

HS2 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
INTERCEPT STORIES

REVEALING REALITY

31 individual intercept interviews were conducted across train journeys in the UK and EU.

Passengers have been clustered into groups which reflect their frequency of travel.

Emotional states have been allocated to issues raised by passengers.





DAILY WORK PASSENGER

PAUL, IT **DAILY WORK PASSENGER**

Time: 18:01

Journey: Waterloo to Guilford

Train provider: South West Trains, Class 455

Purpose: Going home from work

Frequency: Everyday, Mon-Fri

"I've resigned to fact I have to stand up and I have pretty low expectations of service (e.g. quality of Wi-Fi)."

"I don't expect any "extras" such as food as it's a commuter train at the end of the day and the journey isn't that long."

REVEALING REALITY



"People are fairly relaxed at weekends and don't mind noisy kids. If kids were on this commuter train, people would be tutting."



Layout and Seating – “I don’t even try and sit down as it’s always busy. If I can get a seat I can use my iPad and do some work.”

Toilets – “I don’t really need to use the toilet because it’s not a long of a journey.”

Food and Drink – “I don’t buy food on train but I might buy a snack at the station. Sometimes there is a trolley service on this train but I don’t buy anything. There’s only so much you can get on a trolley anyway”

Technology – “I don’t tend to use the WI-FI because I assume it’s going to be rubbish. I have enough data on my phone anyway.”

Journey Reflections – “It would be great if there were more seats, but that’s unrealistic because the train is at full capacity, even with a 12 carriage train.”

CAMERON, ENGINEER DAILY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 07:54

Journey: Euston to Birkhamstead

Train provider: London Midland, 350/3 Desiro

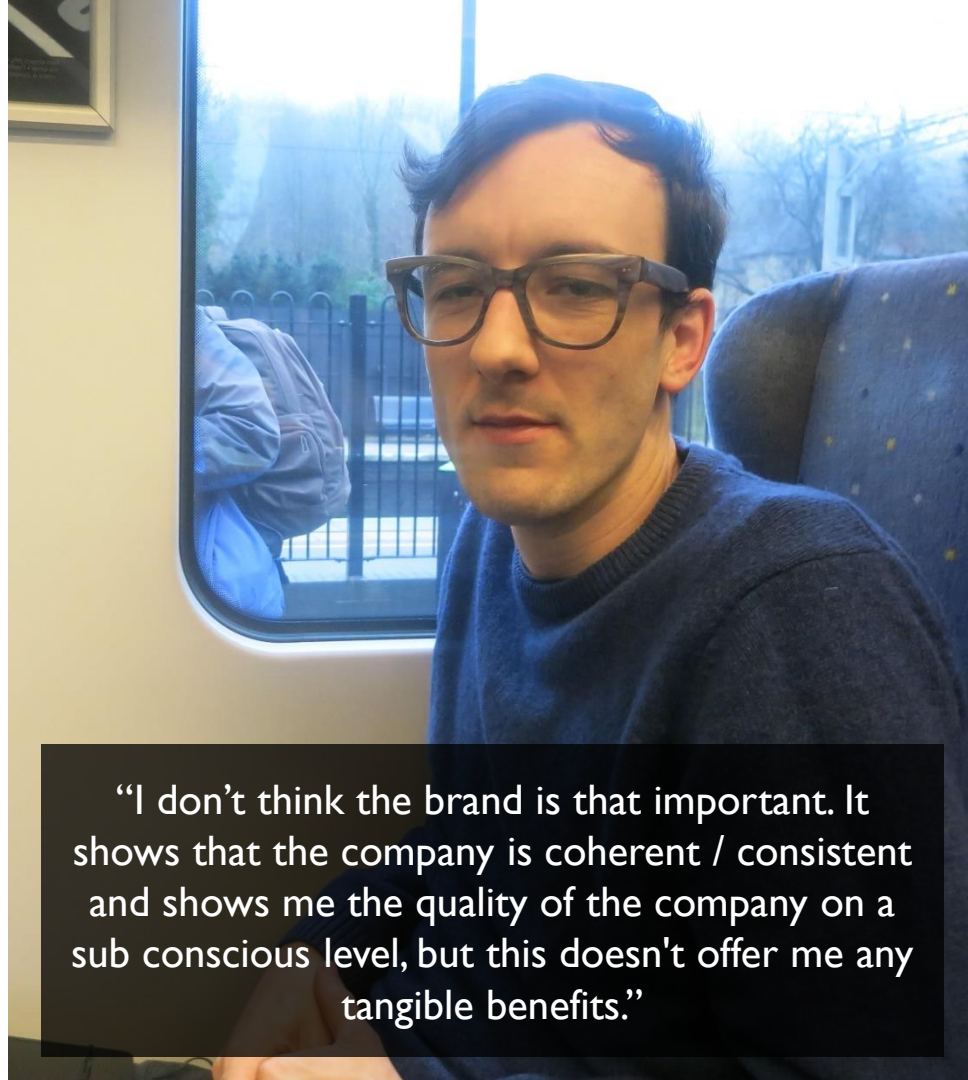
Purpose: Going to work

Frequency: Everyday, Mon-Fri

“Euston is a tatty station. Lots of congestion, choke points and large streams of people trying to cross each other when getting on/off train.”

“This also happens at the barriers. Better people flow is needed.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I don’t think the brand is that important. It shows that the company is coherent / consistent and shows me the quality of the company on a sub conscious level, but this doesn’t offer me any tangible benefits.”



Accessibility – “I buy my ticket at the cashier as you can’t buy a monthly season ticket at the machine (£360 a month). The service isn’t terrible, it’s generally reliable, just very expensive. I don’t know what you could offer me to make that amount of money worth it.”

“Puzzles me that the gap sizes are so big e.g. the trains stopping at Birkhamstead are London midland only. I don’t understand why the platform cant be altered to make it the same height as the train.”

Branding - “From a design point of view I’m sure the brand has an effect and I understand why companies would do it, but it doesn’t make the train run any faster.”

Toilets – “Usually aren’t too bad. I hang my bag up in the large disabled toilet and hang anything I need off that. There is no need to put things on the floor.”

Food and Drink – “If I’m running very late I’ll buy something quick at the station for breakfast. Food at stations isn’t great, it is what it is.”

REVEALING REALITY

PAUL, CONSULTANT
DAILY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 15:30

Journey: St Pancras to Ashford International

Train provider: Southeastern, Javelin High-speed

Purpose: Going home from work

Frequency: Everyday, Mon-Fri

“Train travel could be improved, but It’s perfectly adequate for what you’re doing. If you want Rolls Royce luxury, go and buy a Rolls Royce and go to work.”

REVEALING REALITY



“It’s perfectly adequate for what your doing. A purposeful journey which is functional.”



Toilets – “Once and never again.They are shocking / disgusting”

“Cleaning them more often or a on board cleaner would be good. Some of them are so small, disabled access must be difficult.”

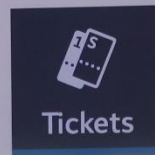
Food and Drink - “When I travel up north (Virgin Trains) I'd usually grab something from the trolley because it's a long journey.”

“Food on trains is expensive when compared to the station and the variety isn't as good. I'm not expecting a three course dinner, snacks are fine.”

Technology – “If I run out of battery on my phone that's fine, such is life.”

“WI-FI would be handy but Southeastern would probably charge you another £400 + for your season ticket.”

Plat 1B Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Hilton Keynes C11 Blotchley Leighton Buzzard Cheddington Tring Berkhamstead Hemel Hempstead Milton Junction & London Euston.	Plat 2A London Euston Calling at: Page 2 of 2 Milton Keynes C11 Blotchley Leighton Buzzard Cheddington Tring Berkhamstead Hemel Hempstead Milton Junction & London Euston.	Plat 2B Longbridge Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Five Ways University Selly Oak Bournville Kings Norton Northfield & Longbridge.	Plat 6 Preston Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Sandwell & Dudley Molverhampton Crewe Marrington Bk Quay Wigan North Western & Preston.	Plat 15 Four Oaks Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Duddeston Aston Gravelly Hill Erdington Chester Road Mylde Green Sutton Coldfield & Four Oaks.
London Midland	London Midland	London Midland	Virgin Trains	London Midland



Plat 10A Nottingham Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Taworth Burton-on-Trent Derby Long Eaton Basson & Nottingham.	Plat 10B Stansted Airport Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Colnshill Parkway Hunston Leicester Hilton Newbury Oakham Stanford Peterborough March Ely Cambridge Audley End & Stansted Airport.	Plat 10C Redditch Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Five Ways University Selly Oak Bournville Kings Norton Northfield Longbridge Barnet Green Alvechurch & Redditch.	Plat 10D Lichfield Calling at: Page 1 of 1 Smeethwick 61th Bdg Molverhampton Telford Central Millington Stourbridge Walspool & Newton (Pouys).
CrossCountry	CrossCountry	London Midland	Bus replace Arrive Trains Hales

Information

WEEKLY WORK PASSENGER

ENENI, WORKS IN RETAIL WEEKLY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 16:45

Journey: Canterbury to St Pancras

Train provider: Southeastern, Javelin Highspeed

Purpose: Going home from work

Frequency: 2x3 times a week

“I usually do some paper based and mobile work. I think it's easy to work, but the reception on trains is terrible.”

