

Villagers astonished after rail services cut

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VILLAGERS say they have been left astonished by the decision to cut commuter services in Islip by Chiltern Railways.

New changes coming into force from December 12, now mean the 5.50pm commuter service will not stop at Islip and the 7.03am service moves to 7.18am.

Residents say this makes it near impossible to make the Oxford Parkway connection to London in the mornings, adding an extra 40 minutes to their journeys.

It comes just over a year since the new line between Oxford Parkway and London Marylebone was opened.

Islip parish councillor and former commuter Peter Collins said: "Our problem is that the village has gone through an awful lot of upheaval and didn't really want this originally.

"But we agreed it would be best for the village and thought there was the obligation for Chiltern to provide a service to London.

"For the past year it has made a huge difference, people have

DISCONNECTED: Islip commuters will no longer be able to make London link



BAD CONNECTION: Commuters say the decision not to stop at Islip will make it near impossible to make the Oxford Parkway stop to London

moved into the village to take advantage of the connections to London.

"Islip is already plagued with traffic problems and this will just make a lot more people get in their cars instead."

The village has had the benefits of a newly-renovated station and better connectivity to London since the Oxford Parkway, Bicester and London Marylebone line was opened last October.

The new changes will mean the direct connection between Oxford Parkway and the 7.03am service will no longer run and instead the new service from 7.18am will get to Oxford just one

minute before the London service departs.

After complaints regarding the removal of the 5.50pm London train, Chiltern has provided a service to stop at Islip after it reaches Oxford Parkway and back to Islip by 7.32pm.

Scot Peterson of OBRAG (Oxford Bicester Rail Action Group) said: "The change eliminates Islip as a commuter stop on the London line.

"It is a substantial waste of the taxpayer money that underwrote Network Rail's extensive work on the station."

Chiltern Railways apologised for the impact on villagers in Islip. A spokeswoman said: "Customer demand means that some trains are of a length where they must travel to sidings south of Oxford to form later services from the main platforms.

"To do this they must reach Oxford at particular times as this is a particularly congested section of the railway network. This has affected services from Islip.

"We recognise that the changes are not ideal and we apologise for the impact this will have."