

Re: Penistone Line Timetable from HPSRUA

8 December 2025

Dear Marie

Firstly, thank you for your ongoing support for the Penistone Line. The progress made towards the upgrade, with the work on the business case is a good step - we had a very productive meeting with the consultants recently.

However, the purpose of this email is to make you aware (if you weren't already) of a service reduction in the forthcoming timetable from 14 December 2026. For some time we, and others, have been lobbying for the reinstatement of the 21.35 train from Sheffield, arriving in Huddersfield at 22.54, which was withdrawn during the pandemic, and led to a 2-hour service gap before the final 22.36 train at Sheffield. We were naturally pleased to see that the lobbying had been successful, and the train was to be reinstated.

However, what wasn't made clear until the final version of the timetable was published a couple of weeks ago, was that the last train (22.36 Sheffield – 23.59 Huddersfield) was to be withdrawn on Mondays to Thursdays. Instead, there will be a bus from Barnsley at 23.05, connecting with an earlier train from Sheffield. The bus will serve all stations but will not arrive in Huddersfield until 01.07 i.e. taking over two hours!

We have naturally raised the matter with Northern Rail, who have advised us that Network Rail have instructed them not to run the train on those nights, to allow for work related to the Transpennine Route Upgrade (TRU), and that this may be the case for several years.

While we fully understand the need to allow for the upgrade works, we are concerned that a blanket cut like this is being done for the convenience of the rail industry, without evidence that it will be actually essential every weeknight for several years, and secondly that the nature and time taken for the replacement bus journey will discourage most travellers, and then be used to make a case for saying there is no need to restore the rail service as it is not needed.

As an MP whose constituents will be affected by this cut, we would be grateful if you could raise the matter with the relevant minister and/or rail bodies. We will, of course, be happy to provide any further information you may need and have attached a copy of the relevant timetable to this email.

Many thanks for your support

Ian Joustra

Huddersfield Penistone Sheffield Rail Users' Association