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# THAMESLINK PROGRAMME AUGUST CLOSURES - Q&A

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## **What is the Thameslink Programme?**

The government-sponsored Thameslink Programme is transforming north-south travel through to deliver increased capacity on one of Europe's busiest stretches of railway.

The Thameslink Programme combines new trains, new track, new signalling, an expanded infrastructure and station improvements to deliver better connections to more destinations. This will deliver significant improvements that respond to the growth in passenger demand now and into the future.

It will deliver more capacity by diverting trains from terminating stations and increasing the number of trains flowing through central London and make Thameslink more like urban railways in other European cities. This increase provides an opportunity to expand the Thameslink network and provide new journey opportunities.

Delivered so far:

- longer, 12-car trains between Brighton and Bedford,
- platform lengthening at several stations,
- extensive track work and signalling upgrades
- brought into use the new Borough Viaduct west of London Bridge and the Bermondsey Dive Under to the east of London Bridge
- upgraded stations including West Hampstead, Farringdon and Blackfriars

The most complex part of the programme is now underway; this includes rebuilding London Bridge station and laying new track and signalling equipment around the station to create a more spacious and better connected transport hub.

## **What service changes will take place in August 2017?**

Significant work will take place over the August 2017 bank holiday and the four working days after (Saturday 26 August – Saturday 2 September). Stations and trains will be much busier than usual and passengers will need to change their journeys.

There will be no Southeastern services to or from London Bridge, Charing Cross and Waterloo East for eight days. This will mean that there will be fewer trains into London and for those four working days there will be an enhanced Saturday level of service. Those trains that do run will be diverted to alternative London stations such as Cannon Street, Victoria, Blackfriars and Waterloo and will be extremely busy, with queuing systems in place.

- On Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 August, there will also be no trains at Cannon Street.
- On Sunday 3 September, there will be no Southeastern trains at Victoria.

Detailed travel advice is now available at [ThameslinkProgramme.co.uk/2017](http://ThameslinkProgramme.co.uk/2017). This will include the timetable and station specific information for passengers.

### **What will the impact be for passengers?**

There will be fewer Southeastern trains, which may be going to different stations than usual. Passengers' journeys may be longer, busier and they may have to change the way they travel for those days. Passengers should plan, especially those who have more flexibility around their working hours and ability to work from home.

### **Will trains be diverted to Waterloo?**

Yes, some Southeastern trains will run into Waterloo. There was been agreement between Southeastern, Network Rail and South West Trains, to allow some Southeastern services into Waterloo (the old Waterloo International platforms) for the four working days when there are no Southeastern trains to the three London stations (London Charing Cross and Waterloo East): 29, 30 and 31 August and 1 September.

### **Will this coincide with work taking place at Waterloo station?**

From 5 – 28 August fewer trains will run in and out of London Waterloo while Network Rail carries out a significant upgrade to the station. This will include extending platforms 1-4 to allow longer, ten-carriage trains to stop at suburban stations for the first time, providing thousands of extra seats every day. Platforms 1-10 will be closed throughout this time to allow Network Rail to carry out the work safely, meaning that there will be fewer services. The final three days of the Waterloo blockade will coincide with the first three days of the work taking place at and around London Bridge. We understand that this will cause stations and trains to be very busy, which is why we are carrying out this work over the bank holiday when fewer people use the railway.

For more information about what will be going on at Waterloo this August, please visit [www.southwesttrains.co.uk/wswupgrade](http://www.southwesttrains.co.uk/wswupgrade).

### **What will happen in the event of the Waterloo possession over-running?**

There is not an overlap in usage but in the event of a problem Southeastern trains will not use Waterloo; services will be diverted to Blackfriars instead following a pre-agreed robust contingency plan.

### **Why does the work require 8 days complete closure of London Bridge station?**

The work will take place from Saturday 26 August to Saturday 2 September inclusive. An eight-day closure is required to undertake track work that will

affect the Charing Cross lines at both London Bridge and between New Cross and Bermondsey. In this time, Network Rail's engineers will disconnect the tracks from the temporary position they are currently in and move them into their final position. They will also remove the temporary crossover at the London end of platforms 6 and 7 and put the track in its final alignment. At this stage, Network Rail will also commission the signalling to bring platform 6 into operation.

Safety is the number one priority. We need to close all lines over the bank holiday weekend as we move large sections of track components around. We also have to keep the traction current turned off on all lines as we make major alterations to traction power and sub-station switching.

