



Simpler → Fares

Clearer options, modern flexibility

Updated July 2026

LNER is at the forefront of fares simplification. We know that complexity, crowding, flexibility and value for money are barriers to using rail – our Simpler Fares programme looks to tackle these.

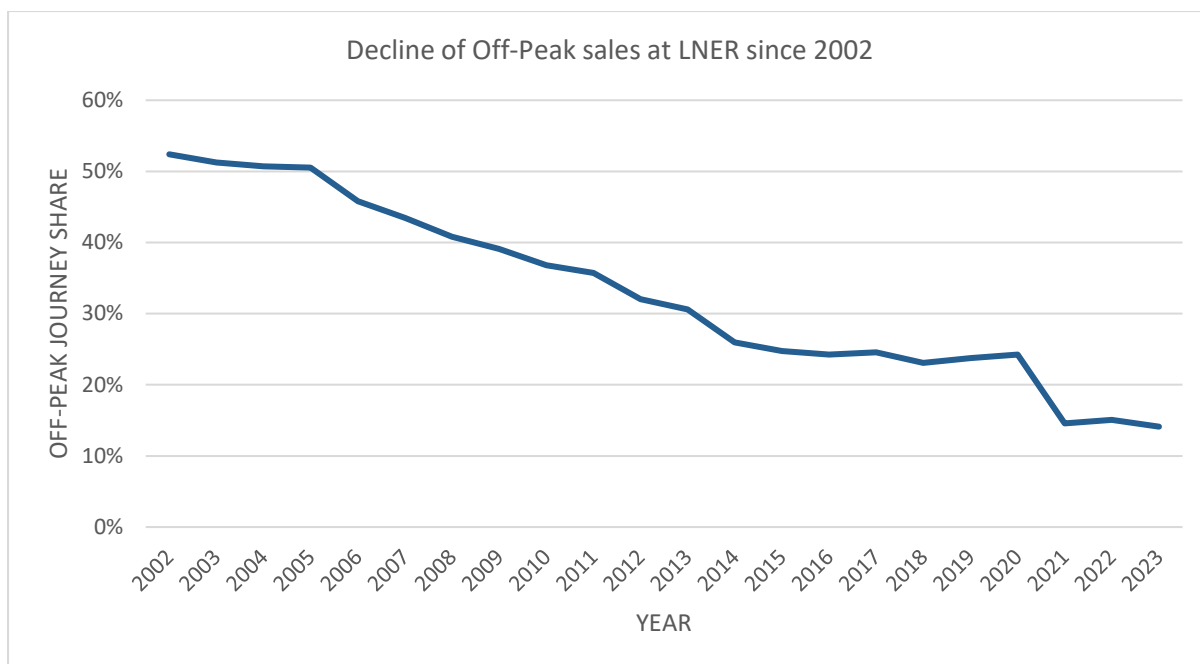
In June 2023, we rolled out Single Leg Pricing which made fares simpler by reducing the number of different fares for customers to understand. Simpler Fares enables LNER to set fares more fairly while focusing on reducing crowding and making fares better suited to customer needs, creating consumer confidence in buying the best tickets and delivering greater certainty of a guaranteed seat.

Simpler Fares builds on Single Leg Pricing. It sees the removal of complicated and outdated off-peak and super off-peak fares on longer distance journeys. As a result, all train prices more closely reflect customer demand which helps to alleviate overcrowding – research conducted by Transport Focus in March 2023 cited that 21% of potential rail users said that less crowded trains would encourage them to use trains more in future. The second part of Simpler Fares is the introduction of a simpler form of flexibility - one that better meets the needs of today's customers.

