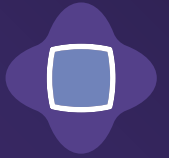


Annual Review 2025

The Rail
Ombudsman



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Foreword – Kevin Grix

“2025 has been a busy and productive year for the Rail Ombudsman team and as we embrace a period of reform, I am reflecting on the positive work done to use passenger and operator experiences to deliver improvements now, and into the future.”

In 2025, the Rail Ombudsman continued to deliver a dependable service to consumers and rail service providers, with demand increasing over the course of the year. Use of the service has been a clear indicator of the ongoing need for expert, independent, and impartial redress – something that the Department for Transport has recognised in its next steps to reform Britain’s railways.

Sponsorship of the Rail Ombudsman by the future passenger watchdog presents a key opportunity to increase the impact of actionable insight, benefiting passengers and the sector.

Close cooperation with stakeholders has been the mainstay of business-as-usual delivery throughout the year. Our closely integrated working arrangements with Transport Focus and London TravelWatch continue to deliver a structured approach for consumers, whether the issue falls within the remit of the Rail Ombudsman or other bodies.

An increasing volume of casework means an increased opportunity for insight. In 2025, our team distilled passenger experiences into 21 key recommendations, either to individual rail service providers or the industry more broadly. The remit to make recommendations is a valuable part of the Rail Ombudsman’s work; while directly valuable to continuous improvement initiatives within the industry, we also know that complainants want to drive positive change as an outcome of their complaint, rather than simply seeking reimbursement or compensation. As the examples given in this Annual Review show, recommendations can be for simple, precise improvements, helping the sector to improve everyday experiences for passengers at a local scale. Similarly, insight can be applied at a strategic level across the sector, notably ensuring that information provided to passengers is clear, accurate and consistent.

This Annual Review also describes the work undertaken to enhance our online services, which meet the latest accessibility standards and our relentless focus on service user experience.

Kevin Grix
CEO and Chief Ombudsman



A review of 2025 – Judith Turner

“A key success has been the strength of our engagement with the sector. Through training, workshops and ongoing dialogue, we have seen a clear willingness from rail providers to better understand complaints and improve how they are handled. This reflects an important shift towards a more proactive, customer-focused approach, where organisations are increasingly resolving issues early and at source.”

The past year has been one of continued progress for the Rail Ombudsman. As we reflect on 2025, it is encouraging to see that the investment made in training, engagement and shared learning is delivering real benefits for passengers and operators alike.

This progress is evident in the cases that come to us. While case volumes have grown, so too has their complexity. This is a positive development. It suggests that more straightforward complaints are being resolved directly by providers, allowing the Ombudsman to focus on more complex and sensitive disputes. In this way, the system is working as intended, with the Ombudsman acting as an independent final stage of resolution.

Internally, 2025 has also been a significant year for Ombuds Group. Being recognised as one of The Sunday Times' Best Places to Work is an achievement we are very proud of. It reflects our commitment to our people, our values, and the culture we are building. Supporting our colleagues is essential to delivering a high-quality service, and this recognition demonstrates the strength of that commitment.

Equally important is how accessible our service is to those who need it. Our independent user survey continues to show high levels of satisfaction with accessibility. This is fundamental to our role. An Ombudsman service must be open, transparent, and easy to use, ensuring that *all* consumers can access fair and impartial redress. Together, these developments highlight a system that is becoming more effective and responsive. While challenges remain, we will continue to build on this progress through collaboration, investment in our people, and a strong focus on fairness and accessibility, ensuring we deliver a service that passengers can trust.

Judith Turner

Deputy Chief Ombudsman



About us

The Rail Ombudsman is an independent, not-for-profit organisation approved by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and validated as a Full Member of the Ombudsman Association.

Our vision

Our vision is to work with the rail industry to inspire consumer confidence and resolve complaints without the need for costly litigation. We are neither a consumer champion nor a trade body. We operate independently to ensure fairness in every case.

What do we do?

We offer a free and expert service to investigate unresolved complaints about rail service providers.

