



Department  
for Transport

# Cross Country rail franchise

There is an online version of this questionnaire that allows you save or print a copy of your response:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/government/consultations/cross-country-rail-franchise>

## Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to read the consultation document and to respond to the questions. Your views will contribute to the formulation of specification for the next Cross Country rail franchise.

### Confidentiality and data protection

We are not asking for any personal data as part of this consultation. If we receive any it will be securely deleted.

Our [privacy policy](#) is on GOV.UK.

## Responding

### 1. Are you responding:

on behalf of an organisation? (Go to question 2)

as an individual? (Go to question 3)

# Organisation details

## 2. Name of organisation

Birmingham Friends of the Earth

## Your journey

### 3. Do you mostly travel on the Cross Country network as:

a leisure passenger?

commuting to and from work?

a business passenger?


### 4. What is your most frequent journey (station to station) on the Cross Country network?

Centred in Birmingham, members use routes to Bristol, to Reading, to Nottingham, to Newport/Cardiff, to Manchester, to Leicester, and to Leeds and York

### 5. How regularly do you travel by Cross Country?

Every day

4 to 6 times a week

2 to 3 times a week

Once a week

Once a fortnight

Once a month

Less than once a month

Once or twice a year

Never

y

### 6. What type of ticket do you usually buy?

	Season ticket
	Full fare
	Advanced ticket
	First class ticket
y	Standard ticket
	Other:

### 7. How do you buy your ticket?

	Online (Cross Country website)
	Online (alternative operator)
y	At station
	On train

	Other:
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## Awareness

### 8. How did you hear about this consultation?

	Poster
	Internet
	Station e-board
	On train consultation
y	Other:

## Passenger survey

Information on these questions is included in the 'Cross Country passenger rail franchise' consultation document.

### 9. What are the particular services, routes and times of day where you think crowding on Cross Country services needs to be addressed most urgently?

Saturday morning Birmingham to Bristol. Friday evening Birmingham to Oxford

### 10. Rank the following in order of priority for improvement for your future Cross Country services. Rank 1 for most important to 6 for least important.

more additional summer only services	6
later times of last trains	2
more frequent weekend services	4
earlier Sunday morning services	3
earlier times of first trains	1
more frequent weekday services	5

Which routes and stations and why?

Birmingham to Cardiff weekday first direct train arrives after the start of the working day.

### 11. What changes would you like to see to the way Cross Country currently sells and provides tickets?

No view

### 12. What changes would you like to see to the Advanced Purchase on the day (APOD) system?

**13. What additional information would be useful to you when planning your journeys or making connections onto other services?**

No view

**14. How would you like the information (in question above) communicated to you?**

No view

**15. How do you believe Cross Country staff could be more effective in providing service and assistance that passengers need on a modern railway network?**

No view

**16. What comment do you have on improving the overall passenger experience before, during and after the journey?**

Isolated unmanned stations after dark, intimidating to lone travellers

**17. How could the way in which Cross Country deals with your complaints and provides compensation to you be improved?**

No view

**18. Rank your priorities for improvement to the carriage layout for long distance inter-city Cross Country trains? Rank 1 for most important to 7 for least important.**

More seats	2
More table seats as opposed to 'airline' seats	6

More comfortable room for short distance standing	7
Cycle storage	1
Seats that align with windows	5
Greater leg-room	3
Extra room for luggage	4

Where and when do you think these facilities are most required?

Lack of cycle facilities is a deterrent to travel. Growth in travel by rail could be even greater if the 'last mile' disincentive to disconnected rail were to be addressed. Providing for cycles is also in line with the industry's sustainable development principles.

**19. Rank your priorities for improvement to the carriage layout for local trains on Cross Country? Rank 1 for most important to 7 for least important.**

More seats	2
More table seats as opposed to 'airline' seats	6
More comfortable room for short distance standing	7
Cycle storage	1
Seats that align with windows	5
Greater leg-room	3
Extra room for luggage	4

**20. What other comments or suggestions do you have about the on-board experience?**

None

**21. Do you have any other views on how the future Cross Country franchise could be improved that have not been captured in the questions above?**

Yes. There need to be towns added to to the franchise to which access is by bus (eg towns such as Padstow that lost their rail connection). The franchisee would be responsible for through tickets and integration of times / locations.

## Qualifying question

22. The rest of this survey is mainly designed to be completed by rail industry stakeholder representatives, however you can complete this if you wish.

## Crowding issues and ideas to respond to

Use the consultation annex to help inform your response.

23. Which of the following potential measures do you think could overcome crowding caused by short distance commuters using long distance Cross Country trains, assuming that suitable alternative services are available?

Removing calls from towns closest the conurbation centre either completely or just at peak times.

Yes or No? No

Retaining calls at such stations but restricting them to pickup/set down only?

Yes or No? No

Removing the validity of multi-modal tickets on long distance trains?

Yes or No? No

Other:

Adding destinations and expanding the Network.

Provide specific instances where these may be applicable.

Birmingham to Guildford needs to be more frequent (Guildford is the interchange for Portsmouth trains).

Bath Spa provision is almost unnoticeable. Major tourist destination and a better interchange for onward journeys to other destinations. Bath Spa could be a part of a network expansion to include Swindon.

The existing offering to the North West is poor (currently extending only to Crewe whereas stations between Crewe and Preston are currently served by trains that may make one call then non stop to London). Cross Country network should be extended to Preston.

In support of rail's part in regeneration, the franchise agreement must be written so as to facilitate new destinations (Skelmersdale for instance).

