

First day of services on SE Trains, as Southeastern enters new ownership

October 18, 2021



Rail services across the south east transferred successfully into the public sector yesterday, under the ownership of SE Trains, part of the Department for Transport's Operator of Last Resort Ltd, (DOHL). SE Trains has vowed to relentlessly focus on improving the service and bringing back more customers to the railway.

Managing Director, Steve White said: "SE Trains is now operational and I'm delighted that the transfer has gone so smoothly. For our passengers and colleagues it's very much business as usual.

"Our focus now is squarely on winning back our customers to travel on the railway.

"You can expect to see more of the striking new trains on our network, investment in our fleet and stations, flexible ticketing and new technology to ensure journeys are as comfortable and convenient as possible.

"Our customers deserve punctual, reliable and sustainable services – and we will continue to develop our timetable to ensure we're meeting our customers' needs."

Fiona Taylor, Network Rail's Route Director for Kent said: "As Southeastern moves into new ownership, we'll continue to work closely in partnership as we always have done to deliver the safe and on-time railway that passengers across the region deserve. We will continue to put passengers first and be responsive to the needs of everyone across the network."

SE Trains officially took control of services from the previous owner, London South Eastern Railway (LSER), at 2am on Sunday 17 October.

SE Trains will work to rapidly complete the roll out of modern class 707 'City Beam' trains, focusing on running clean, punctual services for passengers. The 30-strong fleet will create more space on busy metro routes, providing walk-through carriages and air conditioning to create more spacious and comfortable journeys.

Robin Gisby, CEO of DOHL and Chair of SE Trains Ltd said: "Our aim for SE Trains will be to maintain an unwavering focus on delivering an excellent service for passengers. We have a very experienced team to confidently take the business forward and there are many exciting improvements for passengers to look forward to, including the continued roll-out of new trains.

"I'd like to thank the Southeastern team for their hard work and professionalism during the transition to SE Trains."

The decision taken by Government is no reflection on the exceptional frontline staff of Southeastern, who have been instrumental in delivering services throughout the COVID pandemic.

In future, the Government will move the services back into the private sector on a new Passenger Services Contract, allowing private sector investment and innovation to lead the way in delivering a regional railway that works for its passengers.

Photo credit: Southeastern