We also support the rail industry to raise standards and improve services for passengers. We listen to both sides and seek to find a solution that the parties can both agree to. If that's not possible, we are empowered to make decisions which are binding upon Rail Service Providers; this means that they have to comply with our decisions.

We can also make recommendations to Rail Service Providers to improve the way their service is delivered and we publish case studies and data which can provide insight into common complaints.

Training

Training was once again at the heart of the Rail Ombudsman's engagement with the sector in 2025, with both short courses and accredited City & Guilds training being well attended by the industry.

The following organisations took part in our two-day accredited City & Guilds consumer law training during 2025.

This demonstrates their commitment to improving their people's understanding and skills, and to helping them improve the consumer experience:



Passenger Advisory Panel

Jon Walters (Chair until 15th October 2025)
Citizens Advice

Susan James (Chair from 16th October 2025)
London TravelWatch

Cynthia van der Linden
Ombudsrail (Belgian Rail Ombudsman)

Katherine McGowan-Downey
Transport Focus

Claire Walters/Lydia Horbur
Bus Users

Naomi Creutzfeldt
University of Westminster

Peter Stonely
Independent, Trading Standards experience

Owain Davies
Level Playing Field

Scheme Member Panel

Julie Allan
Govia Thameslink Railway – Chair

Micky Ball
National Rail Enquiries / Rail Delivery Group

Mike Ross
London North Eastern Railway

Jason Ness
Great Western Railway

Paul Jackson
Hull Trains

Julie Balmain
Nexus

Joanne Ferguson
Scotrail

Lynsey Flack
Greater Anglia

Nicola Mayers
Network Rail

James Shuttleworth
West Coast Railways

The UK's Best Places to Work in 2025

We marked a landmark moment in 2025 when we were officially recognised as one of The Sunday Times Best Places to Work in the UK.

Ranked among the country's top employers, this prestigious accolade is based entirely on independent employee feedback, making it a genuine reflection of the experience of our people. This recognition represents more than an award, it celebrates the culture we've built together across our organisation.



A people-first culture that delivers

Our people are at the heart of everything we do. The Sunday Times survey evaluates organisations across key areas including engagement, well-being, empowerment, reward and pride. Our results demonstrated exceptionally strong levels of satisfaction and commitment, providing clear evidence that we feel valued, supported and inspired in our roles.

Our pioneering 32-hour working week, with the option of a four-day schedule, continues to set us apart. By championing flexibility and trust, we've created an environment where high performance and work-life balance complement one another rather than compete.

Investing in wellbeing and growth

This recognition also reflects our ongoing investment in meaningful benefits and professional development. From private healthcare and generous annual leave to birthday leave and performance-based rewards, we are committed to supporting ourselves both inside and outside the workplace.

Equally important is our focus on professional growth. Through specialist training and support for professional memberships, we're encouraged to deepen our expertise and progress our careers—strengthening our organisation as a whole.

A collective achievement

Being named one of the UK's Best Places to Work is a shared accomplishment. It reflects our dedication, professionalism and collaborative spirit as a team. Each of us has played a role in shaping a workplace defined by respect, inclusivity and excellence.

Looking ahead, this recognition reinforces our commitment to listening.

