Good evening

Having just watched my northern news regarding the above, you asked for people's experiences of their northern rail travel.

Recently I travelled back from Liverpool to Kirkby, where I waited half an hour for my connecting train from Kirkby (Merseyside) to Orrell (Wigan). The electronic board was broken and only displayed the sign "check destination on front of train" no train times. This is what Northern Rail tend to do, they leave the boards empty if they are going to cancel a train. After half an hour I checked my iPhone to find there was no train to Orrell but a replacement bus to take me to Orrell and I had to walk back some 500 yards and up a set of steps to find this bus. The doors on the bus were closed and the driver sat reading his paper for the next 15 mins when he eventually opened the doors and let passengers on. We then travelled to Rainford, Up Holland and finally Orrell which took half an hour.

On my way to the bus, I asked at the ticket office why there was no train to be told "it's the new timetable till end July" and yet the night before I checked and there should have been a train due. There was no announcement made to say a bus was replacing the train AND nothing had been typed into the electronic timetable boards. This is what is happening here up north. It's not just Oxenholme and Arndale.

Last Sat I travelled from Appley Bridge to Southport. The train arrived with only 2 CARRIAGES all the way from Manchester going to Southport and on a hot summer day, obviously people take families to the seaside. The train was crammed to the doors, no way could I get on, so had a 20 min wait for the next 4 carriage train. That's another irritation they only sometimes put 2 carriages on all the way from Manchester and people have to stand.

This Sun 8 July, I travelled on the train from Manchester Victoria to Wigan Wallgate Station on the Southport train. Yes the board at Manchester said Southport and the front of the train Said Southport. I got up to get off at Wigan Station and then there was an announcement, "Anyone travelling to Southport, please leave the train here at Wigan and go upstairs to the replacement bus outside the station". I felt sorry for the people having to travel the rest of their journey some 20 miles by bus at 21:15 hrs on a Sunday night.

Ten minutes later whilst now waiting at my bus stop for my bus home to Orrell, there were 2 replacement buses outside the Wigan North West Station (we have 2 stations opposite each other in Wigan. These buses were parked for some 15. Mins to take passengers from Wigan for their onward journey to Preston. The bus then departed, three minutes later 4 people who had been ejected from the Preston train at Wigan arrived asking where their bus was, to be told "sorry it has just left." Again, I felt so sorry for those people stranded in Wigan when they should have travelled to Preston some 25/28 miles away by train, with no other way of getting there other than an expensive taxi ride.

I feel Northern rail currently do not have enough drivers and this is their main problem as trains are being cancelled at the drop of a hat and sometimes bus replacements are in force which must be costing thousands of pounds. I often travel to Liverpool, Huddersfield to see my daughters, Wigan for shopping so I am seeing this happening on a regular basis.
Someone needs to establish exactly how short they are of train drivers because this is what is happening up north, trains cancelled and people stranded. This cannot go on, something really needs to be done and I think it’s time Officials come up north and travel on the northern line to experience it for themselves and do a survey or even look at our timetables say Southport to Manchester line, Kirkby to Manchester, this is where the main issues are.

I am planning to travel from Wigan to Huddersfield tomorrow to visit my daughter. Having looked at the trains I am attaching some pictures relating to bus replacements to show how it can take up to 2hr 45mins on a bus to complete just one portion of your journey and this happens at the drop of a hat and leaves people stranded, like I explained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Travel by</th>
<th>Leaving</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Arriving</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Additional info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19:31</td>
<td>Orrell (ORR)</td>
<td>Wigan Wallgate (WGW)</td>
<td>19:39</td>
<td>0h 08m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Northern service from Kirkby (Merseyside) to Wigan Wallgate show calling points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:05</td>
<td>Wigan Wallgate (WGW)</td>
<td>Manchester Victoria (MCV)</td>
<td>22:12</td>
<td>2h 07m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:32</td>
<td>Manchester Victoria (MCV)</td>
<td>Huddersfield (HUD)</td>
<td>22:59</td>
<td>0h 27m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TransPennine Express service from Manchester Airport to York Routes, availability and fares are subject to these provisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is also a bus replacement from Manchester back to Wigan another 2hr 7 min journey. So getting back tomorrow night, in my own is going to be a nightmare, yet again.

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<th>Arriving</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Additional info</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19:38</td>
<td>Huddersfield (HUD)</td>
<td>Manchester Victoria (MCV)</td>
<td>20:09</td>
<td>0h 31m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TransPennine Express service from Middlesbrough to Manchester Airport Routes, availability and fares are subject to these provisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:20</td>
<td>Manchester Victoria (MCV)</td>
<td>Wigan Wallgate (WGW)</td>
<td>22:27</td>
<td>2h 07m</td>
<td></td>
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This is Northern Rail’s explanation of the timetable changes until end July.
Amended Northern timetable until the end of July

Incident created: 13/04/2018 09:12
Last updated: 10/07/2018 14:46
Route affected: Various Northern routes
TOC(s) affected: Northern

Since Monday 4 June, 6% of daily train services, that’s 165 out of the normal 2,800 daily services, have been temporarily removed until the end of July.

This interim timetable will enable Northern to start to stabilise service levels over the next few weeks and, importantly, start to reduce the number of last-minute train cancellations.

In the short-term fewer trains will be running, but still more than before the May timetable change. A full timetable is expected to be restored by the end of July.

Alternative travel advice:
It has been arranged for Northern tickets to be accepted by other train companies until 29 July 2018. This means if your Northern train is delayed or cancelled, you can use your ticket to travel on the below train companies’ services:

- CrossCountry
- East Midlands Trains
- London North Eastern Railway
- Merseyrail
- TransPennine Express
- Virgin Trains

What areas are affected?
On a number of routes affected there will be alternative rail services available, as well as other modes of transport. Where available, rail replacement buses will also operate on affected routes with details provided locally for customers.

Lakes Line
Northern are currently operating a limited shuttle rail service on the Lakes Line. This comprises of 12 round trips per day between Oxenholme Lake District and Windermere, operating between 06:30 and 20:00, with rail replacement buses to cover gaps in service for crew breaks.

This includes express coaches in operation for commuters, stopping service for tourists and special buses for school children – ensuring you have been able to continue to travel along the Lakes Line and enjoy all the Lake District has to offer.

Blackpool
There will be a reduced service between Blackpool South and Preston and also between Preston and Cōne and a small number of off-peak services between Blackpool North and Manchester Airport will be removed. Other services between Blackpool North and Manchester Piccadilly will start / terminate at Manchester Oxford Road.

Lancashire
There will be reductions between Ormskirk and Preston and a small number between Blackburn and Southport via Manchester Victoria, whilst many services on the Lancaster to Morecambe line will be removed.

Manchester
A reduced service will operate on the Kirkby to Manchester Victoria line via Wigan, and between Manchester Victoria and Stalybridge.

Liverpool City Region
You will notice 2 bus replacements on this timetable for tomorrow Sat 14 July, each now taking 2hrs 49mins, it just gets worse. Hopefully I can travel from Wigan to Huddersfield tomorrow for my grandsons 17th birthday lunch with my family.

July 2018