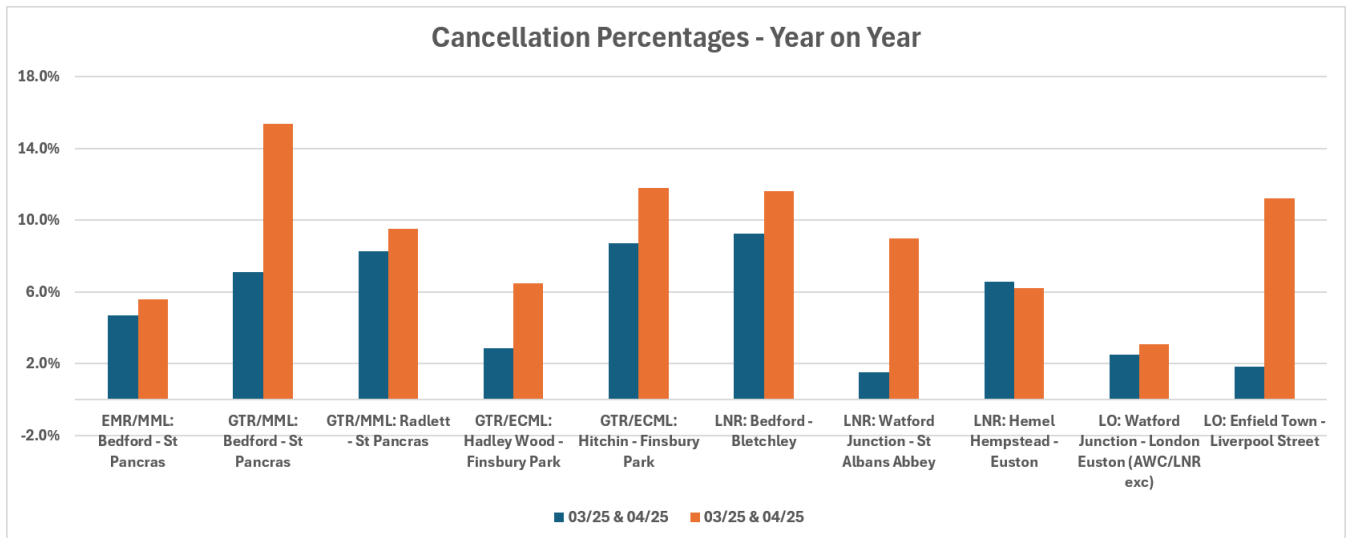
Cancellations over time



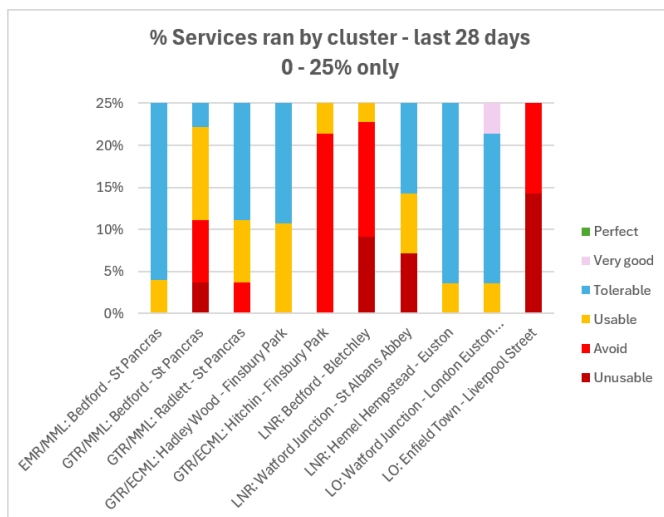
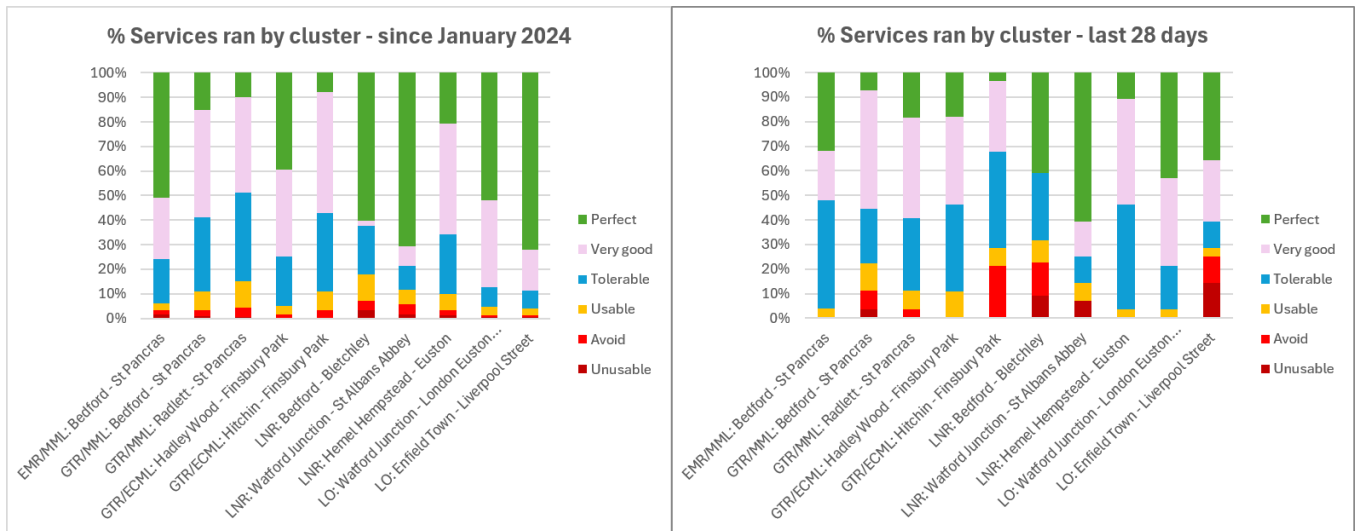
This graph is also available in landscape at the end of the newsletter.