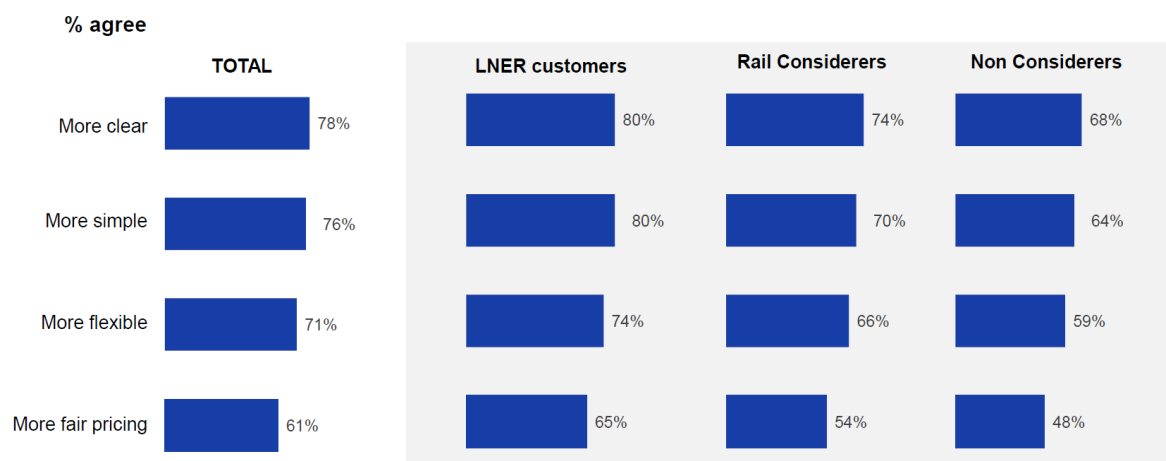
Simpler Fares launched in January 2024 followed by a second phase in August 24 (Northeast and Scotland) in collaboration with our partner operators. This means that Simpler Fares is not only accessible to those using our hub stations in Newcastle, Berwick upon Tweed and Edinburgh, but also for customers using surrounding smaller stations such as Morpeth, Dunbar and Musselburgh.

The third phase of our Simpler Fares initiative included a larger group of partner operators, bringing in stations around London. This means that the offer is available for journeys between the defined stations in the North (Edinburgh, Berwick, Newcastle, and surrounding areas) and the defined stations in the South (London Terminals, Alexandra Palace, Stevenage, and intermediate stations), as well as all rail stations in London Zones 1-4 (and tube stations in Zones 1-6). Off-Peak and Super Off-Peak fares are no longer available for these journeys.

For journeys between the eligible stations in the North and the eligible stations in the South, the new 70min Flex fare is also available alongside the Advance fare where appropriate, where LNER is the primary operator for the selected travel itinerary.



Research commissioned by LNER and conducted by Incite in 2022, revealed that the new Simpler Fares fare structure was clearer, simpler and fairer than the status quo; and reflects positively on LNER and rail industry. It specifically helped people understand different ticket types and provided a less overwhelming booking experience. LNER customers felt positive, particularly relating to openness and honesty.



Q. Compared to the current approach to ticket types in the rail industry: ...how clear is the new approach? ...how simple is the new approach? ...how flexible is the new approach? ...how fair would you say that this new ticket pricing approach is? Base: All respondents N=2,812 (Incite, 2022. LNER customers N=1,632 / Rail Considerers N=909 / Non-Considerers N=271)

Introducing LNER Simpler Fares

- **Simplicity**

With the removal of outdated Off-Peak/Super Off-Peak fares (see area below), customers can easily select the best tickets for each part of their journey. 35% of people who have rail as a travel option are put off travelling by train because it's difficult to find the right fare. 84% of people want to see fares change (c20k). Source: RDG

- **Flexibility**

Simpler Fares sees the introduction of a new, widely available Semi-Flexible fare that gives customers the freedom to either travel as booked, or to start the journey up to 70 minutes earlier or later than planned. Customers can use the connecting services of other operators or travel wholly with LNER where possible. The following, easy to understand fares will be available (in both travel classes) under the new fare structure:

