

Dear Member



## Meeting with First Capital Connect & Network Rail on Thursday 27 May free travel & attendees

### Free travel

FCC have kindly confirmed that, if your normal journey does not include St Albans, then free travel is available for the meeting on Thursday night. To take up this offer, then please print off page 1 of this newsletter and show it to ticket staff if needed.

Our thanks to FCC for allowing free travel again.

### Attendees

We are expecting at least the following to attend:

FCC	Neal Lawson, Managing Director Michelle Smart, Customer Services Director Larry Heyman, Partnership & Integration Manager
Network Rail	Dyan Crowther, Route Director, Midland & Continental Fiona Dolman, Customer Relationship Executive - <i>First Capital Connect</i>

### Meeting practicalities – a reminder

The meeting is at 7:30pm at the Friends Meeting House, 7 Upper Lattimore Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3UD. This is a return to our venue of 2008. From the station<sup>Ⓜ</sup>, head down Victoria Street towards the centre of St Albans and turn right at the second set of traffic lights (where there is Cotswold Outdoor Sports shop) and the Friends Meeting house is on the approximately 4th on the left - see <http://tiny.cc/krhcc>.

↪ Victoria Street is straight ahead from platform 4; from platform 1, turn right and cross the bridge over the railway.

My aim is for the meeting to look forward, covering both the short term (for instance the planned improvements in communications) and the longer term (mainly Thameslink Programme).

An [ICalendar event file](http://tiny.cc/e7ryj) (<http://tiny.cc/e7ryj>) is available on the website for you to record this event in Outlook, Google Calendar etc.

### Treasurer's Note – Subscriptions

A reminder that 2010/11 subscriptions are now due - £3.00 for individual membership, £5.00 for joint membership residing at the same address.

There are 4 options for payment:

1. On Thursday night.
2. By cheque to Malcolm Howe (149 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5RD).
3. By Standing Order - please contact Malcolm ([malcolm.howe@aptu.org.uk](mailto:malcolm.howe@aptu.org.uk)) for more information.
4. Via PayPal at <http://www.aptu.org.uk/membership.html> (you do not need a PayPal account).

## Engineering work – including all station trains not serving St Pancras on Saturdays

FCC have responded to our question as to why the St Pancras <> Kentish Town engineering work takes place on Saturday rather than Sunday. The reply is set out below; it explains a number of key drivers to the weekend blockade. These include:

1. If London Bridge is closed, there will be no blockade (nowhere for Brighton main line trains to terminate).
2. A general rule of only one set of major engineering work between Brighton and Bedford; therefore closures of the Brighton Main Line (or indeed the recent closures at Luton) mean there will be not normally be a blockade.
3. Because '1' & '2' normally take place on just the Sunday, the core is open more often on Sunday than Saturday.
4. Because they want to work most weekends between St Pancras and Kentish Town, since the core is open more often on Sunday, Saturday is the more sensible option.

In response to other comments, FCC have confirmed that Oyster readers will be available at the high level platforms - a permanent reader is being (or just has been) installed; until this happens, a temporary one will be available.

### FCC's detailed reply

Throughout the negotiations involved within the industry engineering planning process, FCC has always maintained that it was not acceptable to have engineering work through the core section (St. Pancras-Blackfriars) and on the Brighton Main Line at the same time. Also, when Network Rail require engineering work affecting London Bridge, the core section again needs to be open as we have no other terminating location south of the river.

As the majority of the Brighton Main Line and London Bridge engineering work takes place on a Sunday, the consequence is that the core section engineering work on a Sunday is more susceptible to change than the core section engineering work on a Saturday.

Towards the latter part of last year the Thameslink programme, through Network Rail engineering access planning, approached us with additional instances of core section engineering work requiring extension to Kentish Town. The access required resulted in FCC services being unable to access St. Pancras A&B, with the timetabling solution being 4 trains per hour semi-fast) into St. Pancras High Level and 2 trains per hour (all stations) to Kentish Town.

The additional level, instances and nature of access required by the Thameslink Project meant that Saturday engineering blocks by their more 'fixed' nature was the most efficient solution both from an engineering work basis and a timetable basis and was endorsed as such by First Capital Connect.

Regards

*Neil*

Neil Middleton  
23 May 2010