



THE RT HON NICK HERBERT CBE MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR ARUNDEL & SOUTH DOWNS

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Jo Johnson MP
Minister of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
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26 June 2018

Dear Jo

Thank you for responding to my Westminster Hall debate on rail services in Hassocks last week and for your attention to these problems.

In the debate I once again asked if you would look again at the new timetable, which has withdrawn a valuable direct peak Clapham Junction service for a significant number of my constituents in Hassocks. You undertook to go back to Network Rail and GTR to check that their underlying assumptions about transfer times, which GTR were using to justify the timetable changes, were realistic. Would you be able to update me on this?

In relation to the disruption, you acknowledged that performance was still far from satisfactory, but also said that you hoped that passengers were feeling that improvement is starting to happen. I am afraid that there has been little such improvement. Last week, the fifth since the new timetable was introduced, 265 trains were cancelled at Hassocks station. Trains continue to be delayed, and when they are arriving they are often too short, resulting in overcrowding.

We are now into the sixth week of the new timetable, there is still disruption, and my constituents continue to be justifiably furious about it. GTR says that it is trying to provide passengers with a more predictable service, prioritising peak-time trains and reducing ad-hoc cancellations. My constituents would like to see the evidence that this is working. I hope that you will acknowledge that the problems are continuing and place the strongest possible pressure on GTR to deliver the improvements which Hassocks passengers have been promised.

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I am also aware that GTR aims to implement an interim timetable from mid-July to give passengers a more dependable service. While this will be based on the targeted May 2018 timetable, I hope this will nevertheless provide an opportunity to restore direct services from Hassocks to and from Clapham Junction, and I would be grateful if you would raise this with GTR.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Nick Herbert

NICK HERBERT