- **Fixed** (Advance) - The best value fares, only valid for the booked service(s) stated on the ticket
- **NEW: Semi-Flexible** (70min Flex) – More modern and often more affordable flexibility. Travel as booked, or start the journey up to 70 minutes earlier or later, travelling with LNER for the main leg of the journey
- **Fully Flexible** (Anytime) - Valid for travel at any time of day

- **Confidence**

Reduced instances of over-crowding and more chance of getting a seat on long distance journeys due to improved capacity management. Research conducted by Transport Focus in December 2022 cited 'getting a seat on the train' as the 5th most important thing for passengers (from list of 25). Digital Flexing with the new semi-flexible fare will give customers more control over their travel choices allowing them to swap trains at the click of a button.

		Stevenage <> Morpeth				Alexandra Palace <> Dunbar			
		OLD FARES		NEW FARES		OLD FARES		NEW FARES	
Standard	Advance	£23.10	Advance	£23.10	Advance	£34.40	Advance	£34.40	
	Super Off-Peak	£95.70	70min Flex	£33.10	Super Off-Peak	£95.40	70min Flex	£44.40	
	Anytime	£188.50	Anytime	£188.50	Anytime	£204.80	Anytime	£204.80	
First Class	Advance	£72.50	Advance	£75.40	Advance	£100.00	Advance	£104.00	
	Off-Peak	N/A	70min Flex	£90.40	Off-Peak	N/A	70min Flex	£119.00	
	Anytime	£312.60	Anytime	£325.10	Anytime	£333.50	Anytime	£346.80	

The NEW FARE: 70min Flex

A new **Semi-Flexible** fare (**70min Flex**) is designed to better meet the needs of today's customers. Simple to understand, providing appropriate peace of mind irrespective of departure time. More affordable flexibility linked to the best value available Advance fare.

- The 70min Flex comes with a guaranteed seat reservation on the chosen LNER train during booking
- These tickets offer the freedom to start the journey up to 70 minutes earlier or later than booked, travelling with LNER for the main leg of the journey
- LNER direct customers can swap their booked journey in 'My Account' at LNER.co.uk or on the LNER App. They'll be shown other valid train options. If a customer is unable to swap digitally *or* if they purchased via another ticket retailer, they can still board any valid train and find an available seat
- Tickets are non-refundable but they are changeable beyond their validity for a fee
- Tickets are subject to availability. The 70min Flex may not always be shown alongside the Advance
- Only valid on LNER services and any required connecting services
- Customers may have to stand for part of their journey on any required connecting services or when travelling on alternative trains

The new fare will be retailed across all retail channels (LNER Website and App, Ticket Vending Machines, Travel Centres, other operator websites, Trainline, other retailers, etc.) but is not available onboard.

