



Deal seafront: with an 80 minute rail connection to London its tourist potential would be even better

The Business Case for providing a full high-speed rail service to Deal and Sandwich.

By Tom Rowland for Trains4Deal. Supported by Deal town council.

Introduction and executive summary.

The key stated objective endorsed by the Secretary of State for Transport for the development of the specification for the new rail franchise for Kent is the support of economic growth through the provision of train services of appropriate, frequency, journey time and capacity.

The second objective is to develop services that use the high-speed network to and from St Pancras International to encourage an increase in the end-to-end journey opportunities to and from Kent.

Providing Deal and Sandwich with a full high-speed rail service from early in the morning to late in the evening, seven days a week will achieve both of these objectives.

The cost of provision of the service will be around £500,000 per year. This sum will be quickly recouped for the train operator through the generation of approximately 100 additional annual season ticket sales; the longer-term and more difficult to accurately quantify impacts on tourism and local employment opportunities will be a vital but additional bonus.

Consequently we would urge the Secretary of State to include an enhanced, full service for HS1 in the minimum service specification for the new franchise.



Fast train,
fast train

please stop in Deal (and Sandwich)

The current situation

Deal and Sandwich are served at the moment by three morning services to London St Pancras and two return evening services, each week day from Monday to Friday. In August 2012 an additional late evening service from St Pancras will be added and in September 2012 an additional morning service at 7.20 am, arriving in St Pancras at about 08.40 will be added.

This skeleton service has been funded by Kent County Council (KCC) following a successful campaign headed by Trains4Deal, the group which is now recognised the Deal and Sandwich Rail Users' Group and is a stakeholder in the Southeast Railways Passenger Forum and the biannual KCC Rail Summit.

While a very welcome lifeline, the current service enables regular commuters to get to and from work in London but it does not provide for irregular commuters who wish to go to and from London one to three days per week using later trains and rail cards, and so cutting the current full daily fare from around £60 to a more manageable level. Nor does it provide for weekend visitors and tourists staying in the local hotels or those coming for days out or to events during the annual two week summer festival or the regular programme of music, drama and theatrical events at other times.

Further, KCC can not be expected to indefinitely fund the provision of a railway and it has only been put in the position of having to find money for the existing trains to stop in the two stations because of a series of anomalies in the current franchise.

Briefly, the current franchise holder (along with others) was encouraged to put in keenly priced bids for their franchise on the understanding that a financial safety net would be provided by the DfT should agreed projections on increases in passenger numbers prove to be over-optimistic. When these numbers did indeed prove too optimistic the operator was promised extra support in the form of additional subsidy. Another provision in the agreement stated that the additional support would be withdrawn at the rate of 80p in the Pound as the operator's revenues increased. Under these circumstances the toc would have to earn a profit of £5 to recoup every £1 of additional investment outside the agreed minimum service specification, making serving Deal and Sandwich with HS1 services commercially unattractive. In a nutshell, Southeastern Railways found itself in a similar poverty trap as a benefits claimant; it was not worth its while to do any extra work as the benefits are withdrawn faster than the claimant can earn.

The improvements required

The minimum service specification for the new franchise should include Deal and Sandwich. The existing four morning trains on the up line should be retained with additional HS1 trains hourly along the pattern already in place for Dover and Folkestone.

Down trains should run as is the case now for Dover and Folkestone, with trains all day and late into the evening, as per the current pattern at Dover. Adding the two stops onto the end of the line will not impact on journey times from the stations already served.

New Homes

A total of 600 new homes have been given outlying planning permission on two sites in Deal. The developers are Ward Homes and Hillreed Homes.

According to research undertaken by Southeastern Railways currently 75 per cent of daily commuters from Ashford International station now use the HS1 service to St Pancras.

The demographic targeted by the two developers is similar to that of new home buyers in Ashford so it is reasonable to assume that at least 20 per cent of the households moving into these 600 new homes would make their decision to purchase on the availability of a fast, reliable rail service to the capital which they intended to use as regular commuters.

100 additional season tickets at a cost of around £5,000 each would cover the entire cost of the service on their own, a total of about £500,000.