We will also undertake significant alterations to the signalling systems between New Cross and London Bridge to bring lines 5, 6 and 7 into use and while this is happening, we are unable to run trains. Network Rail cannot carry out the required work on the signalling systems until the track alterations have been made.

We delivered a comparable volume of work over Christmas 2015 across 10 days, with no services through London Bridge.

### **Will my ticket be valid on other routes during the closures?**

Valid tickets will be accepted on the following alternative routes. If stations or buses outside of this list are used, you will be charged.

Southeastern tickets for 'London Terminals' will be accepted as follows:

For entry **and** exit at these **Tube** stations:

- Blackfriars, Canada Water, Cannon Street, Charing Cross, Elephant and Castle, Embankment, London Bridge, Mansion House, North Greenwich, Southwark, Victoria, Waterloo
- DLR between Greenwich and Lewisham
- London Overground between Canada Water and New Cross

On these **Bus** routes, calling at:

- 11 Trafalgar Square - Victoria
- 15 Monument - Cannon Street - Blackfriars - Aldwych
- 17 London Bridge - Cannon Street
- 21 Lewisham - New Cross Gate
- 24 Trafalgar Square - Victoria
- 35 Elephant & Castle - London Bridge - Monument
- 40 Elephant & Castle - London Bridge - Monument
- 132 Bexleyheath - North Greenwich
- 133 Elephant & Castle - London Bridge - Monument
- 136 Lewisham - New Cross Gate
- 161 North Greenwich - Woolwich Arsenal

- 225 Lewisham – New Cross Gate
- 321 Lewisham – New Cross Gate
- 343 Elephant & Castle - London Bridge
- 381 Waterloo - London Bridge
- 422 North Greenwich – Woolwich Arsenal
- 436 Lewisham – New Cross Gate
- 472 North Greenwich – Woolwich Arsenal
- 521 London Bridge - Cannon Street - Blackfriars - Aldwych
- RV1 Waterloo - London Bridge

If you are travelling using pay as you go and believe you should have received a refund but have not, please contact the TfL Customer Services team.

Southeastern passengers will be able to use alternative Southeastern stations where there may be more journey opportunities available to them.

### **What are you doing to communicate these closures to passengers?**

Working with our Thameslink Programme partners and the train operating companies, we have been promoting the closures in 2017 through a number of channels, including posters, leafleting at station, announcements at stations, train posters, on-train announcements, social media, traditional media (broadcast and print) and stakeholder briefings.

Further activities include leaflets on seats of trains, leaflets on cars in Southeastern car parks, information on OIS and CIS screens, announcements on trains and advertising on radio and in newspapers.

### **What are you doing to communicate these closures to business stakeholders?**

We have taken an active, coordinated approach to keep business stakeholders informed. This has taken the form of regular email updates, face-to-face briefings with business groups in the Charing Cross, Cannon Street and London Bridge areas, site tours for key stakeholders and comprehensive hand postcard drops to keep businesses informed.

We also created a [business toolkit](#) which includes a poster to display in the office, a leaflet explaining the changes, suggested text for internal communications, digital copies of walking maps around Cannon Street, Blackfriars, Waterloo East and London Bridge stations, and an animation showing the changes to services that can be displayed on screens around the office.

### **Is anything changing at London Bridge after August?**

Yes, there will be some operational changes at London Bridge station from September to December 2017, after we open platform 6 to allow more Charing Cross trains to call at London Bridge.

Until December, platforms may feel more crowded than usual and passengers will be requested to remain on the concourse until their service is announced. While we have robust plans in place to manage this, it may be preferable to travel from other London stations in the evenings, where possible.

Safety of passengers remains our number one priority. We're working hard to minimise disruption to passengers wherever possible until these extensive works are finished in 2018. This is only a temporary measure while London Bridge remains a work in progress.

### **Will ticket acceptance still be the same after the work finishes?**

Following the completion of the upcoming improvement work at London Bridge from 3 September, Charing Cross trains that are currently unable to stop at London Bridge during peak times will once again be able to call.

Therefore, interim ticket acceptance and automatic refund arrangements for the Tube and buses will be partially withdrawn. Changes vary by train operator. Journeys via the following Tube stations and bus routes will no longer be automatically refunded:

- Southeastern – Southwark, Waterloo;
- Southern – Charing Cross, Embankment, Southwark, Waterloo; bus route 15
- South West Trains – London Bridge, Southwark, Waterloo; bus routes 381 and RV1
- Ticket acceptance for Thameslink customers remains unchanged until January 2018.