Phase 2A

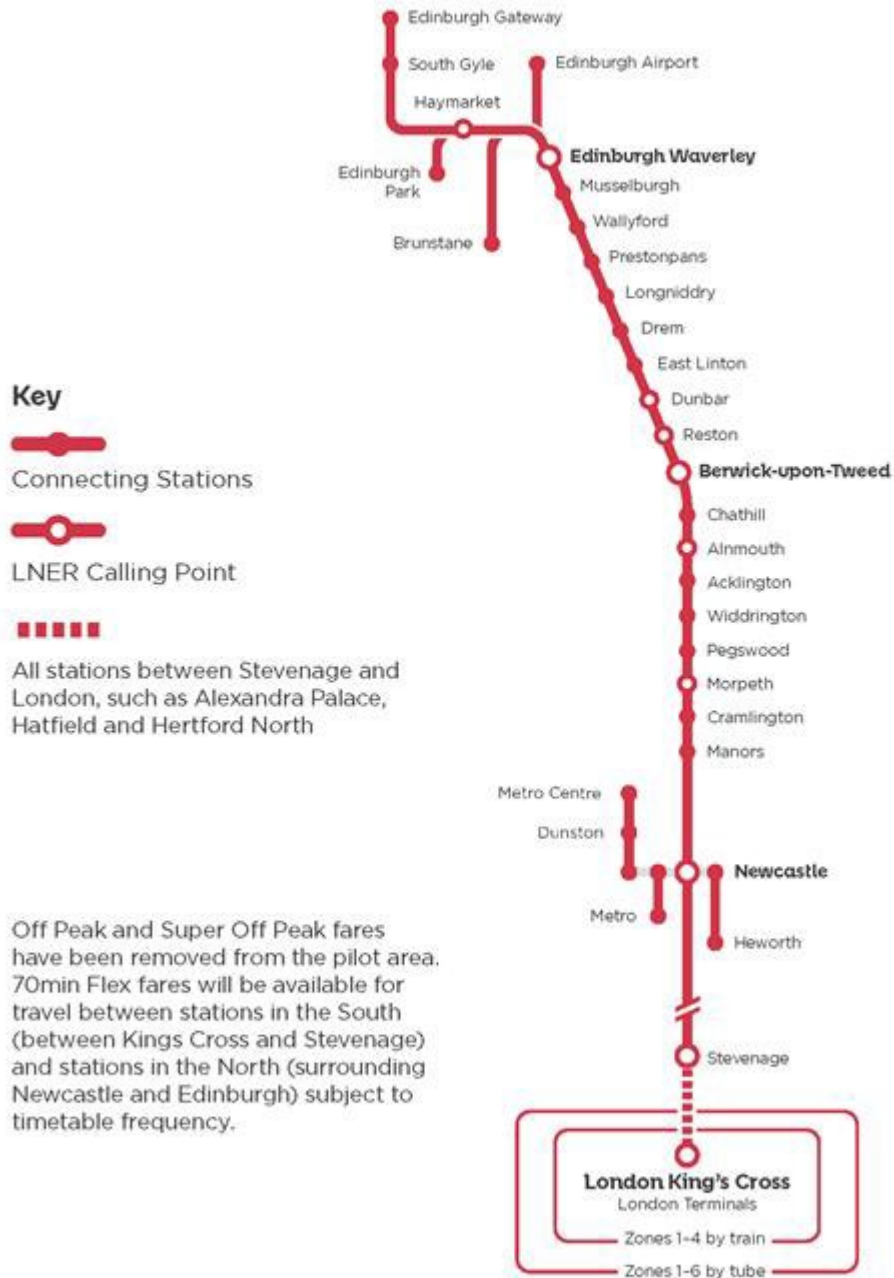
Phase 2A Overview

In August 2025, LNER launched Simpler Fares Phase 2A, including more stations in the London area, as well as extending the validity of the new 70min Flex tickets to services of other operators that provide vital connecting services to and from these stations. This important phase more closely resembles our vision for long distance fares simplification and enables LNER to capture much richer learnings to consider ahead of any possible future roll-out.

Phase 2A continues to include partner operator services including Northern, TPE, CrossCountry and ScotRail, as well as new partner operator services including GTR and TfL. With the combined timetable frequency, this means that customers will be able to purchase and utilise the Semi-Flexible 70min Flex fare (where appropriate) for a journey between one of the stations in North (shown below) and one of the stations around London. E.g. A customer will be able to purchase the new 70min Flex fare from Cramlington to Stevenage, travelling on a Northern train to Newcastle and changing onto an LNER train down to Stevenage (or changing at Peterborough for a GTR train down to Stevenage).

As with previous phases, for London-based journeys, the new Semi-Flexible fares will only be available where LNER is the primary operator for the selected travel itinerary and may not always be shown alongside the Advance.

Simpler Fares Area



Customer Assurances

Most of our passengers choose to buy fixed tickets because they offer excellent value, and this is the case for Simpler Fares too.