“It's usually quiet because I'm always travelling in the opposite direction to the rush hour.”

REVEALING REALITY



“Expecting a fast, clean service... not luxury.”



Accessibility – “Some stations are not very welcoming. The waiting areas are not very nice and it’s sometimes worse than standing outside. Train station environments need to be human friendly and inviting.”

Layout and Seating – “I have to sit facing (or side on) the direction of travel. Temperature is important. Sometimes the trains are colder inside than the weather outside.”

Toilets – “I never use them as I have to take all my stuff with me. I’d never leave my stuff or ask someone to look after it.”

Technology – “The reception on trains is rubbish. The internet and signal is bad and most don’t have Wi-Fi. If they do, it’s not very good.”

“I took three calls on the train and all three cut out (tunnel and above ground). Plugs are very important to me from a safety perspective so I don’t run out of battery.”

RICHARD, CAR DELIVERY DRIVER WEEKLY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 15:05

Journey: Kings cross to Peterborough

Train provider: Virgin, Intercity 225, MK4 carriages

Purpose: Going to Leeds after delivering a car

Frequency: 2x3 times a week

Layout and Seating – “I was sitting on the floor as I didn't have a seat reserved for this train. Usually if I can sit at a table I'll try and get my head down and sleep.”

Toilets – “Cleanliness and having enough toilet paper is most important to me. I really like the touchless toilet flushers.”

Food and Drink – “Sometimes I travel with colleagues so we will get a table, some beers and play cards.”

Technology – “I have my phone charger with me, but I am on the floor so there's nowhere for me to charge my device.” –

I am restricted.

REVEALING REALITY



“I'm not fussed by train providers – I get on whatever train is booked by work.”

JANET, PERSONAL ASSISTANT WEEKLY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 10:20

Journey: Milton Keynes to Euston

Train provider: Virgin Trains, Voyager (5 carriage)

Purpose: Going to work

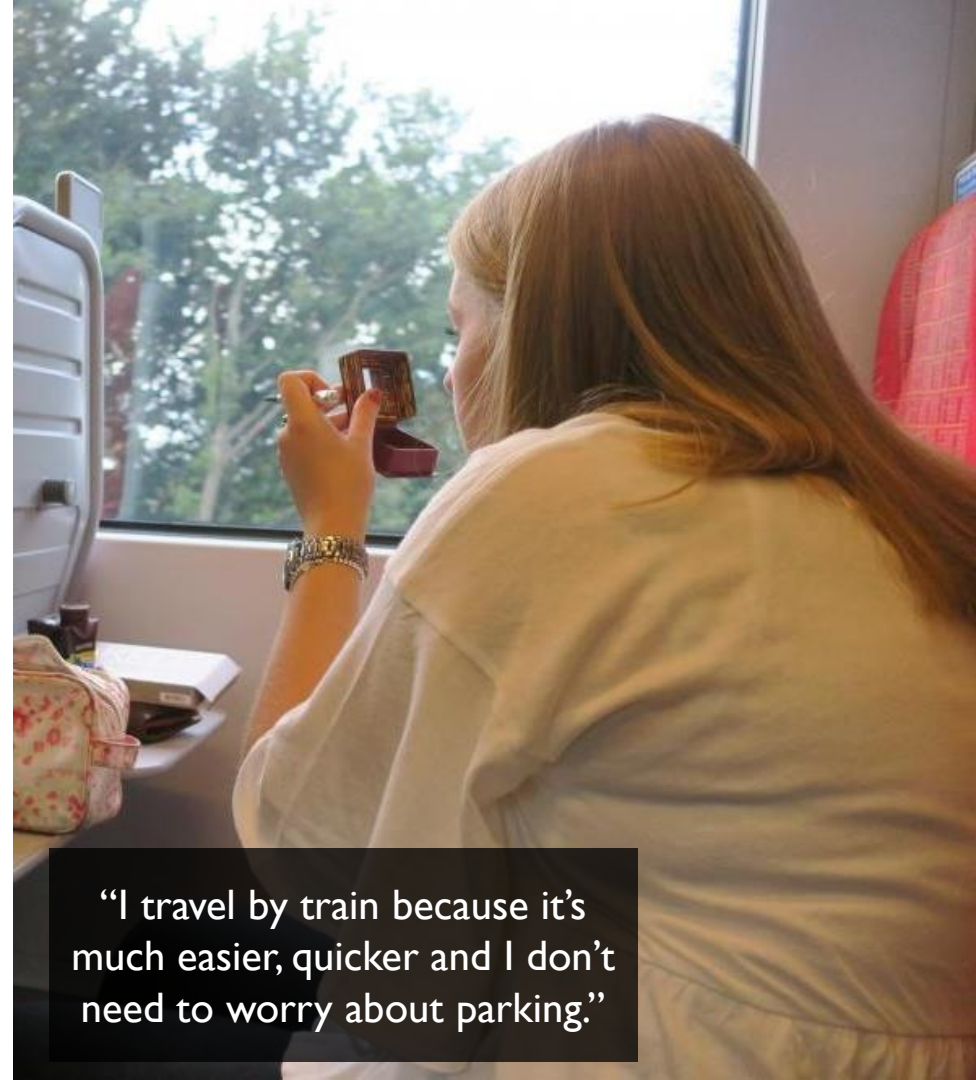
Frequency: 2x3 times a week

Layout and Seating – “The most important facilities on the train is a seat and the WI-FI , although I wish it was free.”

Providers – “Virgin is my favourite as it’s the quickest and the price is fair.”

“Speed and cost are the two things I prioritise when travelling by train. The consistency of the brand is important for me because it feels like the company care about their trains.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I travel by train because it’s much easier, quicker and I don’t need to worry about parking.”

**MONTHLY
WORK PASSENGER**

A yellow sign with the Metro logo at the top. Below the logo, the text reads "Make MORNINGS TALKING about". The word "MORNINGS" is in a larger, bold font, and "TALKING" is also in a large, bold font. The word "about" is in a smaller font. The sign is yellow with black text.

PHILIP, MANAGER
MONTHLY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 15:05

Journey: Kings cross to Peterborough

Train provider: Virgin, Intercity 225, MK4 carriages

Purpose: Going home from work

Frequency: 2x3 times a month

“Work is always paying and I find it too expensive to travel for leisure. I prefer driving as its cheaper and more comfortable.”

“I either read the newspaper on the train or I’m on the phone. I don’t work on the train because its too busy and there isn’t enough room for my laptop.”

REVEALING REALITY



“Biggest reason why I don’t travel by train for leisure is because it's too expensive.”



Accessibility – “Arrive at station about 30 mins before to check out train, platforms and visit shops. I always buy a newspaper at the shops.”

Layout and Seating – “I usually have enough space, but it gets uncomfortable when it's too crowded. I'd love some more legroom.”

Toilets – “They aren't too bad on the Virgin Trains. From experience, I know they're worst on commuter trains (always dirtier)”

Food and Drink – “I always buy a snack and a drink at the food bar. I wouldn't buy a full meal because I know the quality isn't very good on trains.”

Service Reflections – “Not really fussed about the service. I just use whichever train is easiest to get home. Everything is booked and paid for by my company.”

KJESRTI, FINANCIAL CONSULTANT MONTHLY WORK PASSENGER

Time: 10:33

Journey: Heathrow to Paddington

Train provider: Heathrow Express, Class 332

Purpose: Travels to Oslo twice a month for work.

Frequency: 2x3 times a month

"A train is comfortable when it's not too packed and when people are not standing everywhere."

"I would like the train to be open and spacious. I find natural and bright light better than yellowing artificial light."

REVEALING REALITY



"I prefer the Heathrow Express to the Thameslink and Southeastern services I use to get to Gatwick. The Express service is just so reliable, you don't even need to check the times, it's so frequent so it's less stressful."



Layout and Seating – “I like how open and modern the Express train is. It’s quiet and feels like a very smooth ride.”

Technology – “I like the screens in the Heathrow Express train. I use the Heathrow Express app but have had some trouble with it - seems a bit buggy.”

“I usually listen to podcasts and have them downloaded before my journey so I can continue listen to them.”

