

Proposed Metro Timetable Design Change: Consultation response

We received 155 individual responses to our consultation on the design and format of Metro station poster timetables. We also received group responses from several organisations and social media groups representing passengers.

Most people who provided individual responses were happy with the new design, with:

- 90% of people said the 'overall look and feel' was better than the current timetable;
- 83% said it was better for finding train times for a specific journey, and
- 86% said it was better for working out how long a journey will take.

People also made suggestions and criticisms of the new design, which we will incorporate into the final posters when they are produced in May 2018. These include:

- 27 people said they felt additional peak services between Pelaw and Monkseaton/Regent Centre should continue to be shown on the timetables as individual departures. As a result of this feedback we are going to include these on posters for journeys where the average wait is six minutes or more (for example when someone is travelling from Monkseaton to Haymarket). Peak services will continue to appear on the official Metro App and journey planning tools so people can work out train times in advance, and be announced at stations in real time on PAs and information screens.
- 19 people disliked the fact we are splitting the Green and Yellow lines onto separate posters – but 23 people specifically commented that this made the timetables easier to read, so we are keeping this format.
- Five people, as well as access groups who responded, asked if we could make the font larger. As a result we are increasing the minimum size from 12pt to 14pt.
- Five people said promoting 'last train' times could be confusing, as they do not go to the end of each line. As a result we are removing this feature as a separate box, with the information instead to be found within the timetable grid itself.

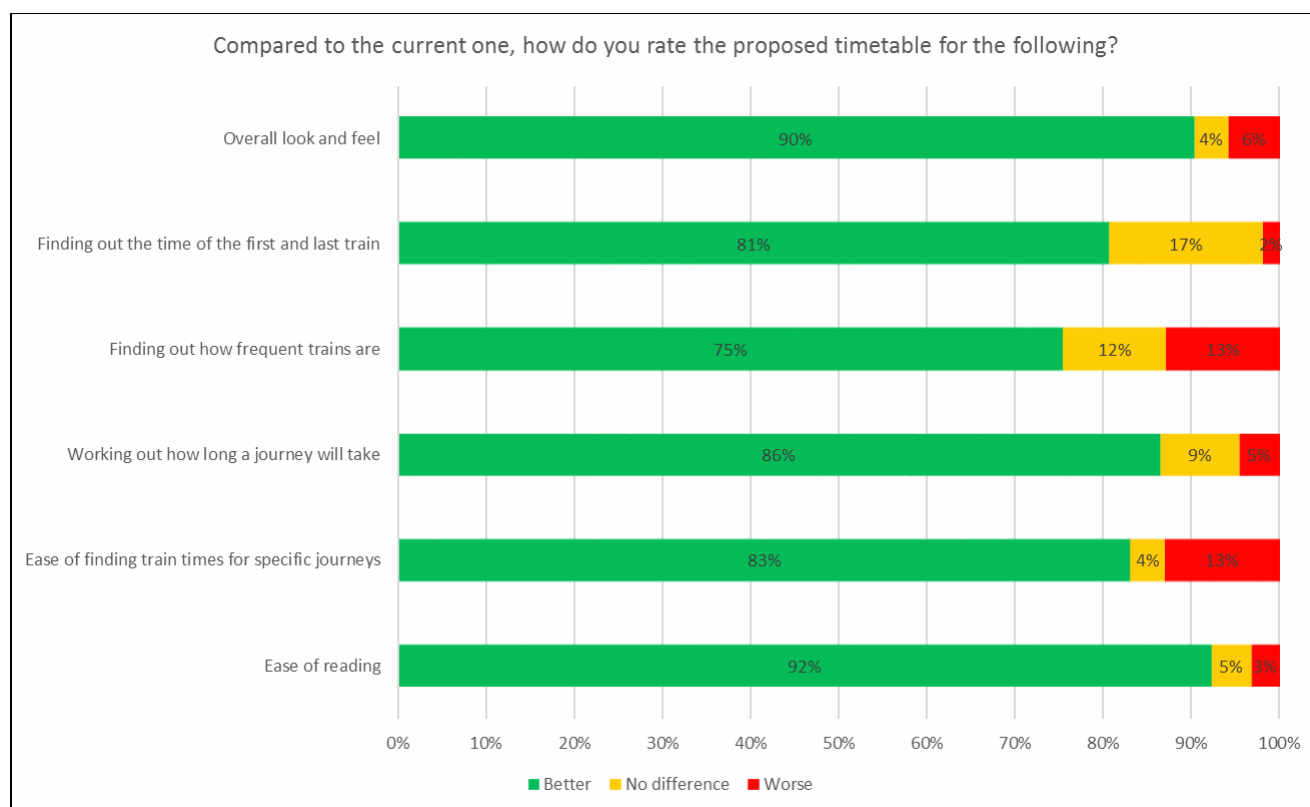
We aim to provide services which can be used by everyone in our community, so we consider feedback about accessibility carefully and invite responses from groups representing disabled passengers. One person said the new design was easier for someone with dyslexia to read, but two said there could be a problem with black text on a bright white background. While there is an issue of glare for PDF documents read on screens we don't believe this will be the case with printed posters, but we will keep this under review. As noted above we have also increased the minimum font size as a result of feedback.

