

Dear Member



This is just a quick newsletter to provide you with a copy of today's Stakeholder news from FCC:

## FCC's Stakeholder news

Dear Stakeholder

We have continued to operate a revised timetable on the Thameslink route this week. Around 70% of the service is running and where possible we are adding extra services. We fully understand our customers continued frustration and we are doing everything possible to return a full service to the Thameslink route. The Great Northern route has been operating a normal service all week – except for some delays due to today's snow.

I can reassure you we are in frequent and consistent communication with our drivers and Aslef. We have senior managers visiting each of our driver depots on a regular basis to address any pay concerns. In addition, I understand letters from Aslef outlining the recommended acceptance of our offer were distributed this week. This will include a ballot paper for members on the pay offer and the result will be announced by Aslef after 13th January.

The outlook for the Christmas period on the Thameslink route will see timetables at stations outlining the service available. This will also detail the various Thameslink Programme engineering works that take place over this period. At this stage, it looks likely that we will continue a revised service for this period. Evening peak restrictions will not apply on the 24th, 29th, 30th and 31st. The website will have the latest travel information throughout this period: [www.firstcapitalconnect.co.uk](http://www.firstcapitalconnect.co.uk)

We will provide a full update on timetable plans from the 4th January as soon as possible.

Plans for compensation in addition to Delay Repay have been finalised and this will include a flexible ticket offer for Thameslink customers that equals five days free travel to be used in 2010. This will be provided from the middle of January and we will be advising customers of how to claim in the new year.

On behalf of everyone at First Capital Connect, I wish you a happy festive period.

## Compensation offer

Both BCA and APTU have been lobbying for additional compensation and are pleased that our efforts (and no doubt those of many others) have borne fruit.

My understanding of the 5 days travel offer is that this is subject to approval by Department for Transport because of the potential revenue impacts (refer our last newsletter) - amongst arguments put forward will be that it will encourage us to renew / discourage us from switching to other routes. I think these are all valid arguments.

I believe that the flexible ticket offer will be usable in peak hours, so it equates to 5 days commuting for the FCC portion of your journey (eg cannot use East Midlands Trains, will need to pay for the Underground / bus portion of your journey). The period of flexibility is such that it is expected to be relevant for someone who renews their season ticket in January 2011.

I have no more details about the offer. Goals I will pursue include:

1. Increasing the number of days offered;
2. Ensuring it covers weekly tickets [if it does cover them, you will definitely have to produce original tickets, since FCC records do not show you have purchased a series of tickets]. **I recommend you continue to keep expired tickets.**
  - a. **If this situation (the buying of a new weekly ticket each week) applies to you, please do let us know - I would like some evidence to support my case. It would be useful to get a brief explanation why you do not but monthlies.**
3. Ensuring it is useful to those of us about to renew an annual ticket.

### Almost finally ...

FCC's Stakeholder news concludes: "On behalf of everyone at First Capital Connect, I wish you a happy festive period." It is easy to dismiss this as insulting - but I don't think we should take it that way - there are many, many staff at FCC who have tried their best to run the best possible service, and I am sure there are many customer staff who have been shouted at and verbally abused.

We should remember this, and wish those FCC staff a Happy Christmas next week.

### And finally ...

This is probably the final APTU Newsletter of the year. In 2008, we managed 9 newsletters; my counting suggests this is the 18<sup>th</sup> this year. My hope is that we don't reach 36 next year!

*It only remains to wish you all the best for Christmas and a prosperous 2010 (with, we hope trouble free travel).*

Regards

*Neil*

Neil Middleton  
18 December 2009