An existing new development in Kent by Hillreed Homes

Cathcart Gate, Kings Hill West Malling; 2,3,4 & 5 bedroom homes in the price range £275,000 to £485,000. The homes are arranged in distinctive residential neighbourhoods around focal points such as a village green, the cricket ground or golf course.

Betsham; a small development of just eight 2,3 and 4 bedroom homes on the site of the Colyers Arms public house. Traditional family homes in a great location, close to Ebbsfleet International Station.

Eccles; an exclusive development of just five 3 & 4 bedroom homes in the small village of Eccles Kent. Eccles in just 1.5 miles from the M20, and 3 miles from the M2 Motorways. Prices from £284,000 to £365,000.



Ward Homes: Highfields Place in Ashford one of the 11 developments the company has in and around Kent.



**Nigel
Colbrook**

trained as an estate agent in Deal 45 years ago and has recently returned to the town as the new owner of the highly successful agency Bright and Bright.

“The growth potential that improved trains services will bring is one of the reasons I came back to the area. A regular HS1 service will make a huge difference” he said.

He thinks that it is “quite feasible” that on their own buyers of the 600 new houses planned for Deal in the next few years will generate 100 extra annual commuter tickets, enough to cover the costs of running the service for the year.

On top of this there is huge potential for more commuter traffic from buyers of period houses.

“In the 1960s lots of people used to commute from Deal daily.” The numbers fell off as the service degraded, he said. Now that the service is finally improving so that on the HS trains it is 20 minutes faster than then they will start to commute again,” he said.

Existing HS customers

In addition there are the existing season ticket holders. Southeastern Railways understandably regards this information as commercially confidential and no independent research has been carried out by Passenger Focus.

Surveys by Trains4Deal and estimates of usage by KCC suggest that between 30 and 60 London-bound passengers get off each of the returning two trains each weekday evening and between 100 and 120 get on in the morning.

Southeastern high speed services' subsidy kept for Deal and Sandwich by political editor Paul Francis

Source: East Kent Mercury/ Kent on Line 25 January 2012

High speed services to and from Deal and Sandwich are likely to continue to be subsidised by Kent County Council after signs the services are proving popular with passengers.

County transport chiefs say they are more than likely to carry on helping Southeastern fund the services, which began last September, up until the rail franchise is renewed.

However, the county council is expected to negotiate with Southeastern to cut its subsidy on the basis of evidence of increased numbers of season ticket holders using the daily service.

KCC agreed to contribute £190,000 to meet the costs for a year's trial. The money is used to pay for the crew and trains, with three early morning services and two returning from St Pancras in the evening.

Cllr Bryan Sweetland (Con), KCC cabinet member for transport, said that in three months, the number of season ticket holders travelling from the two stations had increased from 12 to 120.

"The number of season ticket holders who go from Deal and Sandwich has increased and we have been pleased with that. If those numbers continue to go up, I do not think there will be an issue [continuing with a subsidy] and rolling it forward until the franchise is renewed."

KCC agreed to underwrite some of the costs on the basis that it could help encourage new businesses to east Kent following the news of Pfizer's withdrawal from the area.

Tourism By Rail

Deal is a pretty seaside town on the East coast of Kent with a population of around 40,000, the longest and one of the most densely populated conservation areas in England and is ideally situated to promote itself as an all year round tourist destination and economic growth point.

It offers a summer festival of international standard, a theatre, walking and cycle paths, a pier, coffee shops, restaurants and very high quality high street shopping with its small independently-run businesses while the seafront provides views, beaches, sailing and sea bathing.

Sandwich with a population of around 7,000 is one of the most picturesque and historic towns in England.

