

Ahead of major timetable uplift, rail companies release the 8 ways they are ensuring people can travel safely... and how passengers can help

July 3, 2020



With pubs, cinemas and more shops opening next week, Britain's train companies are preparing for more people to start returning to the railways by publishing their pledge to maximise space, boost cleaning, help with hygiene and improve information to ensure passengers can travel safely.

It comes as the rail industry continues to urge people to use public transport only if necessary to ensure there is enough space for those who need to use it. To help, as more businesses reopen, train operators will be adding more services from Sunday 5 July. This reflects the forthcoming relaxation of lockdown measures by the Government and will help employees across newly opened up sectors get back to work.

The Safer Travel Pledge, which will be displayed in train stations around the country, will help people who work in pubs, cafes, hairdressers and the wider hospitality industry to have confidence in their journey as they return to work for the first time in over three months.

Under the new Safer Travel Pledge, extra services are being introduced by the rail industry where possible to meet increased demand and timetables will be designed to prioritise more trains at peak times and busier stations to prevent overcrowding.

Here are the eight things rail companies are doing to help combat the spread of COVID-19. And the four ways passengers can help.

Train companies...

1. More trains and extra carriages in timetables – to make extra room and help with social distancing
2. New social distancing signs – so people know where to go, stay 2 metres apart where possible and avoid pinch points
3. Powerful fog cleaning on trains – with trains and stations cleaned more frequently through the day
4. Soap restocked more often in stations and on trains – so it's easier to keep your hands virus-free
5. Vending machines for face coverings and hand sanitiser – at over 150 stations making it easier for passengers to buy what they need
6. Hand sanitiser points in over 300 stations – helping protect people from the virus
7. New service on Messenger app alerting people to busy trains – look up National Rail on Messenger to get started
8. Up to 2,500 extra staff available at key locations – to help passengers on their way

Passengers...

1. Travel off-peak – keep distance wherever possible and avoid the busiest times
2. Wash your hands – carry hand sanitiser and wash hands before and after your journey
3. Bring a face covering – wear it throughout your journey, but remember that hidden disabilities and medical conditions mean not everyone can
4. Check before you travel – visit nationalrail.co.uk before setting off and sign up for alerts on the Messenger app

Robert Nisbet, director of nations and regions at the Rail Delivery Group, which represents train operators and Network Rail, said: “With pubs, restaurants and other businesses reopening next week, more people will be taking the train. While we are still asking people only to take the train if necessary, as the lockdown is eased further we are stepping up timetables and taking other steps so people can travel with confidence.

“In return, we want people to help us by avoiding the busiest times, wearing a face covering and checking the latest train information online before setting off.”

Photo credit: Rail Delivery Group