Service Reflections – “I really likes the Norwegian airport express ‘Flytojet’ as it runs all the time and is even more modern than the Heathrow Express.”

“With Flytojet I can register my bank card online and then all I need to do is swipe my bank card to get through the barrier. A receipt is sent straight to my email. This is useful for work and needing receipts.”

A person is walking on a moving walkway, likely at an airport. They are wearing dark pants and black shoes. Two black bags are on the walkway: a briefcase-style bag with a strap and buckle in the foreground, and a larger bag with a white logo in the background. The walkway has a metal grate surface and a yellow safety line. A white text box is overlaid in the center.

ONE OFF
WORK PASSENGER

JEAN, RUNS HER OWN BUSINESS ONE OFF WORK PASSENGER

Time: 07:54

Journey: Birkhamstead to Birmingham New Street

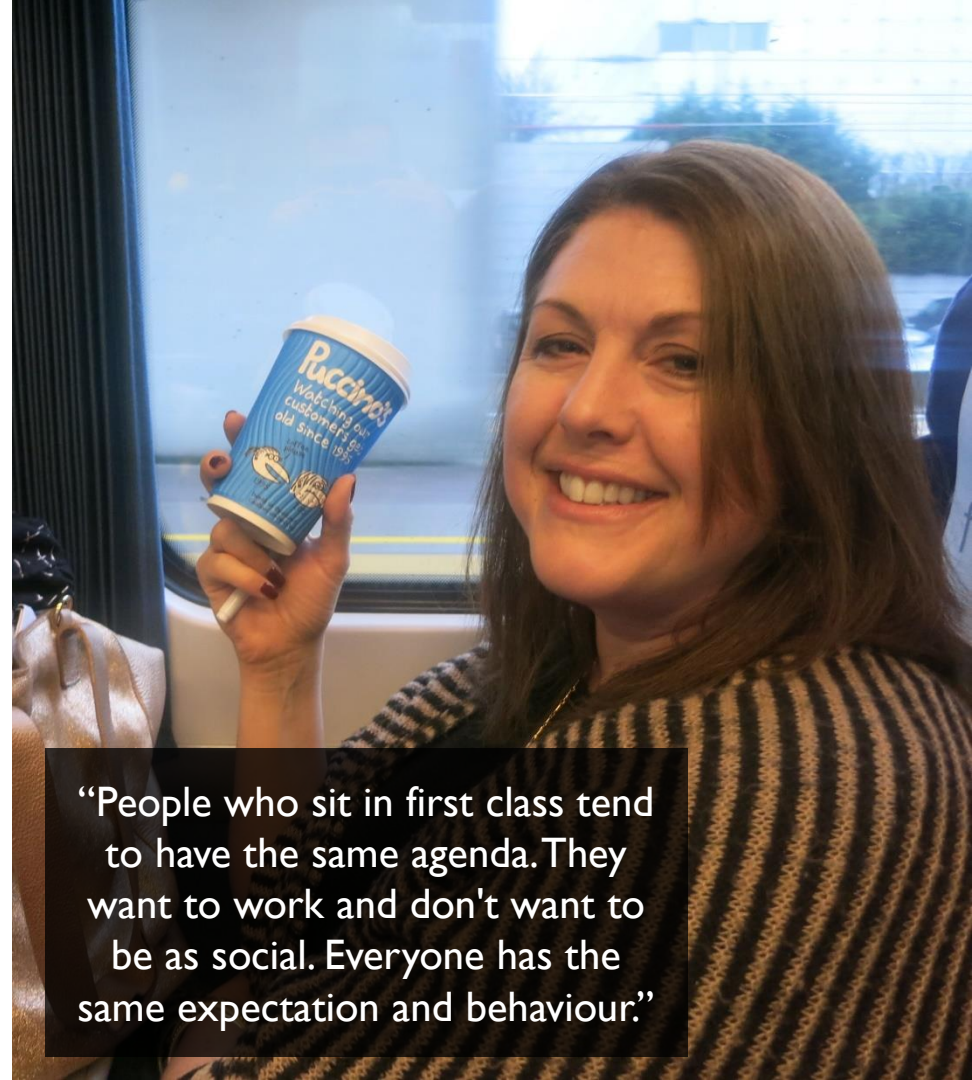
Train Provider: London Midland, 350/3 Desiro

Reason: Trade show at the NEC in Birmingham

“I chose to travel first class as I’ve earnt it. I work hard and the cost was only a little more than a standard ticket.”

“It allows me to work, even though space is still very limited but also have some 'me time' and take a break from the world.”

REVEALING REALITY



“People who sit in first class tend to have the same agenda. They want to work and don't want to be as social. Everyone has the same expectation and behaviour.”



Accessibility – “Train travel is very functional. It is very much A to B and I’m not sure if it was any better that it would change my life.”

Toilets – “Better sign posted toilets in stations would be great. I don’t know where they are? When they are open? If they are clean?”

Layout & Seating – “There is no personal space but I try and make my own little area by putting my bag on the chair. I think in first class you get more ‘personal space’ as there is this closed off (illusionary) safety about it. It gives me the sense that its slightly calmer because there is no immediate view to the main doors of the train.”

Technology – “I usually carry a charger with me but I don’t always know if I’ll have a plug next to me. I do like it when I book tickets and it gives me options for a plug, window seat etc. Personalising my journey to how I want it to be... to a certain extent.”

GEMMA, RESEARCH MANAGER ONE OFF WORK PASSENGER

Time: 14:20

Journey: Brighton to Victoria

Train provider: Southern, Class 387/2

Purpose: Work meeting, travelling back to London

Layout and Seating – “I like to have my case next to me as I don't like leaving it out of sight. Someone could just take it and walk off the train.”

“It would be good if trains were more like planes...TV's in the backs of seats.”

“I prefer to sit facing the direction I'm travelling, looking out of the window and seeing what you are going. It feels like progress and you are getting there quicker.”

Toilets – “I don't know how often they are cleaned? Aeroplane toilets are good, so why can trains be as good?”

REVEALING REALITY



“When you think of Virgin you think of a good high end brand. Luxury holidays (I am a member of Virgin health club. I think most of their trains are quite run down really. I just expected more from them.”

JOHN, FREELANCE JOURNALIST ONE OFF WORK PASSENGER

Time: 08:37

Journey: London Marylebone to Banbury

Train provider: Chiltern, Class 68, MK3 carriages

Purpose: Travelling home from press conference

“I realised it was much better than flying - you can sit across from your colleagues and talk.”

“Flying is a hassle from end to end. Security, check-in...the whole process of flying is tiring.”

REVEALING REALITY



“Had a ‘moment of realisation’ that the train would be much more convenient - this was when I was travelling by Eurostar to France.”



Accessibility – “With my poor hearing I find that I can’t converse on a plane because of the constant humming. The train is better because it’s not very noisy when I travel off-peak.”

Toilets – “I can’t remember the last time I used them. I don’t normally need to. Maybe I subconsciously avoid them.”

Service Reflections – “I sometimes travel with Virgin to Milton Keynes as the ride is better, faster and smoother. It feels like the Eurostar.”

Layout and Seating – “I like to sit in a 4-seater and put my iPad on the table. I really like it when I can extend the table by pulling out the bit from underneath. Then I can sit back in the seat rather than perching on the edge of it to use my iPad.”



MONTHLY

LEISURE PASSENGER

LORCAN, STUDENT MONTHLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 08:31

