



Our Complaints Handling Procedure

How to make a complaint and
what you can expect from us

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About this document

Inside, you'll find everything you need to know about how to make a complaint if you're unhappy with any aspect of our service. You'll find out what to expect when you get in touch with us, and what we do with the information you give us.

At Great Western Railway we define a complaint as...

'Any expression of dissatisfaction by a customer, or potential customer about service delivery or company or industry policy'

Other versions of this document

If you'd like this document in Welsh, or in an accessible format like Braille, Large Print, audio or easy read, you can go to **GWR.com**.

Or ask our Customer Support team – here's how to get in touch with them.

Call: 03457 000 125*

Email: GWR.Feedback@GWR.com

Write to:

Freepost GWR CUSTOMER SUPPORT

*Calls to 0345 numbers cost no more than calls to geographic numbers (01 or 02) and are included in inclusive minutes and discount schemes in the same way. Calls from landlines are typically charged up to 9p per minute; calls from mobiles typically cost between 3p and 55p per minute. Calls from landlines and mobiles are included in free call packages.

More information

For more about our commitment to you, read this document alongside our Passenger's Charter and the National Rail Conditions of Travel. You'll find them both at **GWR.com**.

Giving you the best service we can

We want every experience you have with us to be an easy one. So we work hard to give you a great service every time. But we know sometimes things go wrong. If they do, we want to hear about it so we can make it right, and stop it happening again.

If you do want to complain, we make it as easy as possible for you. But we know you'd probably prefer not to have to contact us at all. So we do whatever we can to make sure you don't have any reason to be unhappy. Here are just some of the things we do to make that happen:

- we work hard to understand the reasons why customers contact us – we try to address those reasons so you don't have to get in touch
- we make sure you can find the information you want quickly and easily
- we give our people the information, tools and training they need to answer your questions and resolve any problem on the spot
- if you do have to get in touch, we aim to put things right for you first time

-
- we're always looking for ways to improve our service, and working with our people and processes to make them a reality

In the meantime, we want to hear from you. If you tell us what went wrong, we can make sure it doesn't happen again.

Handling complaints fairly and efficiently

Our complaint handling process not only makes it easy for you to tell us you're unhappy, but helps us to put things right for you as quickly and fairly as we can.

Here's how:

- it's easy to get hold of a copy of our complaints handling process – at **www.GWR.com** or at any of our stations – and to make a complaint (there's more about this on page 10)
- we write everything clearly and in plain English so there's no room for confusion
- if English isn't your first language, we'll reply clearly and appropriately for you
- we investigate every complaint fully and fairly
- we keep your details confidential (there's more about this on page 18)
- we address every point you raise with us so you get a full reply
- we do everything we can to put things right for you first time

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- we monitor and audit our responses to make sure they're of a high standard
 - our managers get regular updates about the complaints so we can make changes where we need to
 - we review our complaints handling process every year to make sure it's effective

When a third party's involved

If your complaint involves another rail company or Network Rail, we'll send your complaint to them and ask them to get in touch. We'll always let you know when we've done that.

If your complaint involves a journey that features more than one rail company, we will liaise with the other companies involved to ensure you receive a co-ordinated response.

We sometimes work with third parties who can help us deliver one aspect of our service safely. If your complaint involves one of those parties, you won't need to contact them directly. We will always deal with your complaint as if we provided the service for you.

How to make a complaint

If you're unhappy with any aspect of our service, there are several ways you can tell us.

Tell our staff at the station or on the train straightaway

We train our staff to handle complaints fairly and efficiently, and to solve any problems there and then if they can and we provide a number of tools to enable this to happen.

If they can't, their manager or supervisor can help instead. That way, we can resolve everything for you as quickly as possible.

If you want your complaint to be formally recorded, or it involves a member of GWR staff and will require investigation into what happened, we will either provide one of our 'tell us your views' forms or pass on your complaint to our Customer Support team directly.

Get in touch with our Customer Support team

If you don't tell our staff on the spot, you can get in touch with our Customer Support team, between 6am and 11pm every day except Christmas Day. They'll be happy to help with your complaint.

Here's how to contact them.

Call: 03457 000 125

Email: GWR.Feedback@GWR.com

Write to: Freepost GWR CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Web: **GWR.com/contact**

In addition, all GWR stations and trains carry copies of our 'Tell Us Your Views' form which, once completed, can be sent to our Customer Support team via our freepost address. Just ask a member of GWR staff and they'll be happy to give you a copy.

Our Customer Support team's contact details can also be found on all our major publications, prominently displayed at our stations, via our Facebook page, our Twitter feed, and the GWR website

Get in touch with our Social Media team

You can also get in touch with our Social Media team regarding your complaint. They'll be happy to help and will either pass your complaint onto our Customer Support team on your behalf or wherever possible offer an immediate solution. Here's how to contact them.

Twitter: [@GWRHelp](https://twitter.com/GWRHelp)

Facebook: facebook.com/GWR

Please note that we respect the privacy of our employees so won't discuss complaints

about GWR staff on Facebook or Twitter. Any post that identifies a member of staff will be removed and the complaint passed to our Customer Support team to investigate and respond.

Meet our managers

We also hold regular sessions where you can talk to our senior managers and directors about our service if you're unhappy, or just want to find out more about our service. You can find out when the next sessions are at **GWR.com**.

What to include with your complaint

The more information you give us about your complaint, the sooner we can get back to you with a full reply. For example, please include things like:

- the time and date of your journeys
- the stations you travelled to and from
- the names of any staff involved
- copies of your tickets and any other documents that might help

Helping you make a complaint

You can ask a friend, family member, guardian, support worker or carer to make a complaint on your behalf. We'll need your permission for us to deal with another

person before we discuss the complaint. This does not apply if you are the parent or guardian of a child aged 16 or under.

