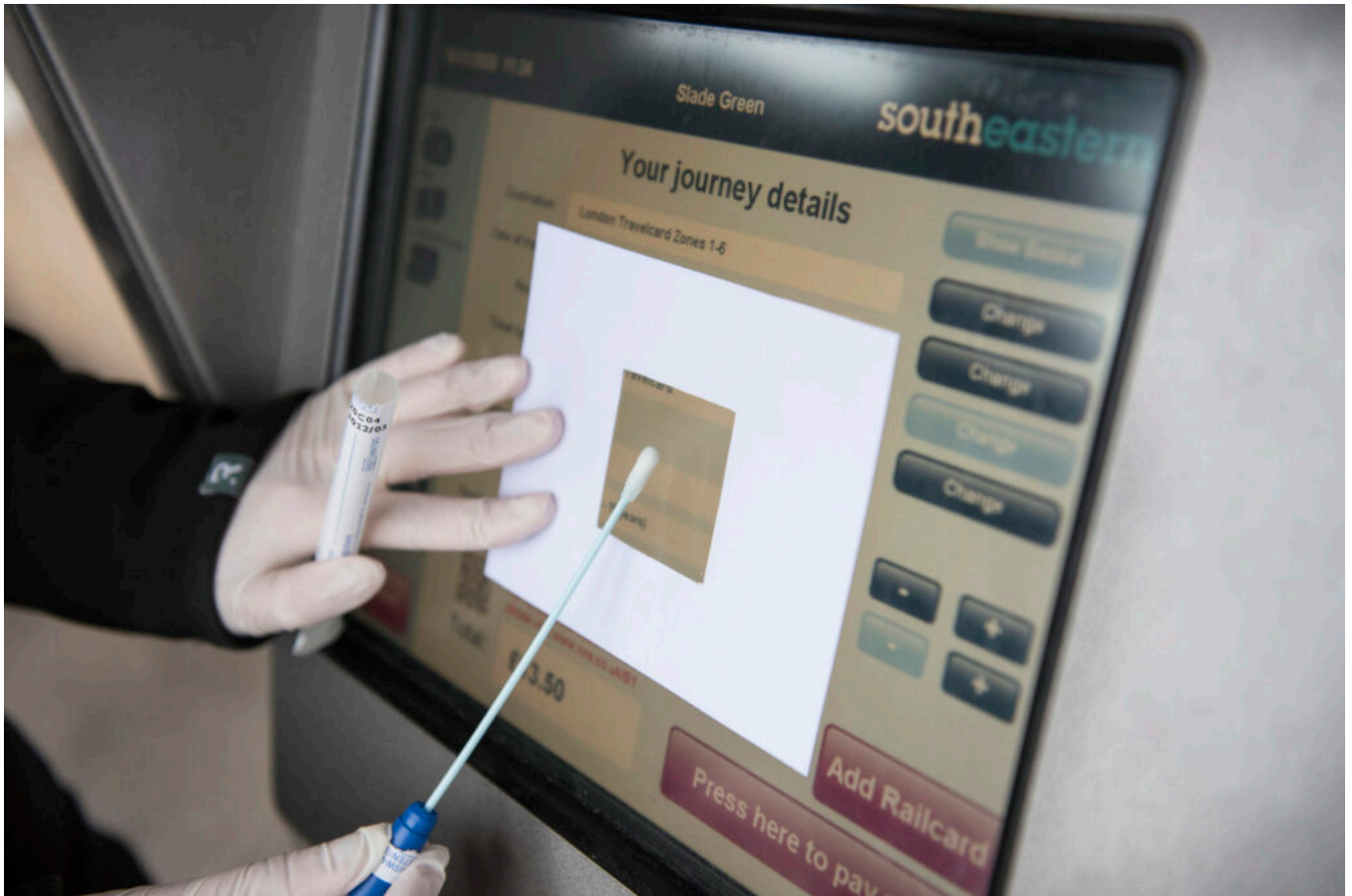


Southeastern makes a new year's resolution for 2021: carry on swabbing

January 4, 2021



With increasing concern about COVID-19 infection rates across the south east, Southeastern's latest round of swab-testing for the virus has revealed a negative test result for every single station, train and train depot swabbed - ensuring that passengers can travel with confidence.

Further tests have been undertaken as part of Southeastern's regular, ongoing programme of swabbing, which has been taking place not only on trains but also in stations and depots, helping passengers returning to school, college and work in January remain reassured that they are able to travel with confidence.

Trains at the Gillingham (Kent) depot and on the Sheerness branch line, as well as the large Slade Green (south east London) depot were all tested. Swabbing locations included 'high touch' points including grab poles in the passenger accommodation, toilet door buttons and the controls in drivers' cabs.

Coronavirus swab testing was also completed on 'high touch' areas among 20 of Southeastern's busiest stations in the autumn, with six more stations including Sittingbourne, Slade Green, Maidstone East, Ramsgate, Margate and Herne Bay tested in November.

By February 2021, over 40 stations will have been tested for traces of Covid-19, with all tests undertaken so far coming back negative, confirming the ongoing effectiveness of additional cleaning. The activity is part of Southeastern's enhanced regime to protect staff and provide reassurance to passengers that they can travel with confidence if they need to, and is being undertaken by a private contractor at all 165 stations across the network.

In addition, Southeastern's [SeatFinder tool](#) allows passengers to check in advance how busy a train might be, enabling passengers to travel on quieter services.

Alicia Andrews, Commercial Director for Southeastern said: "We are always wanting to do more to reassure our passengers that they can travel with us confident in the knowledge that our enhanced cleaning measures are having a real impact - meaning that not a single trace of COVID-19 has been found at our stations or on our trains.

"While Government advice across our network remains not to travel unless you have to we know that some people will need to continue to travel for work, school or college, and so the railway remains ever ready to provide an essential service for key workers."

Photo credit: Southeastern