# Passengers evacuated to walk on tracks as Thameslink trains fail on hottest day of 2025



On the hottest day recorded in the UK this year, passengers on Thameslink trains near Loughborough Junction in south London faced severe disruption and discomfort after a train fault led to the halting of services. Some passengers were forced to endure up to two hours trapped on trains without air conditioning before being evacuated to walk along the tracks. Videos circulated on social media showed groups of people outside the trains, highlighting the difficult conditions in the sweltering heat. One passenger, Angela Lewis, shared her frustration on X, noting, “After nearly two hours on the stuck train to Gatwick we are abandoned outside,” and questioned the necessity of such a prolonged wait inside overheated carriages.

Thameslink and Network Rail issued apologies for the incident, explaining that a fault on a train near Loughborough Junction brought services to a complete stop in the area, with three trains stranded outside station platforms. A spokesperson for Thameslink stated the decision to evacuate passengers was made to ensure safety in the absence of power and air conditioning, which was especially critical given the high temperatures. The spokesperson expressed regret over the ordeal, saying, “This would have been a difficult and uncomfortable experience for our passengers and we are truly sorry.” On the day of the disruption, temperatures exceeded 33°C in Surrey, marking the hottest day so far in 2025, according to the Met Office.

This event is not without precedent in the UK’s rail history, where extreme heat has increasingly caused operational difficulties. In 2012, a major heatwave affected Southeastern and Thameslink services severely, with some passengers forced to walk along the tracks after prolonged delays and high temperatures caused infrastructure failures. On one occasion near Dartford, passengers even prised open train doors and walked on the tracks, prompting staff to cut power for safety. Network Rail reported track temperatures soaring to 50°C during that heatwave, significantly exacerbating delays.

Similarly, in July 2022, amid record-breaking temperatures close to 40°C, passengers at Broxbourne station were evacuated and made to walk along tracks due to electrical supply issues triggered by the extreme heat. That episode underscored how soaring temperatures pose increasing challenges to rail infrastructure and passenger safety.

Evacuations onto tracks, however, are fraught with risks, as prior incidents have shown. In one 2018 case near Peckham Rye, a mistaken evacuation led dozens of London Overground passengers, including vulnerable individuals, onto live rails. This raised concerns about the communication and safety protocols in emergency situations. More recently, in 2012 on the Bakerloo line, nearly 70 passengers trapped inside sweltering trains were directed to walk along tracks to nearby stations after signal failures, with officials maintaining such measures are sometimes the safest options when other avenues are unavailable.

Against this backdrop, the Met Office has warned of further weather challenges, including a yellow thunderstorm warning for parts of south-east Scotland, Yorkshire, the Midlands, and Wales, with heavy rain expected to follow the heatwave. An amber heat-health alert remains active across England, the first since September 2023, reflecting ongoing concerns about the impact of extreme temperatures on public health and infrastructure.

Rail operators face the growing challenge of managing passenger safety and comfort amid increasingly intense weather conditions linked to climate change. The recent events around Loughborough Junction spotlight urgent needs for improved resilience and contingency planning in UK rail networks to mitigate heat-related disruptions and safeguard travellers.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year)
* Paragraph 3 – [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/100-000-trapped-on-trains-for-hours-on-the-hottest-day-of-the-year-6416123.html), [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/train-passengers-stuck-walk-tracks-heatwave-b2127185.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/09/london-overground-train-evacuation-investigation-peckham-rye-live-rail), [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/travellers-trapped-on-sweltering-tube-6303532.html)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/jul/19/uk-weather-extreme-heatwave-forecast-temperature-today-latest-live?filterKeyEvents=false&page=with%3Ablock-62d658ee8f082dc50bc2b465)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/jun/21/evacuated-london-train-passengers-forced-to-walk-along-tracks-on-hottest-day-of-year> - On 21 June 2025, passengers on Thameslink trains near Loughborough Junction in south London were evacuated and had to walk along the tracks after a train fault halted services on the hottest day of the year. Some passengers waited up to two hours in overheated carriages without air conditioning. Thameslink and Network Rail apologised for the delays, citing a fault on a train near Loughborough Junction that brought all services to a halt in the area, with three trains outside station platforms. The Met Office recorded temperatures exceeding 33°C in Surrey, marking the hottest day of the year so far.
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/train-passengers-stuck-walk-tracks-heatwave-b2127185.html> - On 19 July 2022, passengers travelling from Stansted Airport were forced to walk along the tracks near Broxbourne station after trains were evacuated due to the heatwave. Temperatures reached nearly 39°C at 6 pm, causing electrical supply issues. Passengers were seen dragging luggage across the tracks to reach taxis. Greater Anglia confirmed that the problem was due to electrical supply caused by the extreme weather and had warned people not to travel.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/oct/09/london-overground-train-evacuation-investigation-peckham-rye-live-rail> - In October 2018, an investigation found that dozens of London Overground passengers were mistakenly evacuated onto tracks near Peckham Rye station, with some walking along a live rail. The incident occurred after a technical problem halted a train, and a misunderstanding led to passengers being told to leave the train and walk to the station. The Rail Accident Investigation Branch found that about 80 passengers, including elderly people and children, had climbed down and started walking along the track to the station before senior rail staff realised what was happening and stopped the evacuation.
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/travellers-trapped-on-sweltering-tube-6303532.html> - In April 2012, nearly 70 passengers were trapped on two Bakerloo line trains near Queen's Park station in north-west London due to a signal failure. After a 50-minute wait in sweltering conditions, passengers were asked to walk along the tracks to the nearest station. A London Underground spokeswoman stated that the passengers had been waiting for only 25 minutes on board the trains and that walking along the track was the safest option in such incidents.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/100-000-trapped-on-trains-for-hours-on-the-hottest-day-of-the-year-6416123.html> - In April 2012, over 100,000 commuters were trapped on trains for hours due to signal failures, broken-down trains, and sagging power cables caused by the heat. Southeastern and Thameslink services were particularly affected, with some services cancelled and others halved in length. Passengers prised open the doors of a train near Dartford and walked along the track, forcing rail staff to turn off the power, which added to the problems. Network Rail reported track temperatures of up to 50°C, leading to delays of two hours or more on many routes.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/jul/19/uk-weather-extreme-heatwave-forecast-temperature-today-latest-live?filterKeyEvents=false&page=with%3Ablock-62d658ee8f082dc50bc2b465> - On 19 July 2022, the UK experienced record-breaking temperatures, with forecasts predicting highs of 41°C. The Met Office warned of unprecedented heat, with temperatures potentially reaching 40°C or higher in isolated spots across England during the afternoon. This marked the first time temperatures in the UK could reach 40°C, surpassing the previous record of 38.7°C set in 2019. The extreme heat led to widespread disruptions, including damage to overhead power lines and track buckling, causing significant delays and cancellations across the rail network.