Continued overleaf

Cancellations year on year



Spread of cancellations



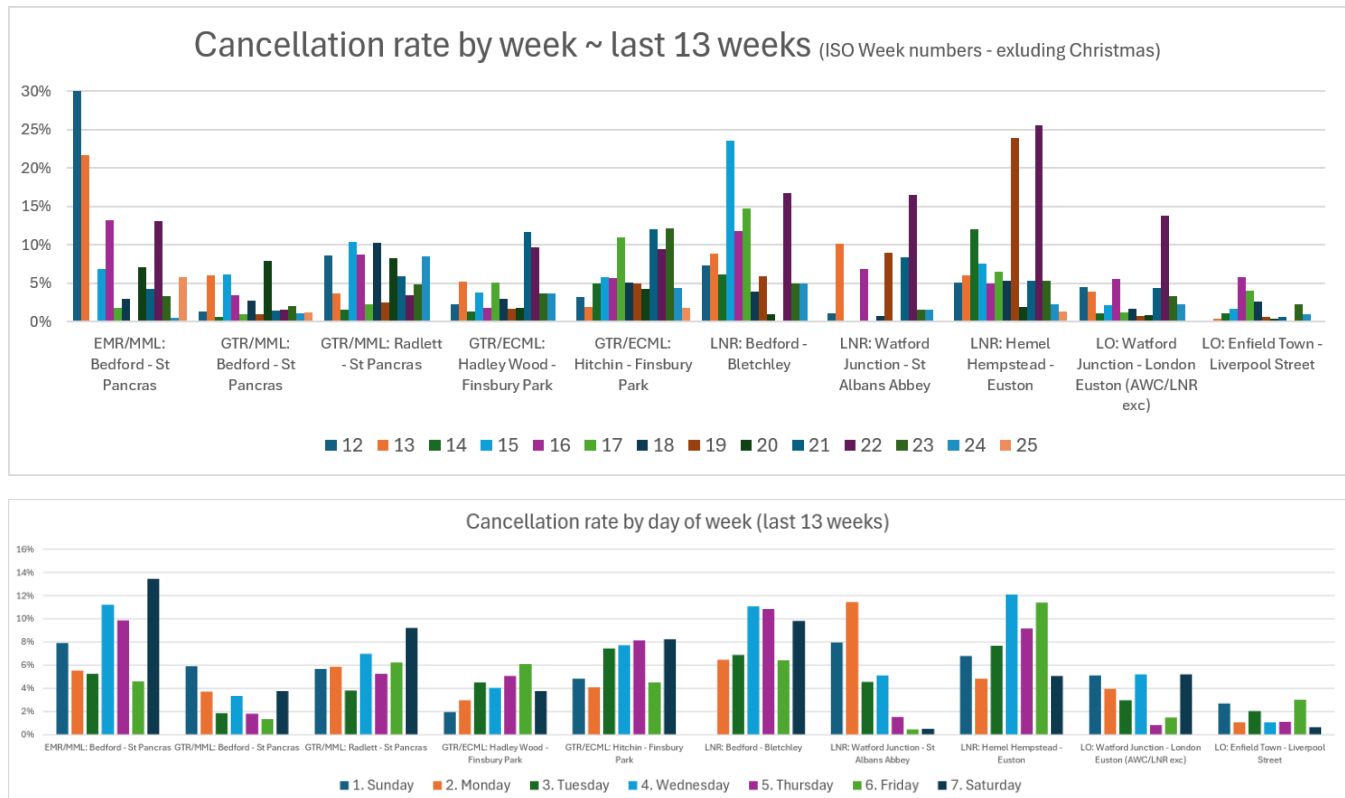
Definitions

38%	Unusable
50%	Avoid
70%	Usable
85%	Tolerable
95%	Very good
100%	Perfect

For 'all of 2024' Action
Short of a Strike days have
been excluded.

Because I am measuring this statistic across at the "whole of day" level, I do not detect long gaps within the day.

Cancellations by week / day of the week



Railfuture update – National AGM & Board structure

The national AGM was in Birmingham on 4 July. As well as the formal business of the company, there was an update from Chris Page as Chair, and we also debated 4 Motions:

1. Ensuring a Strong Passenger Voice
2. Off-peak fares
3. Attracting young people to Railfuture
4. Use of X (formerly Twitter)

The motions as passed by members are [here](#).

On each of these:

1. This will be taken forward via West Midlands branch who have a useful contact in the House of Lords.
2. I championed a very significant change to this motion because the original words, which sought a return to the world where off peak fares would dominate long distance travels would cause significant overcrowding at times, so are not going to be implemented and would just result in us been seen as complaining from the side lines.
3. For this we need to find some resources to implement it, then operate it.
4. For this we need to find a resource to help branches to extend their social media reach.

Chair and Vice Chair

At the July Board meeting Chris Page did not stand for Chair again. This role was taken on by Mike Southgate of Wessex Branch. But we recognised that the breadth of the Chair role, as performed by Chris was so time consuming that becoming Chair with the same responsibilities was very unappealing. So, compared to Chris's effective job description, that task is going to be performed in three parts:

- Chair of the Board – Mike.
- An extended campaigning remit – I will pick this, up, still with the title 'Vice Chair'.
- IT responsibility – Chris will retain this.

A reprise of local campaigning topics