29 June - 8 July 2012

DEAL FESTIVAL

of music and the arts

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Main Events at-a-glance

- Arcadia - Fabulous Festival Opening Night
- Kent County Youth Orchestra
- LAU
- Little Book of Monsters
- Aurora Orchestra: Battle
- Sospiro Saxophones
- The Sacconi Quartet & Viv McLean (piano)
- Miriam Mareska-Dickson

Friday 29th June 2012

The Power of Words - Dover Town Hall - 2:00 pm
 2.00 Dover Town Hall (Part of Pyramideal Project) An extra special concert featuring children from the Aspen Unit at Christchurch Community College, together with some of ...
[Full details »](#)

Arcadia - Fabulous Festival Opening Night - The Astor Theatre, Deal - 8:00 pm
 Friday 29th June 8.00pm The Astor Community Theatre With Mercury Prize winning musician and Magic Circle magician Tim Sutton, star of opera and musical stages Darren Abrahams, ...
[Full details »](#)

Event Types

- [View all events](#)
- [Day time Events](#)
- [Evening Events](#)
- [Late Night Gigs](#)
- [Street Theatre](#)

2012 Gallery



The High Street is distinctive on the beach or to stroll along in good weather conditions.

Deal Attractions:

- Deal Castle
- The Timeball Tower
- The Pier and promenade
- Maritime and History Museum
- Town Hall dating back to 1803
- Markets, collectable fairs and festivals



High Quality Cottages, Apartments and Barn Conversions in Kent for holidays,
longer term lets and short breaks (4 nights) not high season

Close to seafront

**Kingsdown, Nr Deal - Former fisherman's cottage located
very close to the beach and the pretty village of
Kingsdown. [Sleeps 4]**

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Curlew Holiday Cottages Kent offering comfortable, well equipped and personally chosen Kent holiday cottages to enable you to explore a relatively unknown part of England which has an enormous amount to offer.

CURLEW'S Sarah Rainbird said:

“Currently about 10 per cent of our guests use the train, thought would increase significantly if there was a regular high speed train service”

Number One B &B, Deal

Winner Trip Advisor Traveller's Choice 2012 Best Hotel Awards B&Bs and Inns category

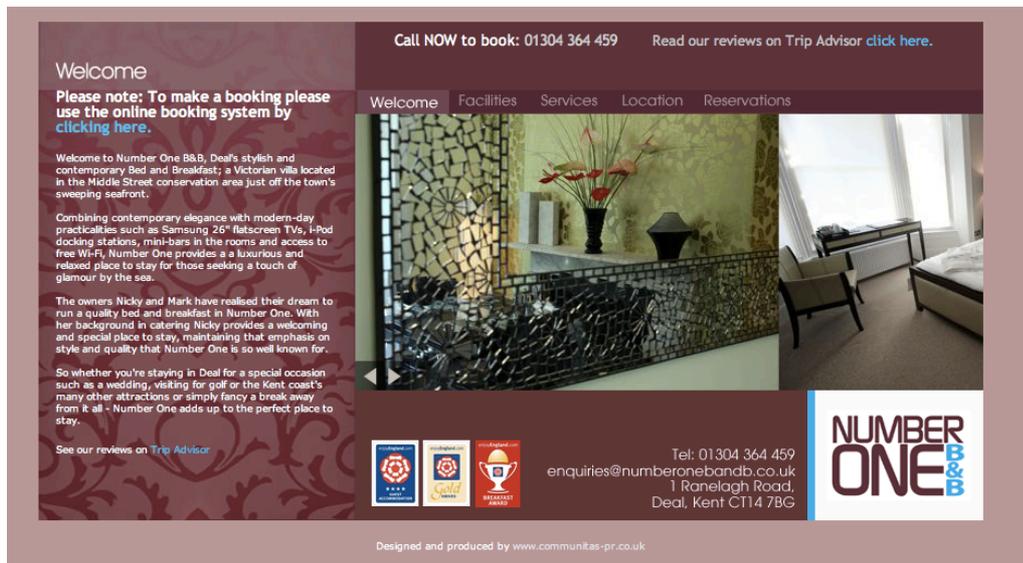
This B&B has over 350 “excellent” ratings on Trip Advisor and they sum up views about the place.

This is what a recent reviewer said about Number One

“3 nights in Deal”

Reviewed 29 June 2012

“Spent a great 3 nights in Number 1 B&B. Nicky really a perfect host, nothing too much trouble. Room lovely, bed comfortable, superb coffee maker in room. Breakfast excellent. Lots of choice cereals, fresh fruit plus the usual full english and also smoked salmon & scrambled eggs options.