Additionally, we have committed to the following assurances to provide a large range of good value fares within the Simpler Fares

1. There is a maximum price: the “Fully Flexible” ticket. Fully Flexible (Anytime) fares, although they are not regulated, will remain capped in line with other regulated fares.
2. A large selection of more affordable seats: at least 2/3 of all “Fixed” tickets sold will be priced at less than half the price of the Fully Flexible ticket.
3. A maximum of 10% of all “Fixed” tickets will be sold at 80% or more of the Fully Flexible price.

Fact Checker

LNER wants to make travelling by train a more attractive proposition. Here are some of our latest statistics on how Simpler Fares is offering good value for passengers:

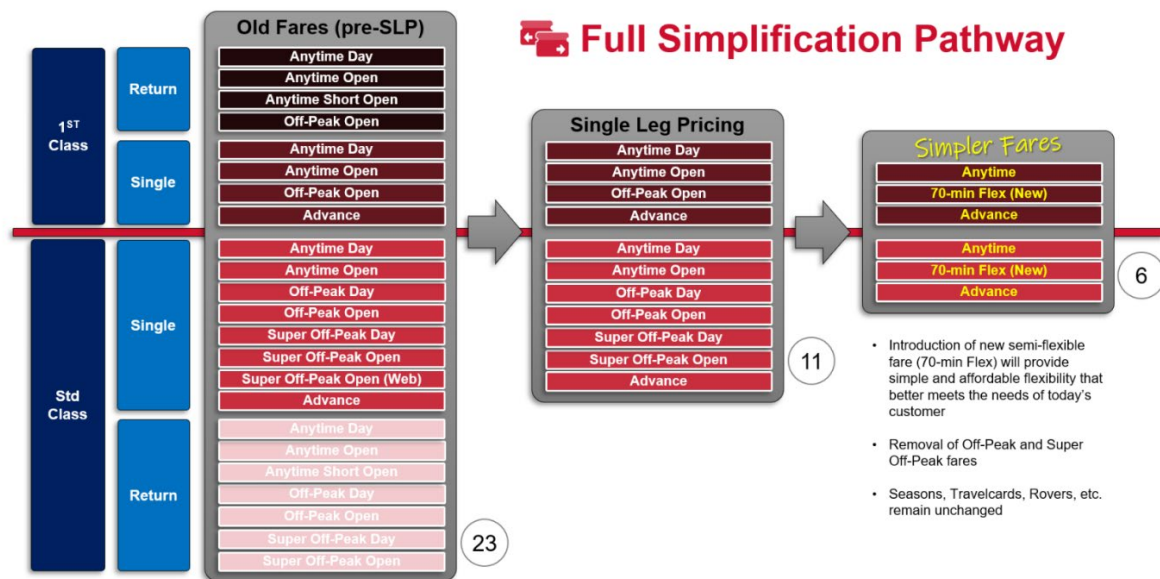
Performance against Customer Assurances (July 2026)

- Assurance 3: 95.6% (vs. >67%) of Standard Advance fares sold were priced at less than half the cost of the Fully Flexible (Anytime) fare
- Assurance 4 1.1% (vs. >10%) of Standard Advance fares sold were priced at over 80% of the cost of the Fully Flexible (Anytime) fare

Stats specific for Simpler Fares and the new Semi-Flexible fare (July 2026)

- Since the beginning of Simpler Fares in January 2023, over 6.8 million journeys have been made on Simpler Fares flows
- There are **0.9 million new Semi-Flexible tickets priced at less than the Super Off-Peak fare** in the booking horizon (for travel from 29th July 2026 until 23rd October 2026 inclusive)
- There are around **1.6 million Standard Advance fares available and priced lower than the Super Off-Peak fare on trains where the Super Off-Peak fare was previously valid** (for travel from 29th July 2026 until 23rd October 2026 inclusive)
- Just under 50% of all 70min Flex fares sold over the last 4 weeks in Standard Class cost less than the Super Off-Peak single fare
- Approximately 75% of customers who purchased the new 70min Flex travelled on their booked trains
- Circa 75% of all ‘Digital Flex’ changes (direct customers using LNER App/Web) are occurring within 24hrs to departure (just under 50% within 2hrs)
- Of those customers that ‘Digitally Flex’, 3 times as many customers are swapping onto earlier trains than later trains
- The majority of customers who are swapping are doing so in the Northbound direction (likely homeward)

Our Vision for Fares



FAQs

Do customers want this?