The [list of campaigning priorities](#) was updated in April; it will next be updated in August. Comments are welcome. Changes last time were small and incremental.

Can I forward this email to others?

Definitely. If you have received this email via someone forwarding it, to be added to the Herts & Beds mailing list, please send me an email. You will be able to unsubscribe at any time.

Privacy, including GDPR.

You are receiving this email because you meet one or more of these criteria:

1. You are a Railfuture member who lives in the area, has provided an email address.
2. You have previously attended one of our meetings (or actively declined a previous invite) and I believe you have given us clear permission to keep you updated about future meetings.
3. You have specifically given us permission to keep you updated about future meetings.

If you want to be taken off this email list either reply to this email to that effect or follow the unsubscribe link at the foot of the email. If you are a Railfuture member, to update your general Railfuture communication preferences, follow the process set out in the member area on the website or in the address flyer for Railwatch.

Stay Safe.

Neil

Neil Middleton

Director (with responsibility for Communications) | **Convener, Railfuture Hertfordshire & Bedfordshire** |

TOC Liaison Representative for GTR | Vice-Chair, London & South East Branch

e-mail: neil.middleton@railfuture.org.uk | phone: 07887 628367

our websites: www.railfuture.org.uk | www.railfuture.org.uk/Herts+and+Beds | www.railwatch.org.uk

follow us on Twitter: [@Railfuture](https://twitter.com/Railfuture) | [@RailfutureLSE](https://twitter.com/RailfutureLSE) | [@Railwatch](https://twitter.com/Railwatch)

Railfuture Ltd is a (not for profit) Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales No. 05011634 | Registered Office: Edinburgh House, 1-5 Bellevue Road, Clevedon, North Somerset, BS21 7NP (for legal correspondence only) | All other correspondence to 3 Chandos Court, Martlesham, Suffolk IP12 4SU

Cancellation percentages

