

**Rail Services – Parish Council responses to the following question:**

What issues does your parish have with train services within the borough that result in people using their car rather than the train?

Parish	Comment/s
Sutton Valence	More travellers would use the train instead of their cars if the train fares were more affordable.
	The majority of parishioners from Sutton Valence use Headcorn Station where there is an issue with both the availability of parking and the cost.
	To use the number 12 bus to get to Headcorn is not viable because of the infrequent service and the cost.
East Sutton	The main train station used by parishioners of East Sutton is Headcorn. The car parking at Headcorn is inadequate with nowhere near enough spaces. The cost to park is also a deterrent.
	The high cost of train travel means that the fares are a prohibiting factor to many potential users.
	The increase in anti-social behaviour on the trains was also a major concern, with insufficient staff on the trains to deal with it.
Yalding	<p>The issue is that the train station is a long way from the village therefore you have to drive to it. The car park is quite small and there have been incidents of damage to cars. The station is not on a main line so the service will only take you to Paddock Wood or Maidstone. People feel that once in the car they might as well continue the journey by car. If they are going to Maidstone Town centre it is much quicker by car.</p> <p>If the bus service from the village went via the train station at the correct link up time this may encourage people to use the train. The bus already goes to Laddingford so this would add very little to the journey time. Councillors have asked KCC to look at this in the past but have always had a negative response.</p>
Teston	Teston's nearest railway station is over a mile from the centre of our village by road/path and we are sure this is an important factor particularly for our elderly residents

Parish	Comment/s
Staplehurst	<p>Staplehurst station is well used, both for commuting to London and more local journeys.</p> <p>As far as travelling to central London is concerned, it's difficult to imagine any changes to the service which would effectively reduce car travel.</p> <p>There is a significant amount of rail travel, particularly by students and schoolchildren, from Staplehurst to Paddock Wood, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. The lack of good, direct east-west roads means that rail journey times to Paddock Wood and Tonbridge are competitive with car use.</p> <p>For journeys to Tunbridge Wells, or destinations on the fringe of south London or the outskirts of Ashford, although the trunk rail journey is likely to be competitive in speed, poor onward connections to the eventual destination may make it more attractive to use the car. Better coordination between different modes of public transport might improve this situation - both physical connections and through ticketing.</p> <p>Travel by train from Staplehurst to destinations in East Kent (Canterbury, Thanet, Folkestone, Dover) is likely to be less attractive following the next revision to the Southeastern timetable, when trains will no longer divide at Ashford.</p> <p>It is possible to travel from Staplehurst to Maidstone by rail by changing at Paddock Wood, but this is unlikely to offer an attractive alternative to the private car or (at most times of day) the bus.</p> <p>For passengers making longer journeys starting from Staplehurst, connections to Gatwick Airport are not as good as they could be.</p> <p>Similarly, if more Eurostar trains called at Ashford, this would become more attractive in comparison with Ebbsfleet, which in practical terms is only accessible by car.</p>