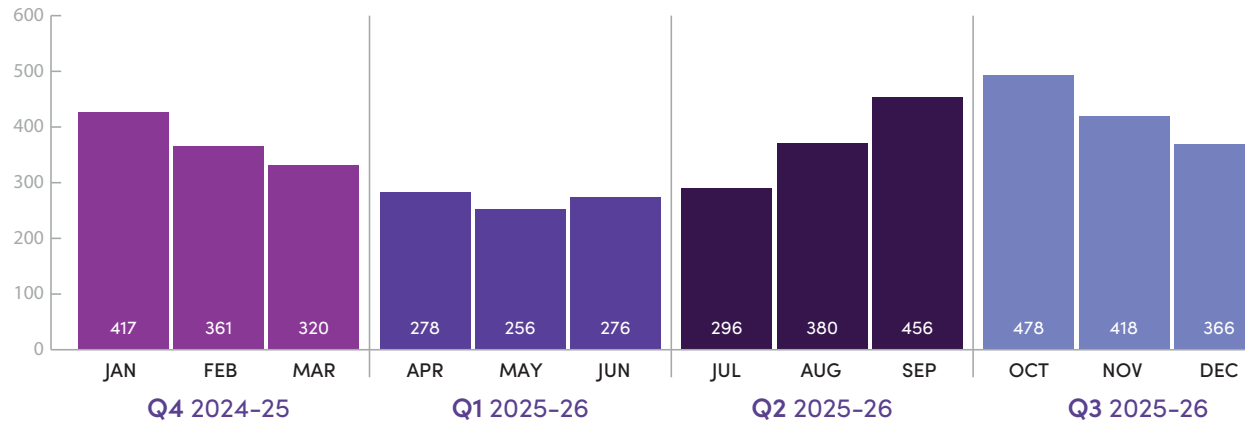
2025 in numbers



Our case results for 2025

Cases raised: 4 302 Cases closed: 4 284

Cases raised by month



Early Resolution, Mediation & Adjudication

Excluding cases found to be Out-of-Scope and rounded to the nearest whole number.



Early Resolution: 55%



Mediation: 21%



Adjudication: 24%

- Consumer complaint upheld (fully or in part) - 33%
- Consumer complaint not upheld - 67%

Activity and engagement overview

Early in 2025, the scheme's remit grew to cover Trainline's customers, meaning the Rail Ombudsman could now untangle often complex disputes involving train operators and the retailer, and deliver binding redress across all aspects.

The Rail Ombudsman aims to maintain a leading position on accessible service provision, and accessible transport remains a key focus area for insight and engagement, too. In addition to launching a new website meeting the latest accessibility standards, we have continued to engage alongside other stakeholders in the National Centre for Accessible Transport and Transport Policy Commission events, allowing us to bring the Rail Ombudsman's insights to workshop discussions at Westminster.

Engagement with our Advisory Panels has been productive, providing a forum for industry and stakeholder engagement. This has helped to ensure the Rail Ombudsman has access to information, a forum for discussing ways of working and a sounding board for opportunities to improve and develop our service. A combined meeting of the industry and passenger panels proved to be a successful format, the breadth of views contributing to lively and rounded discussion. We will continue to adopt this approach in future.

We have continued to work closely with colleagues at Transport Focus and London TravelWatch to ensure effective data and insight sharing. Given our complementary remits covering different aspects of the rail passenger experience, we have worked closely to ensure the processes for transferring complaints between our organisations are seamless and optimised for the passenger. We examined this theme through our Joint Working Experience Survey, which is published on our website.

The Office of Rail and Road continue to support the scheme through contract sponsorship arrangements. We have collaborated on insight and impact, with ORR and the Rail Ombudsman jointly engaging with the industry on recommendations for improvement arising from casework.

We set out to achieve demonstrable impact in the sector through engagement, recommendations, training and advice. By working closely with the sector and other stakeholders we have continued to identify opportunities to improve services to passengers. We have noted a long-term trend alongside our work to drive improvements to complaint handling, through better insight and appropriate training. The Office of Rail and Road's statistics show that in 2018-19, 5.9% of all complaints concerned complaint handling itself. By 2024/25, this had fallen to 2.5%. 2024/25 saw the continuation of a reduced complaint rate across the rail sector. Prior to the Rail Ombudsman's establishment in 2017/18, there were 29.7 complaints per 100,000 journeys. In 2024/25, this had fallen to 19.

By working constructively with a broad range of stakeholders, the Rail Ombudsman has continued to play its part in improving the experience of rail for consumers, providing insight to help tackle issues at source, and providing a fair, impartial backstop if things go wrong.



