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Administrative Support  
Rail Passengers Committee  
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City Road  
Peterborough, PE1 1QF



22 November 2004

Dear Ms Ream

**Re: Trains on the Southminster Branch line**

Thank you for your letter dated 26 October 2004. Please accept my apologies for the delay in this response.

I understand that Dr Kirby has contacted you to seek clarification from us regarding trains on the Southminster Branch line at night. Our Route Commercial Manager has advised that the times of first and last trains are necessarily constrained by our need to gain access for maintenance. On a four-track section of line, it is usually possible to run services for most of the night because a lower level of service frequency can generally be accommodated on just two out of the four tracks.

On other lines that may be equipped with bi-directional signalling, it may be possible to operate a very limited service later in the night by means of single line working. The branch line to Southminster has light traffic and is a single line only. Therefore, no service can be accommodated when access is needed for engineering purposes.

It is worth noting there is a very small improvement in the service from the next timetable change, i.e., from 12 December 2004. The last service from Wickford to Southminster Mondays to Fridays will leave Wickford at 22:58 connecting out of a 22:15 from Liverpool Street. The last Saturday train will continue to leave at 22:30.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Stollar  
**Public Affairs Manager**