Journey: St Pancras International to Gare du Nord

Train provider: Eurostar (e320), Class 374

Purpose: Visiting girlfriend in London

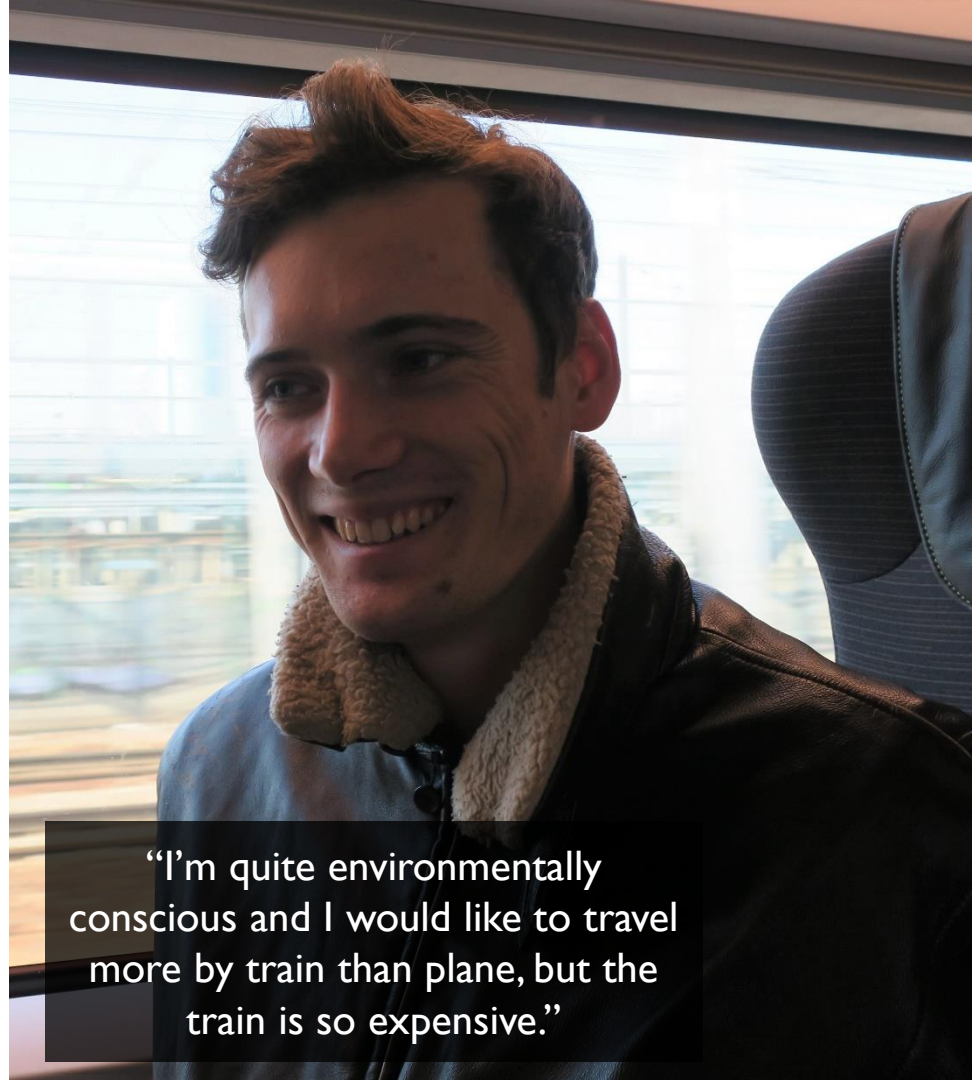
Frequency: Once a month

“I would love there to be a better loyalty programme for the Eurostar.”

“I think having customer service available is really important as travel can be so stressful and there’s so much that can go wrong.”

“Travelling with the Eurostar and using the app is so efficient and goes really smoothly for me.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I’m quite environmentally conscious and I would like to travel more by train than plane, but the train is so expensive.”



Layout and seating – “I like the 4 seater spaces because I have more space around me, so I don’t feel like a sardine.”

“I like having a table, as I always use my laptop. I always try and reserve seats that face in the direction of the sun as I like the natural light. I also prefer to get a seat near the front of the train as it means you have to walk less when you get off the train”

Toilets – “I think the toilet on the Eurostar is better than the toilet on the plane as it is more spacious.”

Food and drink – “I would really like there to be accessible drinking water on trains. I wouldn’t ever buy food or drink in the café because I’m cheap - but I really like that there is a café and a space for you to walk to.”

Tech and info – “I’ve taken the Eurostar at least eight times and the WI-FI barely works. One or two times it has but it’s been too slow to use.”

HELENA, STUDENT MONTHLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 13:00

Journey: Paddington to Bath Spa

Train provider: GWR, class 43, MK3 carriages

Purpose: Going back to University in Bath

Frequency: 1x2 every few months

"I try and do my uni work if I can but its dependant on if I get a table seat or not. Sometimes the plugs don't work and I can't get my charger to fit due to the positing of the plugs."

"The train isn't conducive to working and I think dedicated working areas would be good addition."

REVEALING REALITY



"Limited room for my laptop on trains. A woman tutted at me once because I had my laptop out on the same table as her."



Layout and seating – “Trains don’t have a lot of personal space and everything feels very enclosed. I wish they were more open and had more seats facing each other. I can’t believe some of the trains still have manual doors as well.”

Toilets – “Vestibule area toilets are much better as they are separate to the rest of the carriage, but I avoid the toilets as they are unclean and not hygienic.”

Food and drink – “If I have time I’ll get food from the station as the quality and choice is good. I know food on the train is overpriced, its poor quality and the choice is very limited. I’d liken it to plane food.”

Technology – “I usually book on the train providers website to avoid the booking fees. I find it very confusing with the different times and when I can travel.”

JASMINE, STUDENT MONTHLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 08:37

Journey: London to Birmingham Moor Street

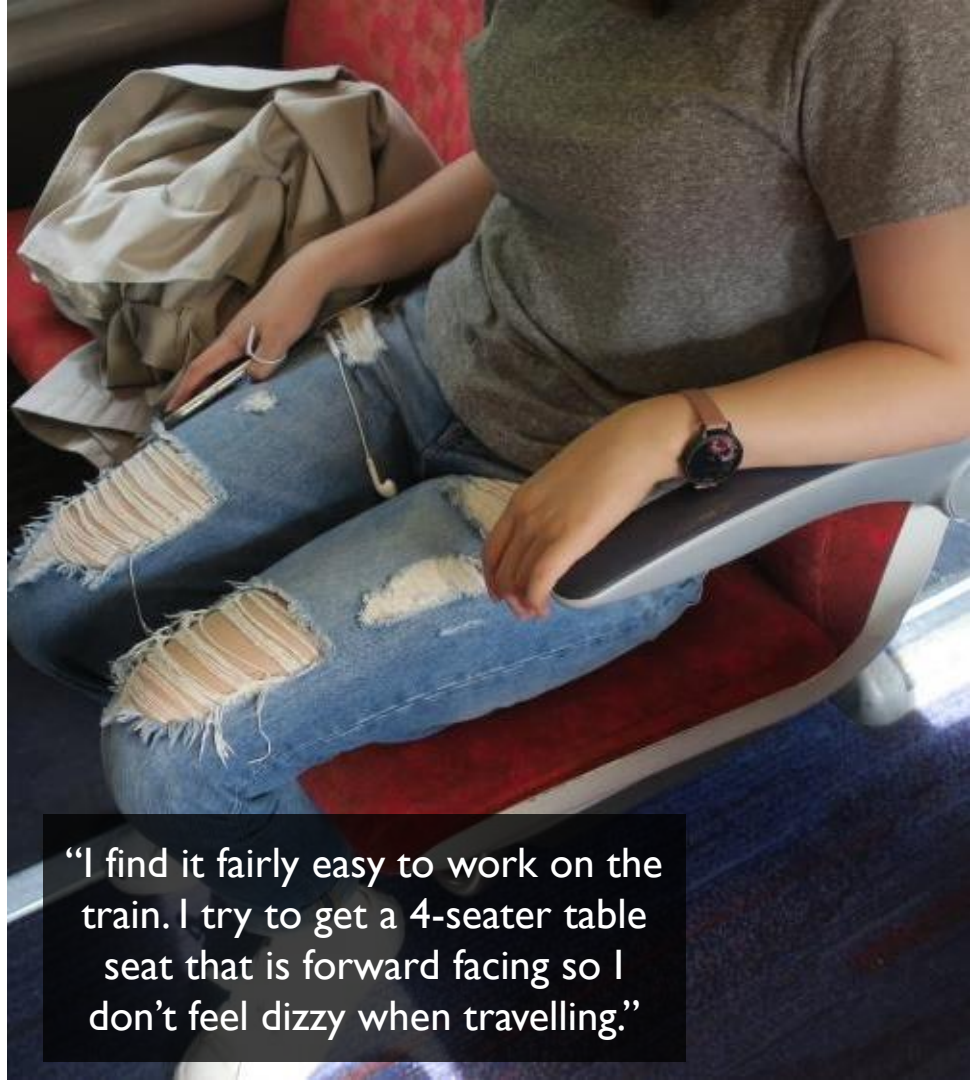
Train provider: Chiltern, Class 68, MK3 carriages

Purpose: Travelling to University

Frequency: 1x2 every few months

“Sometimes I take a Virgin Train from Euston to New Street. This is more expensive and busier, but quicker. I try to travel off-peak to avoid busy periods.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I find it fairly easy to work on the train. I try to get a 4-seater table seat that is forward facing so I don’t feel dizzy when travelling.”



Layout and Seating – “When I first got on Chiltern Trains, I didn’t know where the standard class was, all the carriages look the same. I had to walk all the way down the train to check I was in the right carriage.”

“Sometimes I have to stand on the Virgin Train in the evening when it’s busy.”

Food and Drink – “I always buy a coffee from the station to take on the train and bring food from home to eat.”