Written by **Matthew Thomas**
Director of Public Affairs

Recommendations to industry

In 2025, the Rail Ombudsman made 21 formal recommendations, either to individual Rail Service Providers (RSPs) or the industry more broadly. Examples of the recommendations that the Rail Ombudsman made during 2025:

Provision of information

Information that is perceived to be unclear, whether it's given to passengers before, during or after their journey, is a key driver of complaints made to the Rail Ombudsman. For instance, consumer understanding of information available online can lead to uncertainty regarding ticket options, pricing and refunds. One case related to a RSP not providing clear information on the refunds page of its website:

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP could make clearer that, as stated in the National Rail Conditions of Travel (NRCOT), when a passenger changes their Advance ticket from a more expensive fare to a less expensive fare, they are not entitled to a refund of the price difference.

A second example of a recommendation issued for lack of clarity at the point of ticket sale related to a case where a Consumer had purchased an upgrade through the RSP's website, but claimed it wasn't clear at the time of sale that this only applied to the outbound journey, not the return leg. The RSP apologised for any lack of clarity and acknowledged it may appear unclear that the fare applied to just one leg of the trip:

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP review its booking process to consider whether it can make upgrade information clearer.

Accessibility

Passenger assistance is crucial to many disabled passengers. Failed assistance can have a significant impact, both in the immediate term and in long-term confidence to travel.

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP consider putting in place a designated meeting point on the platform where passengers can wait if they require assistance. This is to aid Consumers who require assistance in boarding a train, but additionally, better enables station staff to identify passengers requiring assistance to board a train, where it has not been prebooked.

Responsibility for delay compensation

Multi-operator journeys are common and this can increase complexity for passengers, particularly if things go wrong.

The Rail Ombudsman recommends that the RSP clarify their stance on operator responsibility in such cases* and ensure that their complaint handlers provide passengers with consistent responses.

-
- This relates to a case where a Consumer experienced delays to two separate journeys. There were two legs to each journey. The delay to the Consumer's journey was caused by the second leg of the journey, despite delays to the first leg. The Consumer travelled with two different operators over the two legs and received contradictory guidance as to which they should seek to claim delay repay compensation from.

Case studies

Case study: Onward transport issue

The Issue

The Consumer complained about taxi costs they incurred following a train cancellation. They arrived at the train station and purchased a ticket for their journey. Following a delay of more than 30 minutes, an announcement was made that the train had been cancelled and that passengers should use the alternative services provided. This included a train which would take the Consumer to an earlier stop, as well as a replacement bus service.

Upon arriving at this alternative train station, the Consumer reported that the replacement bus service never arrived. After waiting for 45 minutes, they arranged a taxi to get home. The Consumer did not obtain a receipt for this journey.

The Consumer applied for Delay Repay compensation and sought reimbursement of the additional taxi fare. The Rail Service Provider (RSP) reimbursed the full ticket cost but did not provide additional compensation for the taxi fare. The Consumer applied to the Rail Ombudsman for a review of this decision.

The Response

The RSP responded to the dispute by confirming that it had paid ticket compensation in line with its policy, and that it had offered to reimburse the taxi costs in the form of National Rail Travel Vouchers. This offer was made as a gesture of goodwill, as without a taxi receipt the RSP was not prepared to provide a direct cash reimbursement.

What the Ombudsman did

The Ombudsman asked the Consumer to confirm whether they would accept reimbursement of the taxi costs in the form of National Rail Travel Vouchers. The Consumer rejected this, on the basis that they did not use train services often and felt that the train company should reimburse them as a matter of principle.

The Ombudsman confirmed that, without a receipt, it would not be possible to compel the RSP to provide a cash reimbursement. The Ombudsman advised that a cash reimbursement could be considered, but only with a receipt, and requested that the Consumer obtain a retrospective receipt from the taxi company.

The Consumer was unable to obtain a retrospective receipt. They were offered reimbursement of the taxi costs in vouchers again, but this was refused for the reason previously cited. The Ombudsman confirmed that the RSP would not alter its offer and, as no resolution was achieved at the Mediation stage, the case would progress to Adjudication.

At Adjudication, the Ombudsman was not able to order reimbursement of the taxi costs without proof of payment. However, the Ombudsman was able to confirm that no alternative service was provided by the RSP and, as a result, the Consumer had to make their own arrangements to get home. The Ombudsman decided that this fell within the 'low time and trouble' award and awarded £5.00. The decision was therefore split, and the claim was upheld in part.