- 84% of consultation respondents want fares to change (c20k). Source: RDG
- 35% of people are put off travelling by train because they find it difficult to find the right fare. Source: RDG

Was there a pilot and how long did it last for?

- The pilot launched mid-January 2024 and ran for 2 years. It will then run on a continuing basis whilst a national approach to fares reform is finalised.

Why do you need to remove off-peak/super off-peak?

- The current fare structure leads to several pain points and more often than not, customers are confused. Over 80% of customers want to see fares change and when tested, the proposed new structure was considered simpler and fairer – and ultimately designed to encourage more people to choose rail.
- Advance fares continue to present the best value for customers and they come with a guaranteed seat reservation.

Will this cover all LNER routes and services?

- In August 2024, LNER launched the next phase of Simpler Fares, bringing in more stations local to Newcastle, Berwick upon Tweed and Edinburgh, as well as extending the validity of the new 70min Flex to services of other operators that provide vital connecting services to and from these stations. As of August 2025, we extended the fares offer further with the inclusion of more stations located around the London area. This allows us to test a version of Simpler Fares that more closely reflects the vision for long distance fares simplification.

Will fares become more expensive?

- Busy periods will be more expensive than quieter periods, but never more than the previous Peak times. The Simpler Fares fare structure means that there will be occasions where

customer driven demand pushes prices. However, the opposite is also true, and lower prices will be available on quieter trains. Customers will find it easier to make more informed purchasing decisions and will have greater certainty of the onboard experience – this is because the new 70min Flex fare comes with a guaranteed seat reservation. Our best value Advance fares are almost always available for trains on the day of travel and can be purchased up to 5 minutes before departure.

How much more will people pay for flexibility?

- LNER's Advance fares will continue to be available as they have been for many years. The variable nature of Advance fares will mean that as before, some customers will pay more and others less depending on the individual demand of the train, journey and date they are booking. Some customers will be able to purchase flexibility for a better value price than ever before. The best value Advance fares between London and Newcastle are only £27.60 each way and the best value Advance fares between London and Edinburgh are only £41.40 each way. The most expensive Anytime fares are £200.80 and £204.80 respectively. We would always recommend booking as far in advance as possible to secure the best value prices.

How will you determine whether the Simpler Fares is successful?

- We will measure the success on:
 - Customer satisfaction
 - Commercial performance

To what extent is this part of a wider reform of fares?

- Our Simpler Fares initiative is a critical part of a wider Fares Reform programme – that builds on our roll out of Single Leg Pricing. Simpler Fares is designed to make rail travel simpler and challenge some of the perceptions around value for money, flexibility, complexity and crowding with the aim of encouraging more customers to choose rail.

Is +/- 70 minutes of flexibility enough for customers?

- Research by Ipsos Mori, commissioned by LNER, found 53% of customers and 55% of non-customers think the option to travel up to one hour earlier or later is about right/more than enough flexibility. 70 minutes was chosen to give more leeway to ensure that some services which are close to, but not exactly on hourly timetables are included.

Why is this different to the way airlines and events venues price their tickets?

- It's similar inasmuch as prices will more closely reflect demand BUT... There are some key differences with our Simpler Fares fare structure:
 - There will be a maximum price (the price of Anytime Single) for fully flexible fares which cannot be exceeded to prevent completely unconstrained surge pricing.
 - There are customer assurances to ensure affordable fares are available. E.g. two thirds of all Standard Advance fares sold will be at least 50% less than the Standard Anytime.
 - Tickets (Anytime singles) will continue to be available even after all the seats have been sold. This protects the 'walk-up railway' and enables customers to travel on any train in almost every circumstance – although we will remind people that the service is likely to be busy and not having a reservation means that a seat is not guaranteed.