Service Reflections – “I choose Virgin for speed but Chiltern for the cheaper price and quieter journey.”

“I am actually more productive on a slower train because it’s less busy.”

MELANIE, SECRETARY MONTHLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 17:24

Journey: Oxford to Bicester Village

Train provider: Chiltern, Class 168/3 clubman

Purpose: Going home after meeting a friend

Frequency: Once every few months

“I don’t travel on a specific train. I just turn up at the station and check the boards to see if the train is on time. It's often late from Bicester.”

REVEALING REALITY



“My children are wary of the trains with automatic doors because they're worried they'll get stuck.”



Layout and Seating – “I would usually pick a 4-seater even when I’m by myself.”

“It’s nice to sit together with my children and it’s easier to play cards because we use the table.”

Toilets – “I think they are convenient. I use them with my children.”

“The toilets at Oxford station are terrible and I try not to use the ones at Marylebone because you have to pay. We try and go the toilet on the train before we get off.”

Technology – “I listen out for the announcements to make sure I’m on the right train.”



WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

DAVE, DOCTOR WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 17:13

Journey: Euston to Birmingham New Street

Train provider: Virgin, Class 390 Pendolino

Purpose: Visiting a conference

Frequency: Once a week

"I never reserve seats. Usually there is someone sitting in a reserved seat anyway and it's too awkward to say anything about it."

"I use Google to find platform information - I find it more straightforward and easier to navigate than anything else. I always struggle to find someone in uniform."

REVEALING REALITY



"I hate being early. I like being fast-paced and I hate waiting around. I like to be productive and waiting feels like a complete waste of time."

SARA, TRAINING TO BE A ARMY OFFICER WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 19:24

Journey: Guilford to Waterloo

Train provider: South West Trains, Class 455

Purpose: Travelling to see boyfriend

Frequency: Every weekend

"I like to hide myself away in a corner especially if I'm tired after the week. I can relax on the train."

"I like getting the best deals and pick my train time and route according to how expensive it is. Sometimes I will go to Paddington instead of Waterloo for example."

REVEALING REALITY



"Why are there no reward schemes for trains? Like air miles, or like at Tesco's or Boots?"



Behaviours – “Sometimes I study on the train. I'm quite focussed, I don't get distracted by getting up and making a cup of tea like I would at home - apart from when I'm interrupted for ticket check.”

Layout and Seating – “Sitting at a table seat can be awkward. If someone sits opposite me, it's really uncomfortable and awkward because our feet keep hitting and there's awkward eye contact.”

ELLA, FRENCH AND SPANISH STUDENT WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 17:09

Journey: Peterborough to Kings cross

Train provider: Virgin, Intercity 225, MK4 carriages

Purpose: Leeds to London to see family

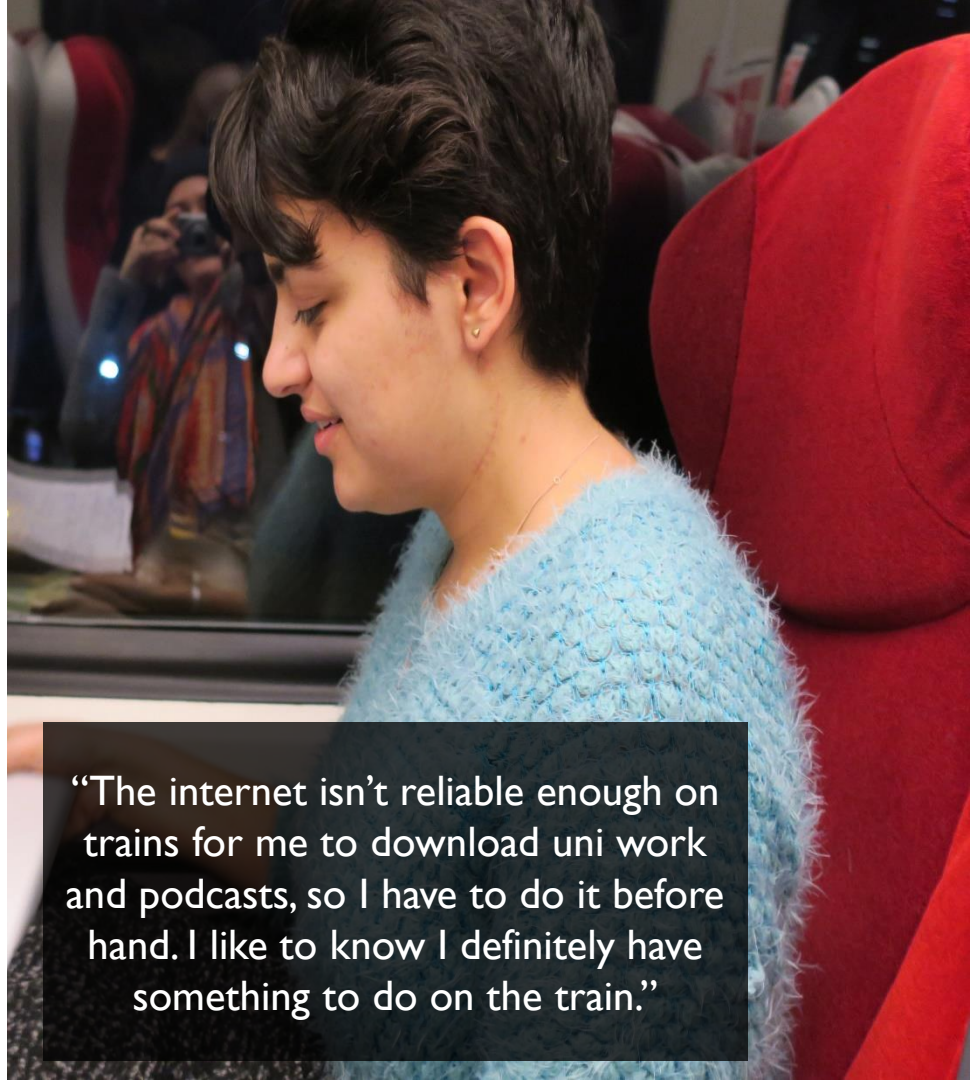
Frequency: Once a week

“Space is very limited and the carriages are really noisy. Using my iPad is okay, but without a table it’s impossible for me to use my A4 notepad.”

“I prefer trains to buses. Trains are more reliable and the bus route can be jammed with traffic.”

“On a train it feels like you're getting to where you need to go faster.”

REVEALING REALITY



“The internet isn’t reliable enough on trains for me to download uni work and podcasts, so I have to do it before hand. I like to know I definitely have something to do on the train.”



Accessibility – “I hate being late and in a rush. I make a conscious effort to get to the station early. I usually wait in the station, listening to a podcast/music but I’m conscious I will miss an announcement so I will take my earphones out.”

Layout and Seating – “It’s annoying when I don’t get a seat reservation. This should be automatic with every booking. Even if I get a seat, my ticket doesn’t tell me if I have a table/plug.”

“Plugs are essential especially if I’m meeting someone. I had to spend 20mins looking for the payphones once, because my phone battery ran out.”

Toilets – “When the train is busy I try extra hard to avoid toilets - I knows it's going to be gross and unclean.”

Food and Drink – “If I have to buy food, I’ll get it at the station as I know it’s cheaper. If do buy anything on the train it will be a tea. It’s a nice pick me up when I’m tired and tea isn’t something you can bring with you.”

CAMILLA, STUDENT WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 19:00

Journey: Coventry to London Euston

Train provider: Virgin, Class 390 Pendolino

Purpose: Visiting friends in London

Frequency: Every one to two weeks

Food and Drink – “I like Euston station because of the shops available, like the body shop.”

Layout and Seating – “I like having a window seat, a plug socket and a table. I’d prioritise them in that order as well.”

Accessibility – “Coventry is a small station so there's no getting lost. In London I like arriving 10 minutes before the train so I’m not waiting too much.”

REVEALING REALITY

“I prefer trains to buses as there are more amenities on trains compared to buses.”



ALICE, PR CONSULTANT WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 10:04

Journey: London Marylebone to Bicester Village

Train provider: Chiltern, Class 168/3 clubman

Purpose: Visiting her mum in Bicester

Frequency: Every one to two weeks

Layout and seating – “I liking sitting at a table because there's more space and I can use my laptop to do some work.”

Food and drink – “I would never buy food on the train. It isn't very nice and there isn't a big choice.”

Technology – “It would be nice to know how many stops there are and what the arrival times are for each stop.”

Service reflections – “I went to first class to Edinburgh because it wasn't much more expensive. It was a treat because you get free drinks and the seat is more like an armchair.”

REVEALING REALITY



“The quiet carriage isn't very quiet usually. A woman asked the guard to ask some other people to stop talking and the guard said no!”