Case studies

Case study: Travel and catering

The Issue

The Consumer complained that they had purchased a first-class seat upgrade via “Seatfrog”, primarily on the understanding that a meal would be provided, in line with the Rail Service Provider’s (RSP) advertised first-class offering. During the journey, the Consumer received only biscuits, a small piece of cake and a packet of crisps.

The Consumer asserted that the limited catering fell short of their expectations. They believed that the service provided was in breach of consumer law and advertising standards.

The Response

The RSP explained that catering is subject to availability, and the provision of First-Class facilities is primarily for larger seating space and access to a device charger. The RSP added that this is clearly set out on its website, including statements that food and drink availability cannot be guaranteed on all services.

As a gesture of goodwill, the RSP offered the Consumer £40.00 in compensation.

What the Ombudsman Did

The Rail Ombudsman engaged in Mediation between the RSP and the Consumer. During this process, the Consumer indicated that they would accept the goodwill offer of £40.00 on the condition that the RSP amended its advertising in relation to its First-Class catering provision. The Rail Ombudsman advised that it was outside of their remit to require changes to the RSP’s advertising materials and that, if the case proceeded to Adjudication, such an outcome could not be directed. As the matter could not be resolved at Mediation, the case proceeded to Adjudication.

When assessing the Consumer’s claim, the Rail Ombudsman considered the terms of the rail ticket, which are governed by the National Rail Conditions of Travel (NRCoT) and the RSP’s Passenger-Charter. Condition 31 of the NRCoT provides that a refund is only due where First Class accommodation is not provided or is fully occupied. As the Consumer did not dispute that they had access to their allocated First-Class seat, the Ombudsman found that there were no grounds to consider a refund on this basis.

The Ombudsman acknowledged the Consumer’s dissatisfaction with the standard of service received compared to their expectations of First-Class. In reviewing the RSP’s website, the Ombudsman noted that the primary emphasis under the “Benefits of First-Class Train Tickets” related to larger seating and additional space, rather than catering. While the website refers to passengers being able to “sit back, relax, and enjoy refreshments”, it also states that food and drink are subject to availability and may not be provided on all scheduled services.

The Consumer confirmed that they received biscuits, crisps and a piece of cake during the journey. On this basis, the Ombudsman was satisfied that refreshments were provided as advertised on the RSP’s website. While the Ombudsman acknowledged that the website refers to catering options such as sandwiches, snacks and meals, it was considered that the disclaimers regarding availability were sufficiently clear.

On balance, the Ombudsman recognised why the Consumer felt dissatisfied with their First-Class experience. However, they were satisfied that the service provided was largely consistent with the information available on the RSP’s website and that any differences did not amount to a significant reduction in service. The Ombudsman also confirmed that it was outside their remit to require the RSP to amend its advertising materials. As such, the complaint was not upheld.

Case studies

Case study: Physical contact when waking passenger during ticket check

The Issue

The Consumer travelled from Birmingham to Preston. During their journey, they were asleep when approached by the train manager for a ticket inspection.

The Consumer says the train manager pulled their shoulder twice to wake them, which they consider unnecessary and distressing. They deny being verbally abusive and say their sister witnessed the incident. The customer also disputes the Rail Service Provider (RSP)'s account that they were aggressive and that police involvement was being considered.

The Response

The RSP says the train manager made several verbal attempts to wake the Consumer and, when there was no response, became concerned for their welfare. The train manager states they tapped the Consumer's elbow and then moved their shoulder to gain a response.

The RSP says screenshots of tickets were initially shown and staff asked to view them within the ticketing application in line with policy. It says the interaction became confrontational and staff reported aggression from the passengers before disengaging. Following an internal investigation, including review of CCTV and staff reports, the RSP concluded there was no evidence of wrongdoing. It does not consider compensation appropriate but says feedback has been shared for training purposes.

The complaint falls within the Rail Ombudsman's remit under customer service staff.

What the Ombudsman did

During Mediation, the RSP confirmed it would not offer a resolution. The case progressed to Adjudication.