More detailed results on the survey as a whole can be found below. Thank you for taking part.

Online survey responses

We asked people to complete a survey which asked: 'Compared to the current one, how do you rate the proposed timetable for the following?'

	Better	No difference	Worse
Ease of reading	92%	5%	3%
Ease of finding train times for specific journeys	83%	4%	13%
Working out how long a journey will take	86%	9%	5%
Finding out how frequent trains are	75%	12%	13%
Finding out the time of the first and last train	81%	17%	2%
Overall look and feel	90%	4%	6%



Comments and suggestions

People who responded to our online survey were also invited to leave comments saying what they liked and disliked about the proposed new format.

The question 'what do you like most about the proposed design' received 134 comments. These can be grouped in the following themes (some people raised more than one theme):

- 75 people made general comments that the new design was 'clearer', 'cleaner', 'easier to read' or similar.
- 23 people said separating the timetable between Green and Yellow lines made it easier to find the train you wanted.
- 21 people said it was easier to work out the journey time to your destination.

- 13 people welcomed the fact the format matched bus and Shield Ferry timetables in the region.
- Six people mentioned the font or layout of information as being better in some way.
- There were eight other comments.

The question 'what do you dislike most about the proposed design received 73 comments. These can be grouped in the following themes (some people raised more than one theme):

- 27 people said they wanted to see additional peak service remain on the timetable rather than being expressed as operating in certain parts of the day, without specific times.
- 19 people said separating the Green and Yellow lines made it harder to find times when travelling between stations between Pelaw and South Gosforth.
- Seven people felt overall readability was reduced.
- Five people didn't like the fonts used or the size of font.
- Five people pointed out that promoting last train times could be confusing as these did not all go to the final station.
- There were 15 other comments.

Group responses

The social media group 'Sort Out The Metro' was invited by us to respond and made the following comments:

- 1) The response from group members was small, perhaps because regular travelers do not refer to the printed timetable that often or know how to read the existing one.
- 2) Comments were overwhelmingly in favour of the new design which was considered easier to read than the existing one.
- 3) Most respondents want to see the times of additional peak services remain on station poster timetables.
- 4) The use of letters instead of symbols for trains terminating at intermediate stations such as Pelaw was thought to be easier to interpret than shapes, as used at present.
- 5) The box summarising last train times was thought to be confusing.

The campaign group North East Action on Transport (NEAT), which represents disabled passengers, also provided a group response, saying that the minimum 12pt font size proposed was too small, and this should be increased to at least 14 pt. We are pleased to have been able to do this.

Individual members also commented that: Making the format consistent with bus timetables was a positive step; the spacing of individual departure times within each hour on the poster should be looked at to see if this could be made clearer to interpret, and additional peak service times should remain on posters to reduce confusion for partially-sighted passengers.