

Update on GWR Timetable Changes

You may have seen the announcement made by Transport Secretary Grant Shapps today (12 May) about a phased return to work, if not I thought it might be helpful to share the media release issued by the Department for Transport.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-guidance-published-to-ensure-transport-network-is-safe-for-those-who-need-to-use-it>

It's clear that whilst the lockdown is starting to ease, advice for customers remains to avoid travelling by train wherever possible. With people who absolutely need to go to work encouraged to travel by car, cycle or to walk where they can. Social distancing will mean that trains can carry a fraction of the usual number of passengers and people are being urged only to go by train if it cannot be avoided.

That said, we have been working with industry partners, with the Department for Transport and with stakeholders so that we are ready to start uplifting capacity and service levels. We will have an amended timetable in place from next Monday (18 May) as we have been asked to be Government. This is now shown in online journey planners. There will be further staged increases responding to the easing of lockdown as things go forward.

Customers will still need to check the timetable weekly for a bit longer as we continue to accommodate infrastructure improvement work and may also add further services in the light of changes to government guidance for our customers. We are working to improve this, and I will keep you up to date on progress. Our advice and messages for customers will support the need for customers to stay alert and continue to be aware of the need for social distancing and consideration of others when travelling by train.

We will be monitoring demand over the next few weeks and working with the DfT and industry colleagues to assess the need for further options to help manage demand. This might include measures to limit numbers on board services. We will make sure you are kept updated on this, and we would welcome any local insight that you might have on the timetable or the operation of services.

We understand the importance of rail to restarting the economy and our teams are working hard to make sure we deliver a robust, reliable service that is as safe as possible in these difficult times.

Thank you for your kind messages of support to date, we will keep you informed and happy to hear from you if you have any suggestions for improvement.

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