The Ombudsman reviewed evidence from both parties, including CCTV footage lasting approximately 40 seconds (without audio).

The footage shows the train manager making physical contact within seconds of arriving at the seat. After an initial tap to the shoulder, two pulling motions follow shortly afterwards. The Consumer and their sister wake and present tickets within around 30 seconds. The train manager then walks away. No visible confrontation is shown, although verbal exchanges cannot be verified due to the absence of audio.

The Ombudsman accepted that staff may be concerned about passenger welfare and that some passengers may attempt to avoid ticket checks. However, the footage did not show that less intrusive steps were attempted before physical contact was made. The escalation from tapping to pulling occurred quickly and without sufficient opportunity for the customer to respond.

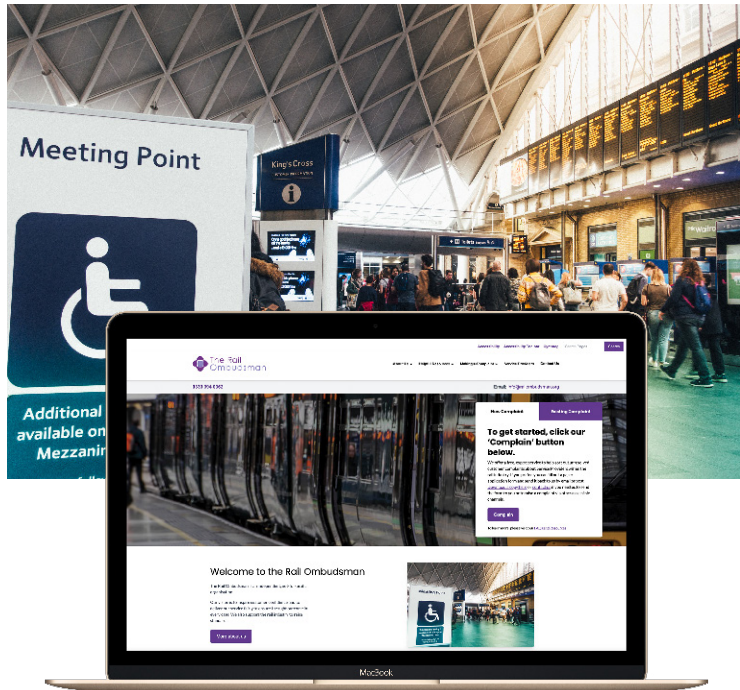
On balance, the Ombudsman did not consider the approach reasonable.

The Ombudsman also recommended refresher training on appropriate engagement with sleeping passengers during ticket checks.

If accepted, the decision is binding on the RSP and must be complied with within 20 working days. If not accepted, the Consumer may pursue the matter through an alternative route.

Launch of the Rail Ombudsman's redesigned website

A step-change for accessibility and user experience



www.railombudsman.org

In July 2025, the Rail Ombudsman unveiled a fully redesigned website that marks a significant milestone in its ongoing commitment to accessibility, clarity and service excellence. Developed in partnership with cloud-based platform Tizo and informed by detailed user feedback and accessibility testing commissioned by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR), the new site delivers a simpler, more intuitive and more inclusive digital experience for both consumers and rail industry stakeholders.

What's new?

Enhanced Accessibility Compliance – Built to conform with the latest WCAG 2.2 AA standards, ensuring the site is usable by people with a wide range of needs.

40 Working Days Calculator – A practical tool that helps users quickly check whether their complaint falls within the timeframe eligible for escalation to the Ombudsman.

Custom Accessibility Toolbar – Features screen reading and custom styling options to support a diverse range of user needs.

Improved Document Accessibility – Key documents are now presented in HTML format with a structured documents page for easier browsing.

British Sign Language Support – A QuickStart BSL video is available on the site, improving access for BSL users.

Kevin Grix, CEO & Chief Ombudsman at the Rail Ombudsman, emphasised that the website reflects the scheme's commitment to clarity, accessibility and continuous improvement, while the ORR's Director of Strategy, Policy and Reform welcomed the launch as a positive development for user experience across the rail complaints landscape.

