

LETTERS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 1.1. A member of the public has written to the Committee in relation to a fall that she experienced when travelling on the tram. She considers that her fall could have been prevented if there had been additional poles or handles to restrain her.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. The views of the Committee are sought.

3. CONTENTS OF LETTER (see Appendix)

- 3.1. The correspondent, who is 80 years old, boarded a tram at The Forest in September. The tram started to move before she had sat down, causing her to lose balance and fall against a pole. She sustained a gash to her head and, following examination at a local health centre, she was taken by ambulance to A and E at the Queens Medical Centre, where stiches were administered.
- 3.2. She considers that her fall occurred because there was no convenient pole or handle to restrain her and feels that a more serious injury could have been sustained by somebody who is less able-bodied.
- 3.3. A copy of the letter has been forwarded to Nottingham Trams (NTL). NTL has responded (see Appendix) by confirming that the control room was contacted at the time about the incident by another member of the public, however insufficient details were provided to carry out an investigation. NTL explain that the trams are fully Health and Safety compliant and that there are handrails, handholds and grab-poles located in optimal positions on the backs of seats and next to the doors. They have offered their apologies and have stressed that the health and safety of customers is of the utmost importance.
- 3.4. The requirements for the spacing of hand-holds and grab-poles on trams are prescribed in detail in the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations. These require that a handrail is fitted at intervals of not more than 1050 millimetres in the longitudinal plane of the vehicle and that a handhold is fitted to the top of the back of each seat which faces towards the end of a vehicle and which is next to a gangway. The regulations also prescribe details regarding the shape, diameter and curvature of handrails and handholds and require them to have slip-resistant surfaces and to contrast with their adjacent surroundings. All of the trams operating on NET comply with these regulations.

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Appendix

17th September 2014

GNLRTAC
Customer Comments
NET Depot
Wilkinson Street
NOTTINGHAM NG7 7NW

Dear Sirs

I travelled on your tram system on the 11th September at 3 minutes to 4 o'clock and sustained a head injury as follows.

Arriving at the tram station my companion and I crossed the tracks in front of the standing train having been motioned across the lines by the driver. On entering the first coach of the tram named 'Angela Alcock' I was attempting to sit on the right-hand pair of seats facing backwards. Before I could locate myself, the train started with a great lurch that flung me off balance hurtling me at great speed across the carriage to the left-hand side of the compartment and ending in a heavy impact against a yellow hand pole.

A fellow passenger suggested that I should go for medical help to the Health Centre in Upper Parliament Street where the gash was examined. It was decided here that I needed to go to A & E at the Queens Medical Centre. An ambulance was called to take me. In the meantime my companion phoned yourselves at 4.40pm on your helpline at the Forest train stop to notify you of the accident.

At the hospital I was assessed by the doctor and waited until 9 o'clock to have 7 stitches in the wound.

One of the reasons why this traumatic accident happened to me was that there was no hand pole at the side of these two seats or retaining bar at the front of them. I am in my 80th year and fortunately am able to walk well. However, if this same situation had occurred to anyone else there is no possible way of holding on to any restraining item. I suggest that you address this situation with the hindsight of this accident that could well have resulted in a fatality.

I look forward to your reply and comments.

Yours sincerely



NOTTINGHAM EXPRESS TRANSIT

13th October 2014

Dear

With regard to your letter dated 17th September 2014 and received by ourselves 07th October 2014, we were sorry to read of your injuries and we do hope that you are well on the way to a full recovery.

We can confirm that our Customer Service Team answered a call from the Passenger Help Point and were advised that a passenger was on their way to seek medical assistance. Unfortunately the caller gave no actual details for an investigation to commence at that time as they ended the call due to being in a rush to depart.

May we advise that all our trams are fully compliant with regard to Health and Safety regulations. There are handrails next to the doors as well as hand holds on the seats and grab poles placed at optimal positions for customer convenience.

The health and safety of our customers is of upmost importance and we would like to offer our apologies if you feel that your expectations have not been met.

Your comments have been logged and will be viewed by our Senior Management Team.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Cantrill', is written over a light grey signature line.

Louise Cantrill
NET Customer Services

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