Penalty fares

If your complaint regards the issuing of a Penalty Fare and you want to make an appeal you must do so within 21 days of receiving the notice. Appeals can be made in writing to...:

Appeals Service
PO Box 267
Petersfield
GU32 9FH

Or by visiting:

www.appealservice.co.uk

Claiming for losses, personal injury or property damage

If you need to claim for losses, property damage or personal injury, please write to, or email, our Customer Support team. They will forward your details to our claim handlers straightaway for you.

What you can expect from us

We work hard to handle complaints effectively. And we do everything we can to put things right for you. Here's what you can expect from us.

We'll get back to you quickly

When you contact our Customer Support team we'll always acknowledge receipt of your complaint.

We aim to get back to you within 5 working days if you make a complaint. If we need to check any specifics before we reply, we aim to get back to you within 20 working days. We always let you know if we need to do this, and keep you up to date.

If the number of complaints we get goes up unexpectedly, or if our response is delayed for any other reason we may not be able to get back to you within 5 days. If this happens, we'll let you know and will keep you updated.

We'll also update our website with the average time it's taking us to reply, and tell organisations like Transport Focus, London TravelWatch, the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) and the Department for Transport (DfT) as well.

We'll investigate your complaint carefully

We will fully investigate every complaint appropriately. This could mean:

- confirming the details of what happened
- collecting evidence
- interviewing any staff involved
- finding out what should have been done differently
- deciding on the appropriate response for you

Staff Complaints

Complaints made about GWR staff members will be recorded onto our CRM and forwarded to the relevant line manager so a full investigation can take place. Due to staff confidentiality we will be unable to share the details of any disciplinary procedures that may, or may not have taken place as a result of the complaint made.

We'll pay compensation when it's due

We'll pay compensation when it's due - if your train is delayed, or cancelled, and you are delayed by 15 minutes, or more, you may be able to claim Delay Repay compensation. You can find out more in our Passenger's Charter, or by visiting **[GWR.com/compensation](https://www.gwr.com/compensation)**.

If you complain about a delayed or cancelled train but haven't specifically requested compensation, we still will process a claim on your behalf and provide you with any compensation that may be due.

We look at each complaint individually.
If we think you've had a particularly bad experience, that isn't covered by the Passenger's Charter, we may give you a gesture of goodwill to make up for it.

If we feel that a customer's correspondence is becoming inappropriate in any way, we may stop responding. We will always get advice from Transport Focus or London TravelWatch before we do this, and it will be a last resort.

Taking your complaint further
If you're unhappy with our first reply, we'll look at your complaint again for you. We'll also make sure a manager reviews both your complaint and our initial response to make sure any mistakes are spotted.

Railway Ombudsman
Please give us the opportunity to try to resolve your complaint. If you're unhappy with the response you receive, you have the right to appeal to the Rail Ombudsman. The Rail Ombudsman is

there to help resolve on going disputes between us and passengers. It's free to use their services and they are independent of the rail industry. They don't take sides, but just look at the evidence available. They will help us both to try to reach an agreement, but if this doesn't happen, they will make a decision based on the evidence they've received. If you agree with their decision, then we have to act on what they say.

You can appeal to the Rail Ombudsman if:

- you're unhappy with our final response to your complaint which will be contained in a letter or email (sometimes called a 'deadlock letter');
- or
- we haven't resolved your complaint within 40 working days of receiving it;
- and
- no more than 12 months have passed since we sent you our final response.

There are some complaints that the Rail Ombudsman won't be able to look into, for example if it's about the way one of our services has been designed or industry policy. If that's the case, then they'll contact you to let you know. If possible, they will transfer your complaint to another organisation that may be able to help you further, such as Transport Focus and London TravelWatch – the independent consumer watchdogs for the rail industry. They will independently

review your complaint and where appropriate, follow things up on your behalf.

Rail Ombudsman contact details:

Web: www.railombudsman.org

Email: info@railombudsman.org

Twitter: @RailOmbudsman

Post: FREEPOST - RAIL OMBUDSMAN

Your privacy and GDPR

Keeping your details secure is a top priority for us. So, we follow our Privacy Policy and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) very closely.

Here's what you can expect from us when it comes to keeping your details secure:

- we won't share confidential information with third parties without your permission in writing – unless we have to meet our responsibilities to insurers, other train companies, Transport Focus, London TravelWatch, and any statutory bodies like the DfT, ORR or the Rail Delivery Group (RDG)
- the ORR and RDG might use your information for research purposes – for example, they may contact you to find out more about why you complained – but you can opt out of this if you want to
- when you contact us, we store your personal details on our dedicated and

secure systems

- we're committed to the GDPR and to protecting any personal data we hold on our systems
- we train all of our staff in how to follow the GDPR, and we review our processes regularly to make sure they're in line with the act
- all correspondence sent to our Customer Support team is stored electronically on our Customer Relationship Management system (CRM). Any paper mail is scanned onto the CRM and the original held in storage for 6 months before being securely destroyed

Further information



GWR.Feedback@GWR.com



GWR.com/contact



Follow us: **[@GWRHelp](https://twitter.com/GWRHelp)**



Like us: **facebook.com/GWRUK**



03457 000 125* (open 0600–2300 daily)



Earn Nectar points
Buy your train tickets online at **GWR.com**



Don't miss out on our latest offers, news and special deals. Register at **GWR.com/signup**

*Standard network charges apply. Calls from mobile phones may be higher.