What this means for users

The redesigned site strengthens the Ombudsman's role as a trusted, user-centred service. By prioritising accessibility and intuitive navigation, which makes it easier for passengers and service providers alike, to interact with, understand and benefit from the Ombudsman's work.

Consumer experience survey

Since the Rail Ombudsman's first year of operation, we have commissioned Ipsos, an independent research agency to conduct an annual conduct and consumer experience survey.

This enables us to measure and track the perceptions of service users and provides us with feedback that we can use to review our ways of working and seek improvements.

How does it work?

Ipsos contacted users of the Rail Ombudsman service whose cases were closed between January to December 2024. Their fieldwork was conducted between February and March 2025. Consumers were asked to complete a survey that explores the full spectrum of their interaction with the Rail Ombudsman. The data captured helps to create a profile of respondents and reflect the different types of outcomes a user of the Rail Ombudsman may see.

Key areas from the Executive Summary highlight:

- Accessibility remains a key area of strength
- An overall increase in user satisfaction
- Perception of staff being professional and knowledgeable remains positive

Accessibility remains a top-rated area both among all complaints handled by the Rail Ombudsman as well as for those with outcomes in favour of the rail consumer. This year perceptions have improved most around the Rail Ombudsman being helpful, informative and transparent.

Encouragingly, there is no evidence of any complainants experiencing specific challenges accessing services once they have contacted the Rail Ombudsman.

These insights will guide our ongoing work in ensuring fairness, transparency and accessibility for all rail passengers. We remain committed to working with the industry to implement positive changes.

The full survey can be viewed here:

https://media.railombudsman.org/Ipsos_Report_accessibility_c35cd055dd.pdf



Rail Ombudsman members



2025 Rail Ombudsman financial statements

(figures in £)

Income

Rail membership: 954,703

Cases: 3,350

Other income: 10,223

Total income: 968,276

Expenditure

Staff costs: 696,707

Operating costs: 260,719

Total expenditure: 957,426

Net profit: 10,850

The total fee for the third contract year (i.e. 26th November 2025 - 25th November 2026) of the ORR-sponsored contract is £1,055,555.12

Based on data extracted from the annual audited accounts of the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman for the 12 months ended 31 December 2025.



Kevin Grix

Chief Executive
and
Chief Ombudsman

Kevin was appointed Chief Executive and Chief Ombudsman at Dispute Resolution Ombudsman in 2008. He read law at university and graduated with honours, prior to studying to be a Barrister in London at the Inns of Court School of Law. He was called to the Bar by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, after successfully passing his Bar exams and is also professionally qualified by the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb). Kevin has served on the Board of Directors of the Ombudsman Association, a body that advises government and helps to oversee the ombudsman and complaint handling landscape in the UK, Ireland, British Overseas Territories and British Crown Dependencies. In November 2018, Kevin was invited to join the Board of Trustees at Citizens Advice Stevenage; in 2024, he was appointed Company Secretary.

Kevin has a dual-mandate, serving also (from the 1st January 2022) as the Chief Ombudsman at the Independent Football Ombudsman (IFO), a scheme that was established by the football authorities (The Football Association, The Premier League, and The Football League) to receive and adjudicate on complaints which have not been resolved at an earlier stage. Prior to this appointment, Kevin sat on the IFO's Advisory Board between 2015 and 2021, where he advised his predecessor on football-related casework and dispute resolution procedures.

Kevin has a keen interest in consumer affairs and has appeared several times on television, radio and in the press to provide expert opinion on a range of issues that affect consumers. He has a specialist understanding of consumer law and has written and presented a series of accredited courses and seminars in this field.

Kevin and his colleague, Deputy Chief Ombudsman Judith Turner, are the co-authors of Volume 28 of Atkin's Court Forms and Precedents on Ombudsman schemes in England and Wales. Published by LexisNexis in 2020, it forms part of the UK's only encyclopaedia of civil litigation forms, precedents and procedure and is a leading authority on the process that should be followed by complainants.