Call NOW to book: 01304 364 459 Read our reviews on Trip Advisor [click here.](#)

Welcome

Please note: To make a booking please use the online booking system by [clicking here.](#)

Welcome to Number One B&B, Deal's stylish and contemporary Bed and Breakfast, a Victorian villa located in the Middle Street conservation area just off the town's sweeping seafront.

Combining contemporary elegance with modern-day practicalities such as Samsung 26" flatscreen TVs, i-Pod docking stations, mini-bars in the rooms and access to free Wi-Fi, Number One provides a luxurious and relaxed place to stay for those seeking a touch of glamour by the sea.

The owners Nicky and Mark have realised their dream to run a quality bed and breakfast in Number One. With her background in catering Nicky provides a welcoming and special place to stay, maintaining that emphasis on style and quality that Number One is so well known for.

So whether you're staying in Deal for a special occasion such as a wedding, visiting for golf or the Kent coast's many other attractions or simply fancy a break away from it all - Number One adds up to the perfect place to stay.

See our reviews on [Trip Advisor](#)

Facilities Services Location Reservations

NUMBER ONE B&B

Tel: 01304 364 459
enquiries@numberonebandb.co.uk
1 Ranelagh Road,
Deal, Kent CT14 7BG

Designed and produced by [www.communitas-pr.co.uk](#)

Great location, sea front 1 minute away, lots of good restaurants nearby. A great bonus is a micro pub The Just Reproach just 5 minutes walk away superb real ales and

friendly chat with locals. A must to check this place out. **Very handy for train station. So easy access to Canterbury, Sandwich, Whitstable, Broadstairs etc even if you do not have a car.**

To sum up if you are looking for a great stay in or near Deal then make sure this is high on your list.”

Regular commuters



“Deal is my main home, from where I am running a global media business as CEO....and without high speed links into London, and from there to the airports, then this enterprise would simply not be possible.”

James Burstall
Chief executive Argonon

James Burstall is an award-winning creative business leader and entrepreneur in international media. In 2011, he formed a

new transmedia group called Argonon, designed to deliver world class entertainment across all platforms. James's goal for the company is to build a world class group of cutting-edge creative people and business leaders focused on delivering exceptional story-telling and entertainment transmedia.

James Clark

I am a software developer and have lived in Deal for over 17 years. Two years ago I was made redundant from the Kent Science Park in Sittingbourne and due to the lack of high tech jobs in Kent decided to choose a career path in London. I work for an international design and production agency which is located in Farringdon.

As a daily commuter from Deal to the City of London the introduction of a limited high-speed service has been of huge benefit to me cutting journey times considerably and improving service reliability considerably.

Since the introduction of a limited high-speed service from Deal, passenger numbers using the service has increased significantly and has helped stimulate the local economy. Deal has very few local job opportunities and the high-speed service allows people to realistically commute to London which offers far greater career opportunities.

The Friday evening service from St Pancras to Deal is also very popular as increasing visitors are using the service to come down to the Kent coast for the weekend to take a short break.

The tourism potential is huge as Deal is considered by many Londoners' as the jewel of the Kent coast. In my opinion it is imperative that any new franchise specification stipulates that Deal should have a full high-speed timetable.

High Speed a must for £6 million business park, say developers

“The high speed rail service is an important aspect in the marketing and a major contributing factor to the development of Deal and the Business Park,” says Mark Quinn of Quinn Estates.

The company has been given planning permission to create up to 44 commercial units/offices and a builder's merchant on the site near the railway station in the town.

"Deal Business Park, would benefit immensely from a regular high speed rail service to and from London," he added.

"At present I am in negotiations with several tenants who are interested in basing their back office functions out of London and high speed rail services are a vital part of the equation for them because they need to commute in and out of London quickly," he said.

70 per cent of the phase one units in the £6 million scheme have been sold and seven phase two buildings have also been taken by one business.

Mr Quinn, said he was delighted at the progress made and is proud to be contributing to such a thriving area.

He said: "I think that this is very good news for Deal. It is going to help create more jobs in the town and it is going to enable people to place their businesses in a thriving town.

Huw Evans, project manager for Quinn Estates, added: "With the housing development getting planning permission, too, this is great news for the area.

"It is all good news, especially in respect of the housing development being given the go-ahead. More people means more business."