Will Simpler Fares be rolled out everywhere?

- Pilots are happening across the industry and whether Simpler Fares will be rolled out further will be determined by the results of the pilots.

Why is digital flexing only available to LNER direct bookers?

- Currently there isn't an industry wide ticketing system to allow digital flexing for both direct and indirect customers. LNER is working with retailers to enable our customers who book indirectly, e.g. book through a Third-Party Retailer, to digitally flex.

How can indirect bookers with the new Semi-Flexible fare get a seat reservation if they choose to switch trains?

- By using LNER's standalone reservation tool on our website and app, or through the travel centre or Customer Service Centre.

Can you only flex if you have a smart phone/LNER App?

- No – customers can flex simply by getting on a train and finding an available seat within +/- 70 mins of their original booked train. Customers can make a seat reservation through LNER's standalone reservation tool, or by contacting the Customer Service Centre or travel centre.

How does Delay Repay work with semi-flexible fares?

- One-click Delay Repay will be available for all customers that book with LNER and travel as per their latest booking to easily confirm they were delayed.
- Customers who are not entitled to One-click Delay Repay will have to complete a delay repay form either online or on paper.

What is digital flexing?

- For LNER direct customers only (excludes 3rd party retailers at launch), they can swap their train(s) in 'My Account' at LNER.co.uk or on the LNER App. They'll be shown other valid trains and will be able to see whether their desired train has any seat reservations available.
- Allows customer to flex to another train within +/- 70min of their original booked train. Makes a new seat reservation, if available, and releases the old seat reservation.
- Travel Centres cannot flex for a customer. They will direct customers to the standalone reservation tool.
- Customer can flex (walk up or digitally) after their original booked train has departed, as long as it's within 70 minutes after their original booked train.

What if a 70min Flex customer has Passenger Assistance (PA) and decides to flex?

- If a customer uses their 70min Flex on a different train from their original booking, they will need to rebook passenger assistance if possible and speak to one of our colleagues at the station to ensure they can help them. We recommend arriving at the station a little earlier than their new departure time to ensure our colleagues can assist.

How can a customer flex when the trains are full?

- We strongly recommend that customers who have booked direct with LNER look to swap their train in 'My Account' at LNER.co.uk or on the LNER App. They'll be shown other valid trains and will be able to see whether their desired train has any seat reservations available. If a customer is unable to swap digitally or if they are an indirect booker, they can simply board any valid train and find an available seat, irrespective of whether it is full/sold out online.

How does the 70min Flex work in disruption?

- Just the same as Advance. Customers will be advised to take the next available service.

Can wheelchair users use the new 70min Flex?

- Yes. While there is clearly more limited availability due to limited wheelchair spaces on board, this new type of ticket provides a better experience for wheelchair users, as they can be reliably informed of the current availability via LNER digital channels. If 'digitally flexing' via "My Account", they will be presented with the reservation status of each travel option as they select and progress with them.

Will there be times that the price of a 70min Flex ticket is less than an Advance ticket for a train that the customer could flex onto?

- Yes, but not very often. With the new Simpler Fares fare structure, our pricing of trains will become smoother across the whole day with no more 'cliff-edges' between traditional peak and off-peak trains.

What if a customer wants to flex onto a delayed train which is now outside the 70 minutes?

- This is OK. Their ticket enables them to flex onto any train which was due to depart up to 70 minutes before or after their original booked train. If any of these trains are delayed, the customer is still entitled to travel on them.

Can a customer flex onto a delayed train that would have been outside of the flexing window?

- No. Their ticket enables them to flex onto train which was due to depart up to 70 minutes before or after their original booked train.