Kevin was previously employed for two years as in-house legal counsel at a global certification and testing business and in 2005 he was part of the team of advisers that set up the University of Hertfordshire Law Clinic, a pro-bono legal advice centre that served the local community. Kevin's previous non-legal and ADR career includes positions in the retail, financial and online gaming industries.



Judith Turner

Deputy Chief
Ombudsman

Judith read Law at King’s College London for three years before graduating with honours in 1998. She then went on to complete the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and a training contract before qualifying as a solicitor in 2001. She was previously employed by a City Law firm, practising in Commercial Law.

Judith joined the Ombudsman in 2011 and now specialises in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Since her appointment, she has written and presented a wide variety of accredited training courses on Consumer Law and Compliance tailored to the sectors within which the Ombudsman operates.

Judith is a regular speaker at industry and ombudsman conferences and events, and is the current Chair of the Ombudsman Association Policy Network. She also serves as a member of the Civil Justice Council's ADR Liaison Panel and has written extensively on ADR and consumer issues, including co-authoring ombudsman content for Atkins Court Forms.

Judith is the Rail Ombudsman's representative on the collaboration of European ADR schemes, Travel-Net and was instrumental in forging the relationship with Bus-Users UK, an example of the Rail Ombudsman's broad approach to engagement in order to share best-practice and influence the delivery of ADR more broadly.



Matthew Thomas

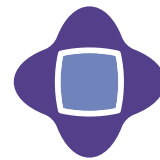
Director of
Public Affairs

Matt started working with the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman in 2017, and in June 2018 began helping to establish the new Rail Ombudsman. Matt brings diverse experience spanning both sales/commercial and policy roles, gained in the private and public sectors. As Director of Public Affairs, Matt has a strong customer service ethos and his responsibilities include stakeholder relationship management and contact management. As a keen advocate of rail travel with a first-hand appreciation of the benefits it offers, Matt is always looking to work collaboratively with the industry to see real impacts on the network.

Definitions

| | |
|---|--|
| Adjudication | The process by which, in the event that an Early Resolution and Mediation have been unsuccessful in reaching agreement between the Participating Rail Operating Company and the Consumer, the Rail Ombudsman will investigate and make an impartial decision on the case. |
| Complex Resolution | A stage in the Rail Ombudsman process where an Early Resolution is not possible. The Rail Ombudsman will first Mediate and then where applicable, Adjudicate to resolve an In-Scope complaint. |
| Consumer | An individual who has undertaken, or has attempted to undertake, a journey on a scheduled rail service, and has purchased (or has had purchased on their behalf), or has attempted to purchase, a ticket for that journey. |
| Early Resolution | A stage in the Rail Ombudsman process that provides an opportunity, in some circumstances, to quickly resolve an issue. |
| In-Scope | A complaint accepted as being eligible for the Rail Ombudsman scheme. |
| Mediation | The process by which, assisted by an independent view from the Rail Ombudsman, a settlement in relation to an In-Scope complaint can be negotiated to which both the Consumer and the Participating Rail Operating Company agree. |
| Out-of-Scope (Ineligible) | A complaint which is deemed ineligible for the Rail Ombudsman scheme and also for Transport Focus and London TravelWatch. The majority of complaints found to be ineligible are caused by Consumers approaching the Rail Ombudsman without a deadlock letter and before the end of the 40 working day period allowed to Participating Rail Operating Companies. |
| Out-of-Scope (Transferred) | A complaint that is outside the scope of the Rail Ombudsman scheme which is transferred to either Transport Focus or London TravelWatch. |
| Participating Rail Operating Company | A rail operating company which is part of the Rail Ombudsman scheme. We sometimes refer to these as Rail Service Providers (RSPs). The full list of Participating Rail Operating Companies is available here: www.railombudsman.org/about-us/Participating-service-providers |

The Rail
Ombudsman





www.railombudsman.org
www.ombuds.group

Premier House
1-5 Argyle Way
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Hertfordshire
SG1 2AD



Scan to view our LinkedIn profile

Registered Office

Dispute Resolution Ombudsman - Registered in England. No 8945616
Registered office: Premier House, 1-5 Argyle Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, England SG1 2AD



Inspiring Consumer Confidence
Since 1992