



PC Rail Simulations

Ashford Kent International

May Bank Holiday Timetable 2026

Operating Information

Author Geoff Butler

Introduction

Welcome to the timetable guide. I will explain firstly the history for you and what is achievable with some history since the last timetable.

In 1987 boat trains ceased to run through Ashford to London Terminals when the Channel Tunnel was opened the entrance is near Folkestone at Cheriton. Also Freight Workings on the train ferries stopped. A Freight Reception Terminal at Dollands Moor was built for freight service through the Channel Tunnel. Ashford Kent Station is now renamed **Ashford International** and new platforms were built between the

Up and Down Fast for the trains operated by Eurostar. This timetable is designed for the May Bank Holiday weekend to cover all the seaside resorts of North and East Kent. With Eurostar running slight adjustment to timings have been made. The pattern will change during the day with freight getting busy in the afternoon and evening as Eurostar starts stops around 21:00

Eurostar Services

This initial service was withdrawn from stopping at Ashford. A **High Speed 1** line was built to London St Pancras linking the Channel Tunnel avoiding Ashford International Station. They at this time run nonstop maximum speeds of 186 MPH on HS1 on overhead wires and Digital Signalling Equipment to Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam at present with Geneva and German cities planned for later around 2029 onwards. I am unable to change the track diagram, so this is a one off in the simulation I have run the Eurostar's passing through on the Up and Down Tonbridge Lines on and off and off the HS1 line and on the Up and Down Folkestone using the Up and Down Fast through Ashford International station. (**Where the European Terminal and platforms are now closed on the island platforms between these lines**). So that you can get an insight into this service with no prospect of a PC rail timetable being produced on digital signalling as the software restriction is stopping it. The HS1 signalling is now

actually controlled from the new signal centre at Ashford from St Pancras to the Eurotunnel entrance where it goes to the Get Link Le Shuttle Control. The real track on the London side of Ashford comes in between the Down Tonbridge and Up Maidstone and tunnels underneath onto the avoiding line and then at the junction of the Canterbury West Branch goes over a flyover. In addition Southeastern use the HS1 line with the Javelin from London to Ashford and then go onto the Canterbury West Branch or via Folkestone and Dover to Ramsgate and Margate. The Javelins maximum speed on HS1 is 140 MPH. They are dual voltage so use the overhead wires to Ashford and Digital signalling and then switch over to conductor rail all around all Kent. All HS1 Eurostar passengers trains carry the train reporting number 9 as the first number. The letter is P for Paris B for Brussels or Belgium and N for the Netherlands outbound for coming and going to from London St Pancras from Europe. Eurostar's having to stay on the booked route between London and the Channel Tunnel on Overhead Wires normally.

For interest a Eurostar Train Driver friend of mine advised me the London Drivers take a train as far as Brussels or Paris and may lodge overnight and come back the following day. Please note that Europe is 1 hour in front of UK so the departure times may look wrong and impossible, but they are not. The other terminal at Cheriton is operated the Get Link Service which is a Lorry Car and Coaches Train Ferry through the Channel Tunnel to France near Calais. Known now as Le Shuttle. Time from St Pancras to Ashford is 25 minutes and Ashford to the Eurotunnel/ UK Border is 6 minutes from Ashford

The rest of the train service is operated by Southeastern. Class 375 EMU trains to London terminal via the Tonbridge or Maidstone Lines and to from the Canterbury or Folkestone Lines to Ramsgate and Dover and onto Margate. MAXIMUM Speed is 100MPH. In addition the line to Eastbourne and Hastings is Operated by DMU services of Southern Trains (Class 171) this service is often referred to as the Marshlink Service as it crosses the Romney Marshes. As of this month Southeastern, Southern Trains and Govia Thameslink are now under public ownership under the Great British Railways (GBR) control. Javelins on HS 1 take 35 minutes as they stop at Stratford and Ebbsfleet.

Freight and Light Engine Moves

Traffic to and From Dollands Moor Freight terminal mainly route via the Up and Down Maidstone to the West and North London line and on to other regions. They do not use HS1 as the locos do not have digital signalled equipment fitted so cannot use HS1. Though DB Cargo are now starting to fit the locomotives with this equipment. The main operators in this area are DB Cargo and GBRF. The locos are not based Dolland Moors for a length of time and you will find that Light Locos will travel from London depots to the terminal GBRF have a depot at Tonbridge. Obviously things change. Most intermodal services use Wembley Yard for sorting onto all other UK destinations or for coming to the Eurotunnel. The story of the Eurostar and a cab ride on a Eurostar from to London from Europe is on these links on You Tube. The last page shows some recent photos of the station. Some recent photos are below of Ashford International/

Eurostar History

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIJVMhLOb5M>

-Cab ride from Europe to London Waterloo stopping at Ashford International.

This shows the digital signalling in the cab and what happened coming off and back on to HS1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jJRhdOh7_0g



**Above HS1 Avoiding Line
Looking towards London**



**Above HS1 Avoiding Line on the flyover
Down Slow and Fast Line Centre**



**A Digital Fixed Signal Marker
N means do not pass without Signallers
permission.**



**Eurostar Old Terminal on the left
Javelin approaching from London onto
Down Slow Platform**



**A class 375 approaching on platform 2 from
Folkestone to the right is the Hastings line approaching**

My photos taken at Ashford International 18th June 2026

Guide for New Signallers

Regulating Trains Through Ashford International.

Trains that are non-stop through Ashford International may if needed route via any route between entry and exit point at the signallers discretion. As some trains may arrive on the panel early due to not having used pathing time between the Departure point and the entry point to Ashford.

The signaller has to decide which route to use or hold the early train. To allow a booked passenger train stopped first to go first unless it is a Eurostar which may overtake if time permits without causing delay to the station departing train. It may be possible to allow the Station Departing train to go first. You can if the entry train is running early slow a train on signals to allow the station departing train to go first. Extra time is allowed passing through the station and exit time.

Some of the reasons can include with Freight Trains being lighter or heavier and length as well alters daily or leave s a freight terminal early if the train is ready. Time is included on the Southern Region where too many trains are in the area drawing electricity and the power from the track, so they have trouble accelerating and keeping to the speed and lose time. So extra time is added. If the supply is good then the trains can be early by a few minutes.

For this reason I have made some trains run early at different times to simulate this.

The problem is with modern trains they have sliding doors air conditioning and other gizmos like Wi-Fi. Compared to the old stock. This is a nationwide problem as sometimes the conductor rails and overhead wires leaks power adding to the problem, A recent report showed this problem. Train Drivers were told to not pull away from stations in full power mode especially if 12 car trains. In an incident at Charing Cross no trains in the station could move initially due to too many trains drawing power in the rush hour at the same time in the area.

Thank you to all the testers mainly Adam and Simeon and the Management Team for the track design and help testing. To John Dennis and Russell Ashmore. Who helped me through this as I am still learning the timetabling processing

Best Wishes

Geoff Butler PC Rail Test Team and Timetable Author

Release Version July 2026.

[Dollands Moor Freight Yard - Wikipedia](#)

**Bottom is HS1 Middle is Dollands Moor Top is the Southeastern Up and Down Folkestone
Looking towards Ashford International**