CLAIRE, DOCTOR

WEEKLY LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 12:28

Journey: Cambridge to Kings Cross

Train provider: Great Northern, Class 387/1

Purpose: Visiting boyfriend in Cambridge

Frequency: Every two weeks

“I get travel sick sometimes so it’s nice just to stare out of the window at the horizon.”

“If I take a longer train, I’d bring my laptop, use the Wi-Fi and book a table seat by the window.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I cycle at both ends to get to my final destination. My bike is my favourite mode of transport because it's easy, free and fun to get some fresh air.”



Accessibility – “I now know I am restricted when I can take my bike on the train. Initially I had to look this up on the website/ask staff at station. I usually travel off peak anyway so it's not a problem”

Layout and Seating – “I usually put my bike in the aisle and create my own personal space in a 4 seater. It sits nicely between the chairs.”

“If the train is busy I'll leave my bike near the doors and sit as close as possible to it. It's annoying when there are multiple stops on the journey as the doors open on different sides at different platforms, which means I can't just leave my bike resting against one set of doors.”

Toilets – “I never go to the toilet when I have my bike with me as I don't want to leave it out of my sight. If I do use the toilets its reluctantly. They're not usually the nicest.”

Food and Drink – “When I have my bike, I can never pop into shops at the station, which is sometimes annoying. If I want to pop into M&S and buy something, I'd have to lock my bike up.”

A group of people, mostly men, are standing in a queue in what appears to be an airport terminal. They are wearing winter clothing like puffer jackets and carrying luggage, including suitcases and backpacks. The background shows a large, modern building with glass walls and brick arches. A sign above the entrance reads "Way out" with an arrow. The text "ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGERS" is overlaid in the center of the image.

ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGERS

TARA, WORKS AT A HEDGE FUND ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 08:31

Journey: St Pancras International to Gare du Nord

Train provider: Eurostar (e320), Class 374

Purpose: On holiday to Paris for the weekend

“The signage at St Pancras to get to the Eurostar was really clear and the service was really efficient. Travelling from Prague to Vienna was a total nightmare, no-one knew where they were going.”

“The seats are quite spacious but really uncomfortable. I also find the layout and the way that the seats on the other side of the aisle face you awkward. It feels like an invasion of privacy.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I didn’t expect staff presence on the train or the platform, but I really appreciated it – it was comforting.”



Accessibility – “The whole process of getting on was really efficient. I was in my seat in about 5 minutes.”

Carriage environment – “The temperature is good, usually it can be too hot. The light is nice although it’s too bright to sleep.”

Toilets – “I thought the toilets were fine. Standard travel toilets, not the cleanest or the dirtiest.”

Food and drink – “I don’t like eating on trains as I like to walk around after I’ve eaten but you can’t do that on a train.”

Behaviours – “I’m reading the guide about Paris now because the internet isn’t working. If the internet was working I would be checking my emails and scrolling on Instagram.”

Seating & layout – “They don’t have sockets which is really annoying!” (*n.b. they do have sockets but she wasn’t able to find them*)

RAV, STUDENT
ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 09:30

Journey: Paddington to Southall

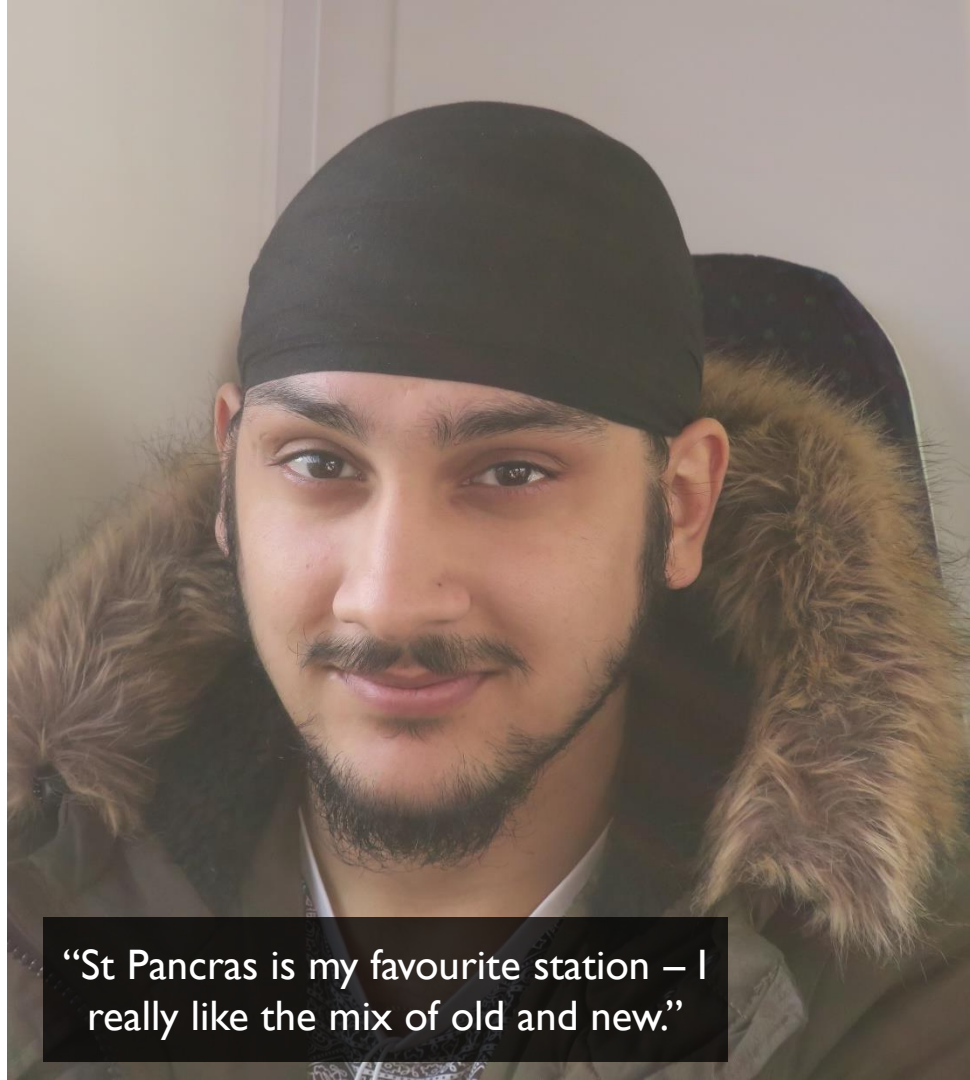
Train provider: Heathrow Connect, Class 360/2

Purpose: Travelling to the temple in Southall

“If I’m eating on a train it’s usually a meal deal I’ve bought at a supermarket. The food at stations is too expensive for what you’re getting.”

“I find trains so noisy and rattily. Sometimes the train is louder than my music.”

REVEALING REALITY



“St Pancras is my favourite station – I really like the mix of old and new.”



Accessibility – “I think the trains are too expensive for what you get.”

Info & tech – “I don’t check journey details when I’m leaving from London. When I’m leaving from Grave’s End I make sure to check Journey Planner as the trains are less regular.”

Toilets – “It depends on the time of day. Usually it’s alright but sometimes it’s dirty or just smells.”

Behaviours – “I always like to listen to music on the train but the internet connection is really bad so I have to make sure I pre-download my music.”

Seating & layout – “I like going for the table seat when I have my laptop and want to do work.”

“It’s really uncomfortable using the laptop on your lap. If I don’t have my laptop with me, the table seat is just useless. Leg-room is really important to me and I always prefer facing the direction of travel.”

KHADIJA, STRATEGY AND MARKETING ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 17:13

Journey: St Pancras International to Gare du Nord

Train provider: Eurostar (e320), Class 374

Purpose: Seeing friends and family for the weekend

“I love the fact that there are plugs by every seat. I did find them quite difficult to locate. The only reason I know about them is because a friend told me about it.”

“Everything with the Eurostar is so easy and you have everything you need – except WI-FI.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I prefer the feel of the old Eurostar. It was more comfortable, less plastic and less white than this new one.”



Accessibility – “I am currently 4 months pregnant and sometimes I do worry about how having a baby will impact my travel. I can imagine it’s going to get less comfortable and less easy.”

Layout & seating – “The Eurostar is better than British trains, it’s far more comfortable.”

Behaviours – “I like to read on the train, especially magazines and books. I would have liked to be on social media but the WI-FI doesn’t work.”