Worcester Shrub Hill – this is the interchange station for Cheltenham to Hereford and to Kidderminster

Ipswich – difficult to access (changes of trains in London)

**24. If it were possible would you agree with transferring these local routes to the West Midlands franchise:**

	Yes	No
Birmingham to Nottingham		No
Birmingham to Leicester		No

Why?

There is no point in making the changes.

# To improve the service pattern and network to offer journeys that better meet your needs

Use the consultation annex to help inform your response.

**25. Would you like to see any other routes or stations transferred to or from the Cross Country franchise?**

Yes	
No	No

## Routes to transfer

**26. Which routes and stations and why?**

None

## Changes

The East Coast service north of York aspirations are listed in the consultation document.

**27. If the network was unable to cope with all the service enhancement aspirations north of Northallerton on the East Coast mainline, would a:**

curtailment of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other existing or new routes)?

diversion of one of the existing Cross Country services be acceptable (with the resources redeployed to enhance other existing or new routes)?

Yes	No
	No
	No

Why / why not?

The necessary enhancements need to be undertaken

**28. Do you think the department's minimum specification should preserve exactly the existing pattern of services and station calls rather than offer an opportunity to change?**

Y	Yes
	No

Comments:

Yes, the existing pattern of services and station calls should be a minimum, with capacity increased to reflect growth and future growth.

If the franchise holder can see a business case for additional services, there is the facility to purchase train paths and to operate additional service. The passenger wants certainty and consistency





## Bidder station stop flexibility

**32. Should bidders have some flexibility to make fewer calls at some stations, for example if that enabled them to accelerate services?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**33. On what routes could this be introduced?**

None

## Minimum specification

**34. Should the minimum specification have the number of trains from each station to Birmingham but give bidders the flexibility to decide where the trains go after Birmingham?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**35. Are there stations within the geography of the Cross Country network that should receive calls that they currently do not receive (include examples and supporting evidence)?**

Worcester Shrub Hill (interchange for other routes)

**36. Are there stations beyond the geography of the Cross Country network that should receive calls that they currently do not receive (include examples and supporting evidence)?**

Stations between Crewe and Preston

## To improve and simplify fares and ticketing

The current Cross Country fare structure is mentioned on page 26 and 27 of the consultation document.

**37. What changes would you like to see to the current Cross Country current fares structure?**

No view

## To improve access, information and making connections

**38. What more could be done to improve access and provide facilities for those with disabilities or additional needs?**

No view

## To improve the on-board experience

**39. Which initiatives would you suggest to try to reduce the disturbance caused by the 'churn' of passengers alighting and boarding at frequent station calls?**

No view

## Engagement improvement

Stakeholders are explained on page 30 of the consultation document.

**40. Are there any improvements to the level stakeholder engagement by Cross Country that you would like to see and how could stakeholder engagement be improved?**

No view

41. Does Cross Country provide a sufficient level of support to relevant Community Rail partnerships in your experience?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

## Community Rail partnerships engagement

42. Has their support improved in the last year to 18 months?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

43. Provide ideas on what more you feel the franchise could do to help the relevant Community Rail partnerships?

No view

## Final comments

44. Any other comments?

In Dft Policy paper **Connecting people: a strategic vision for rail** (Published 29 November 2017) in the Executive Summary, it is stated under 'Expanded network' that ' The surge in demand over the past 20 years means we need to invest in capacity. To rebalance the economy and create more homes we also need to forge new links between places, spurring development and economic growth.

Under ' A productive and innovative sector', We will embed the industry's sustainable development principles in future franchise specifications and expect ambitious proposals from bidders in response.

The Sustainable Development Principles, and these come from the RSSB document signed by Claire Perry, MP, are as follows:

- Customer-driven: Embed a culture where dialogue with customers puts them at the very heart of the railway, and where they are able to make optimal travel and logistics choices.
- Putting rail in reach of people: Position rail as an inclusive, affordable and accessible transport system through the provision of information and accessible facilities.
- Providing an end to end journey: Work together with all transport modes to provide an integrated, accessible transport system.
- Being an employer of choice: Respect, encourage and develop a diverse workforce, support its wellbeing and actively consider and address the challenges of the future labour market.

- Reducing our environmental impact: Operate and improve the business in a way that minimises the negative impacts and maximises the benefits of the railway to the environment.
- Carbon smart: Achieve long-term reductions in carbon emissions through improved energy efficiency, new power sources and modal shift.
- Having a positive social impact: Focus on local impacts and communities through better understanding and engagement.
- Supporting the economy: Boost the productivity and competitiveness of the UK, at a national and regional level, through efficient services and by facilitating agglomeration and catalysing economic regeneration.
- Optimising the railway: Maximise rail's capability, build on its strengths and improve efficiency to deliver a transport system that is resilient and offers good value for money.
- Being transparent: Promote a culture of open and accountable decision making and measure, monitor and report publicly on our progress toward sustainability.

The Cross Country franchise has to put the rhetoric into reality.

Some aspects that can be addressed from the Sustainable Development principles and that are not sought by this franchise consultation:

Efforts at through ticketing. This addresses the 'final mile' and adds other towns to the network

Use of cleaner fuel trains: at present all trains are Diesel Electric yet run for many miles under 25kV electric supply.

There is also a need to address resilience: the document mentions the effect of adverse weather on one length of sea wall. That problem can be solved by replacing the trains. There are other areas that are vulnerable to weather events: Birmingham to Nuneaton is regularly closed by flooding and needs either a major reconstruction of the vulnerable length of railway, or an alternative route.

## Return your completed questionnaire

Save this file and email it to [crosscountry@dft.gov.uk](mailto:crosscountry@dft.gov.uk)

Or post it to:

Cross Country Franchise Team.  
Great Minster House,  
33 Horseferry Road,  
London SW1P 4DR