

## WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION

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In the 3 months since our last Newsletter, we have (just) received information on fare increases from 2 January, and information on increased use of the old class 313 units on the Coastway and more about the Eyewitness initiative launched by Southern in October – some of you will have received an e-mail on this at the time.

### FARES

It has been confirmed that most fares will rise by around 6% at the beginning of January. This is the July RPI of 5% plus 1% as announced in the Autumn Statement. The Department for Transport permits Southern to increase individual fares by up to 8%, providing the overall average increase does not exceed 6%. Some fares have increased by up to 8% but many fares have increased by less than the Southern average of 6% and some have been frozen or reduced. Journeys wholly outside London Zones 1-6 but within the Southern network have been capped. This means that for these journeys outside Zones 1-6 passengers will not pay any more than the fares listed below:

Season Tickets – Weekly £60.00; Monthly £230.40; Annual £2,400.00. Some season ticket fares have been significantly reduced as a result of this cap.

Off-Peak Tickets - Off-Peak Day Return £15.00; Off-Peak Return £24.00

Although fares will be increasing for 2012, Southern say that they will be offering discounts on many fares when bought through their website [www.southernrailway.com](http://www.southernrailway.com). This may allow passengers customers to purchase many fares at 2011 prices (or cheaper) through a discount when bought on-line from Southern. We have not yet received any details of the discounts to be offered. Finally, Super Off-Peak day single and return fares have been frozen. All Southern Advance fares have been frozen again for 2012.

### BILLINGSHURST

At long last all the doors on 8-car trains are now being opened at Billingshurst

### TIMETABLE

The new timetable came in on 11 December and there have been no changes to previous timings. One peak-hour morning train has been reduced from 9 cars to 8 cars and this may give rise to some overcrowding north of Three Bridges. The relatively modern class 377 3-car units previously used on this service and on some West Coastway services between Brighton and Portsmouth or Southampton have been moved to the London area to ease overcrowding on services to East Grinstead and elsewhere. As a result nearly all Brighton to Portsmouth services are now being worked by the detested 40 year old class 313 units which lack both air-conditioning and toilets. This goes against what Southern told us at the AGM, that these 313s would only be used on a couple of peak-hour services between Brighton and Portsmouth. We do know that these 313s were foisted on to Southern by the Department for Transport and so they have to use them as no other stock is available to meet passenger needs, but we think that they would be better deployed in the London area where many 377s are used for short distance suburban services. We will be taking this up with Southern.

### EYE WITNESS

On 21 October, Policing and Criminal Justice Minister and Arundel MP, Nick Herbert launched Southern's internal Eyewitness initiative to the public at Arundel station. Southern senior staff, your Association and the Community Rail Partnership were at the launch of a trial of Southern's award winning low-level crime reporting system to passengers who use Southern services between Arundel and Crawley.

Eyewitness is a scheme which allows the reporting of low-level crime by e-mail. The system has been used successfully as an in-house system where Southern staff have e-mailed members of Southern's Safer Travel and Revenue Protection Teams to report incidences of vandalism, anti-social behaviour and fare evasion. The system allows Southern to respond quickly where officers are in the area, and to identify patterns, trends and hotspots which enables more intelligent deployment of Rail Neighbourhood Officers and Revenue Protection Officers when detailing patrols.

Southern's Head of Revenue Protection and Security, Martin Grier said: "Eyewitness has been a tremendous success since we introduced it internally 18 months ago. Now we look forward to even better results now that we are asking our passengers to tell us about low-level crime that they have seen."

In the last 12 months, reported crime on the Arun Valley has fallen overall by 71%. At Billingshurst station, incidences of crime reduced from 28 last year to zero this year.

Passengers witnessing crime between Arundel and Crawley stations can report what they have seen, where they saw it, when they saw it and a brief description of the offender(s) by sending an e-mail to a dedicated address. For more details, leaflets are available at staffed stations between Arundel and Crawley.

The information above is from the original press briefing and as yet, we have not had any update on how the initiative is progressing and how passengers have reacted to it. On the face of it, it should prove worthwhile and an extension of the initiative to the West Coastway line would be of benefit to passengers.

#### CURRENT PERFORMANCE

This has suffered during December with the South Croydon suicide a couple of weeks ago when many trains were delayed by anything up to 5 hours, and from this Monday's train breakdowns in Haywards Heath tunnel and at Redhill. But apart from these incidents and a couple of other suicides and a bridge bash, Southern's performance has generally been good. But if you have other views on this or consider that Southern's response to the incidents has been inadequate, please let me know.

#### CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICES

There will be no services on Christmas Day. On Boxing Day the only services will be an hourly train in each direction between Brighton and Victoria. This service was due to stop at Three Bridges but this stop has been removed as Network Rail will be completing the subway replacement work on that day – this work was started a few weeks ago but had to be suspended when it was found that the monster crane being used was interfering with Gatwick's radar. There will be bus between Three Bridges and Gatwick connecting with the trains. On the two Bank Holidays, Tuesday 27 December and Monday 2 January there will be a Saturday service. A Saturday service will also be in force on Wednesday 28 December to Friday 30 December with what is described as "Peak hour modifications" But this does not seem to include any direct service from the Arun Valley to London Bridge train as we have had in previous years.

#### AND FINALLY

On behalf of your Association, may I wish you a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year

Trevor Tupper  
Membership Secretary