



The Rt Hon Col. Bob Stewart MP DSO
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To: Mark Harper MP. Secretary of State for Transport

Via E-mail

31st January 2023

Conflicting Train Movements Near Lewisham

Dear Mark,

I hope this letter finds you well.

Since Southeastern Railway's timetable changes on the 11th December 2022, which saw my constituents on the Hayes/ Mid-Kent line lose their direct services to Cannon Street, there have now been two occasions when London Bridge has had to be evacuated due to overcrowding. The most recent being on the 25th January where a trespasser on the tracks elsewhere crippled the network.

The timetable changes have resulted in more commuters being forced to use London Bridge and it is now quite clear that any resilience on the line has been hugely reduced by this change. This is why I have written to Southeastern to call for the reversal of the timetable changes immediately.

Southeastern claim the changes were necessary to reduce trains crossing the junction near Lewisham and this would improve reliability. Re-developing this junction has long been on the agenda – most recently as part of second phase of Transport for London's planned Bakerloo Line extension to Hayes. Due to ongoing issues with TfL's finances this extension is now looking increasingly unlikely. As such can you look to funding Network Rail to improve these junctions to make them both more reliable and return the option of my constituents, particularly commuters, to go direct to either the City or the West End a privilege they have had for a decade.

In the meantime, I hope the pre-December 2022 timetable can be urgently reinstated to avoid a repeat of concerning scenes seen on the 25th January.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

Bob Stewart MP
Member of Parliament for Beckenham