LAETITA, STUDENT **ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER**

Time: 17:13

Journey: St Pancras International to Gare du Nord

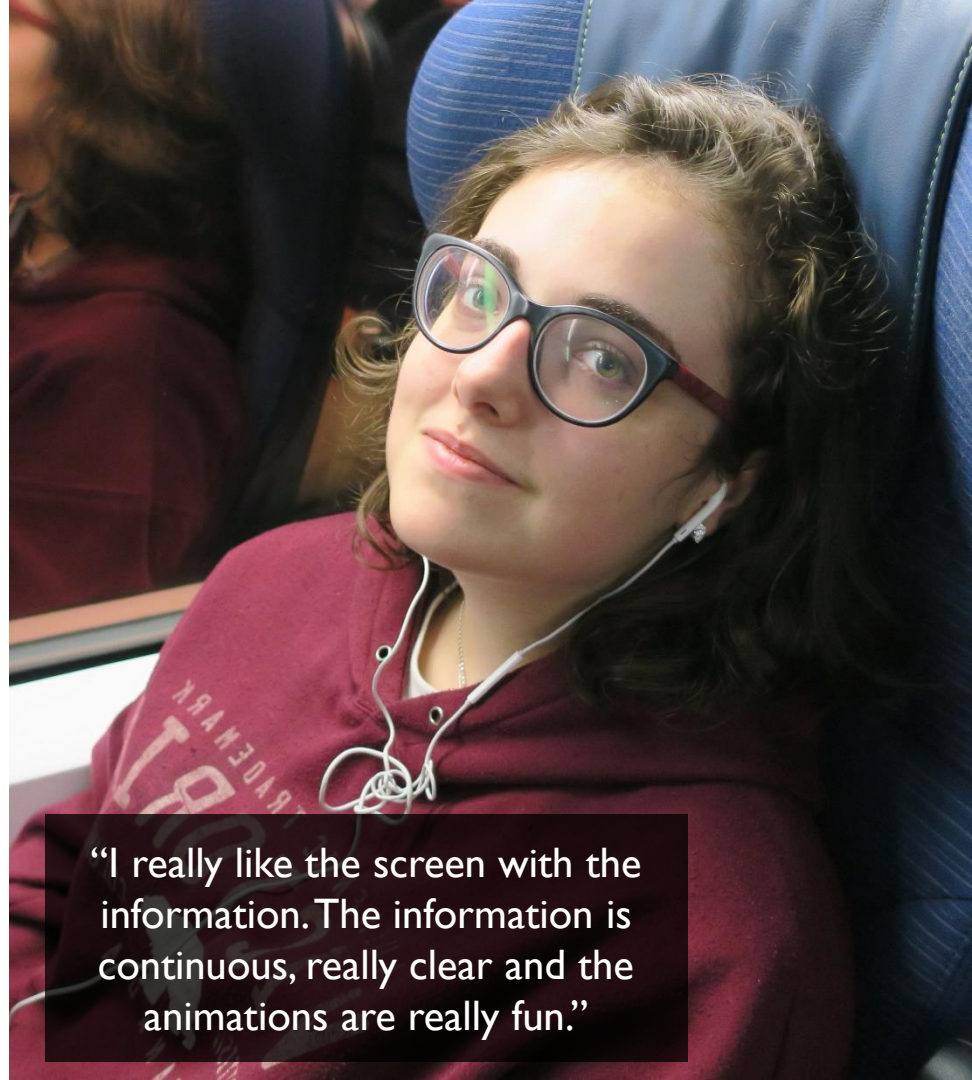
Train provider: Eurostar (e320), Class 374

Purpose: Back to London after weekend in Paris

“I’d love to be able to study on trains but it’s difficult as there’s very little space and the WI-FI often doesn’t work.”

“I never go to the toilet on the trains. They usually smell really bad, they’re really small and they don’t feel clean.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I really like the screen with the information. The information is continuous, really clear and the animations are really fun.”



Accessibility – “I find Gare Du Nord a lot more stressful than St Pancras. It’s less obvious and too busy to be able to see the signs.”

“I actually find boarding the train easier at Gare Du Nord as they pre-segregate you so you automatically arrive closer to your carriage. I prefer trains to the plane, but the train is so expensive.”

Carriage environment – “I find the environment really sober. I’m not sure whether that’s good or bad.”

Behaviours – “I really enjoy listening to music on the train but because there’s never any internet I have to make a playlist of music before I travel.”

Seating & layout – “I like to sleep on trains but the seats are hard and awkwardly positioned. I find the head-rest really uncomfortable which makes sleeping difficult. I like having my own light as it makes reading easier.”

OLLIE, TEACHER ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 15:30

Journey: Reading to Paddington

Train provider: GWR, class 43, MK3 carriages

Purpose: Visiting girlfriend in London

“As space is an issue it’s easier just to use my phone rather than getting my laptop out. I don’t rely on having somewhere to charge my device on the train but USB seats (like they have on some buses) would be great.”

REVEALING REALITY



“Metal seats at stations are terrible. I thought I was going to get piles... Far too cold. Waiting for a train should be comfy, not cold.”



Layout & Seating – “I know I’m not going to get a big space and might have to sit next to someone with an illness. Personal space isn’t a concept on trains.”

“A forward-facing seat does help when I’m on the train as I do get car sick when using my phone but sometimes it is just nice to zone out though from your seat and just look out of the window.”

“Trying to find a seat (pre-booked or not) isn’t very clear. Do I go left or right to find empty seats or my seat?”

Food and drink – “I was on a train that was stationary at the station and I couldn’t get a drink from the buffet car because the train wasn’t moving. Overall you have a much better choice of food and drink at the station and because I’m vegan, my choice on a train is even more limited.”

Technology – “Relaying information to passengers is important. Pings on your phone via Bluetooth could be great, especially for people with headphones in who usually miss announcements.”

REINA, WORKS IN RETAIL ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 12:30

Journey: Victoria to Brighton

Train provider: Southern, Class 387/2

Purpose: Seeing a friend in Brighton

Accessibility – “I do use luggage racks but if I can have my bag next to me I prefer it. If I go to the toilet and I'm on my own I'd probably leave my bag but take valuables with me.” - *I am on edge.*

Seating and Layout – “Full trains are horrible. Trains are usually really hot as well.”

Service Reflections – “I could have flown for cheaper, but the train is more convenient as I don't have to go to the airport.”

REVEALING REALITY



“I chose the train as it was quicker than flying all the way from Durham to Heathrow and then a coach to Brighton.”

SAMANTHA & JENNY,
STUDENT & TEACHER
ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGERS

Time: 10:44

Journey: Kings Cross to Cambridge

Train provider: Great Northern, Class 387/1

Purpose: Going to a hen party

“It’s nice when you have a 4-person seat with a table because it’s easier to talk and you have more space to spread out.”

“I like working on the train because there are fewer distractions. It’s difficult if you don’t sit at table as space is very limited for laptops and the lack of plug sockets is frustrating.”

REVEALING REALITY

“We like trains because you can walk around. We don’t drive and we are doing our bit for the environment by using the train.”





Layout and Seating – “It’s nice to curl up in a 2 seater if you are on your own.”

Toilets – “Its good to have toilets on trains. Quite often they’re cleaner then you think they’re going to be but I hate the toilets with automatic doors, will it lock? Will it unlock? It’s a double worry!”

“With the slow closing doors I think it makes the carriage smell more because the door stays open for longer.”

“I used to have to inject insulin so I’d always go to the toilet for some privacy. I felt very uncomfortable leaving my bags on their own though so I’d make sure I always went between stops so no-one could steal my belongings.”

Food and Drink – “Because I have special dietary requirements I would always bring my own food. This something the train just doesn’t accommodate at the moment.”

Technology – “Would love free Wi-Fi. I know Chiltern Trains has this so why can’t every train provider have it?”

LISA & ELLIE, MOTHER AND DAUGHTER ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGERS

Time: 12:23

Journey: Romford, Euston to Birmingham New Street

Train provider: Virgin trains, Class 390 Pendolino

Purpose: Birmingham to go prom dress shopping

Layout and Seating – “We had reserved seating but when we got to train there were people sitting in our seats. We felt too awkward to say anything about it and instead carried on walking and found the 4 seater.”

Toilets – “We haven’t used the train toilets yet. Expect them to be like aeroplane toilets.”

REVEALING REALITY



“We found the station very busy - when trying to get to the platform we almost lost each other which was pretty scary. There are too many people crisscrossing and people going in the opposite direction.”



MARGRET, DEBBIE & KAY, FRIENDS ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGERS

Time: 13:23

Journey: Coventry to Birmingham New Street

Train provider: Virgin, Class 390 Pendolino

Purpose: Birthday drinks in Birmingham

Food and Drink – “A big benefit of trains is being able to drink. We didn't have enough time to prepare today but we would usually bring vodka-pop bottles. Its too expensive to buy on the train so we come prepared.”

