

**Skipton and Ripon****By Email: Julian.Smith.mp@parliament.uk**Kerry.peters@northernrailway.co.uk

09 December 2024

Dear Julian

I am writing to update you on our services in Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire over the Christmas period and to outline how we are supporting customers, communities and the economy, by giving the certainty that's needed over this busy time of the year.

Before giving detail of our Christmas plans, I'd like to first explain the current situation with our train crew resourcing, and specifically conductor Sunday working. As you will be aware, we secured a new Rest Day Working agreement for drivers on 5 November, and I'm pleased to say this is having a positive impact on delivering training days, with a reduction in cancellations related to driver availability. Despite this progress however, historic terms and conditions mean that Sundays remain a voluntary working day for our conductors in the North West.

We do not have a consistent set of terms and conditions for all conductors working across Northern. For those working out of our North East and East depots, we have an agreement with them which gives a commitment to work on Sundays. We don't have this same agreement in the North West, and conductors can book off with one week's notice. We had reached a new interim agreement in principle with the RMT about conductors working on Sundays across our North West depots, which would also have supported further negotiations to reach long term agreements. The union put the proposal to their members for a referendum, but this was rejected. Had the proposal been accepted, it would have resulted in all conductors across Northern (including those in Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire), see average earnings rise to around £400 - more than double the current arrangement for a Sunday shift.

While clearly not the outcome that we would want, we will now work with the Department for Transport and Rail North Committee, to look at what other options remain to secure the necessary reform to support a seven-day railway so desperately needed by our customers and regions across the North.

Christmas Services in Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincolnshire

We have looked carefully at traincrew resourcing across the Christmas period and considered the interplay with the usual planned Christmas engineering works. Due to higher sickness absence, and annual leave, and given that some services are resourced by traincrew from the North West depots, we anticipate traincrew availability challenges for Sunday 22 and 29 December. Therefore, we plan to reduce the number services through an amended timetable on Sunday 22 December and Sunday 29 December. Reducing the level of services we operate is never a decision that is taken lightly, however, we think it is important to provide our customers the certainty they need in order to make their travel plans.



Pre-planned engineering projects will also affect services on various routes - full details are available on our [website](#).

We have launched our customer communications, with our main message being 'Check Before You Travel' and information regularly being updated, including on our [website](#). The following graphic outlines our specific customer advice for each day over the period.



I hope this has been a useful update and please contact me if you have any questions or queries.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Peters
East Regional Director
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