Technology – “We don't use tech much. Instead we rely on the “leader” to guide us through the station.”

Service Reflections – “We would like to be able to buy tickets on train. I'm usually in a rush and I'm not very organised.”

REVEALING REALITY



“Virgin trains are clean and reliable, much better than the London Midland trains.”

JACOB, GRAPHIC DESIGNER
ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGER

Time: 17:24

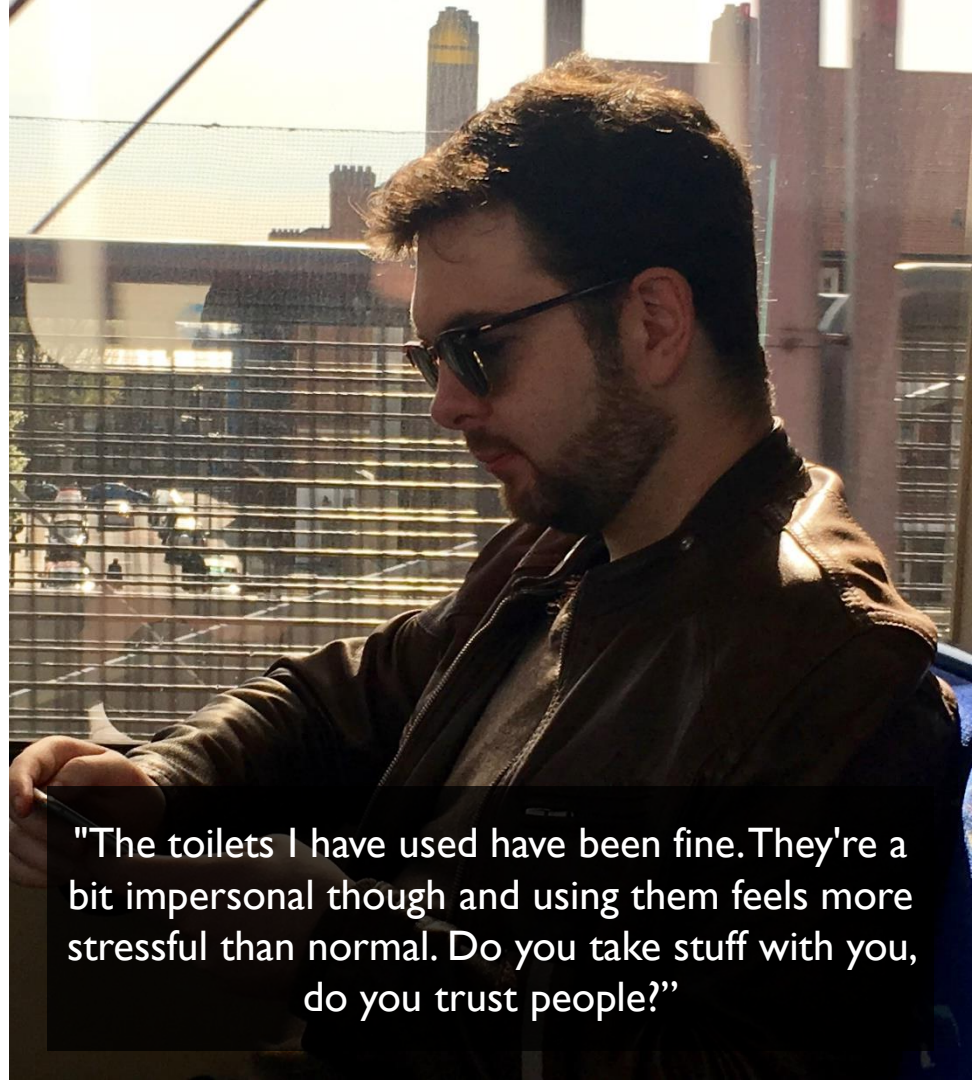
Journey: Oxford to London Marylebone

Train provider: Chiltern, Class 168/3 clubman

Purpose: Going home after meeting a friend

"I like it when you don't have to change trains, it's less hassle. You don't have to stop what you're doing, pack up your stuff, get off the train, find a new seat, unpack and relax again."

REVEALING REALITY



"The toilets I have used have been fine. They're a bit impersonal though and using them feels more stressful than normal. Do you take stuff with you, do you trust people?"



“When I read my book I find it hard because of the background noise.”

“I wear headphones and listen to calming music to block out the noise. I try and sit in the quiet carriage but its never that ‘quiet.’”

Layout and Seating – “I prefer the two-seaters. It's a bit more personal and I don't have to worry about bashing feet with other people.”

“Other people prefer the four seaters so there's always a lot of switching and changing if I sit in one of those.”

BEN, ROBIN, JAMES, STUDENTS **ONE OFF LEISURE PASSENGERS**

Time: 10:04

Journey: Banbury to London Marylebone

Train provider: Chiltern, Class 68, MK3 carriages

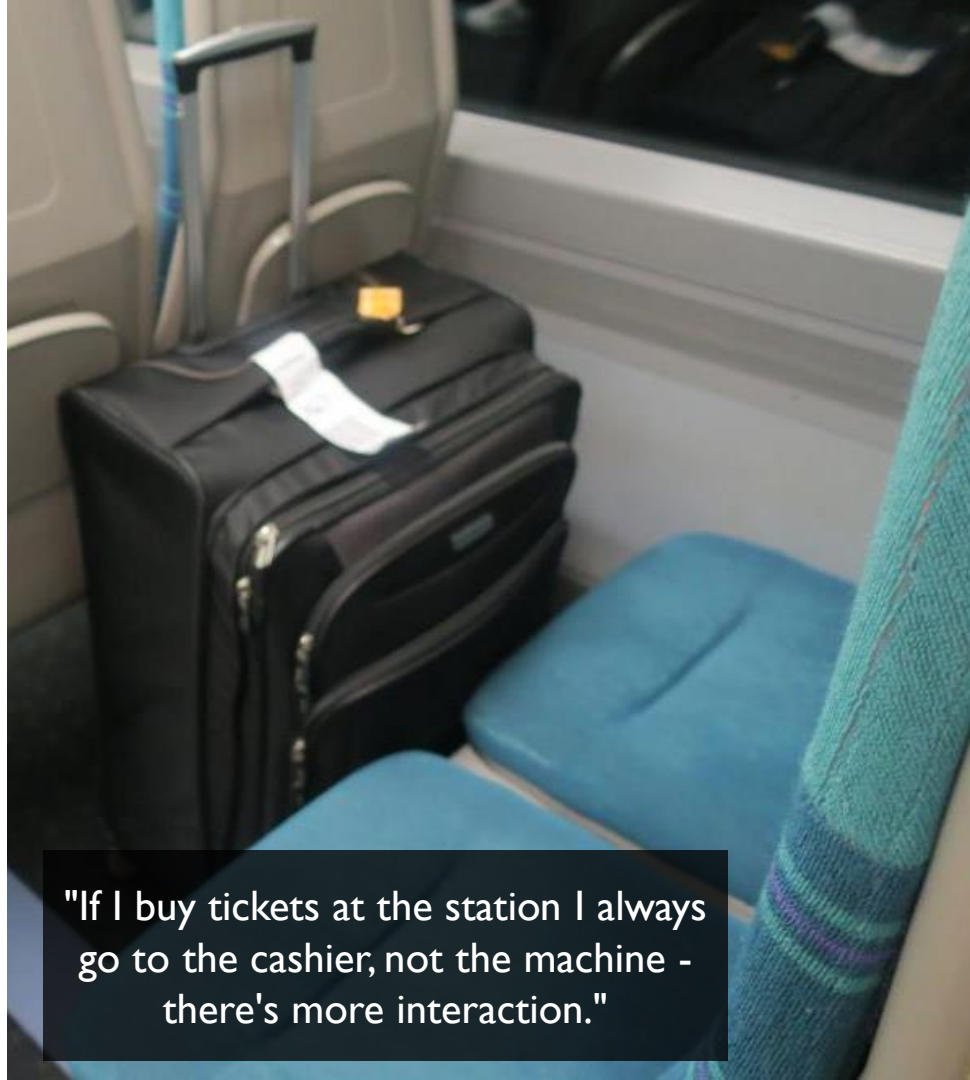
Purpose: Eurostar for language exchange trip

Accessibility – “We had large bags with us. The guard told us to leave them at the end of the carriages in the luggage rack. We kept some near us in-between the seats/on the floor for safety.”

Toilets – “I try and avoid them because they're notoriously unhygienic.”

Food and Drink – “I use the vending machines at the station instead of the cafes. I don't get there too long before the train leaves. I don't want to be caught out and miss my train.”

REVEALING REALITY



"If I buy tickets at the station I always go to the cashier, not the machine - there's more interaction."