

CORRESPONDENT B

Private and Confidential

The Greater Nottingham Light Rapid Transit Advisory Committee (GNLRTAC),
c/o NET Project Office,
Loxley House,
Station Street,
Nottingham,
NG2 3NG

Sunday 26th July 2015

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to make a complaint regarding the appalling treatment my family and I have received on two separate occasions when using the NET tram between Phoenix Park and Nottingham City centre.

Firstly, on 1st June 2015 I was travelling to the Theatre Royal in Nottingham to watch a production with my Mother and Sister. Having not travelled on the tram network for some time, I was unfamiliar with the ticket system whereby there is now a requirement to purchase a ticket from the platform before entering the tram. My Mother had purchased a ticket in which we believed would cover us all for the journey, however upon inspection from the conductor at the next stop we were advised that we had not paid enough. It was at this point that we experienced what I consider to be extremely poor customer service, disproportionate to the error made. The conductor not only advised us that we had paid the wrong amount but continued to threaten us with a £50 fine each- this was said in an angry and threatening tone. Furthermore we were marched off the tram at the next stop (Cinderhill), escorted to the ticket machine in the rain and instructed to purchase a further ticket. The tram then left without us, meaning that we had to wait for the next tram, get back on it to return to Phoenix Park and start the journey all over again. This meant that we were late for the theatre and it left us generally feeling upset, frustrated and humiliated from the experience, which was without any subtlety or understanding, in front of a number of other passengers.

On Wednesday 1st July 2015 my Mother chose to use the tram as transport into Nottingham whereby she was meeting a friend. Again she boarded the tram at Phoenix Park, where her car was parked. I understand that it was an exceptionally hot day on this date and that the impact of this may have been unforeseen. Upon my Mother's return journey to Phoenix Park she boarded the tram at the Lace Market. She was aware that the tram made longer pauses at each stop along the route, however received no communication regarding this or any other potential technical fault. At the point of reaching the Highbury Vale stop the tram came to a halt beyond the platform, the conductors advised that there was a technical fault (as power failure) and that the tram would progress no further. My Mother, along with the rest of the passengers, were then told to leave the tram, onto the tram track. Without any alternative suggestion of how my Mother or others could make it back to Phoenix Park, other passengers began to walk along the track to Phoenix Park, unescorted by NET tram officials. Deciding this was too dangerous and considering the oppressive heat, my Mother decided to return to

the Highbury Vale stop, the safest option. There were no NET tram officials on hand to offer support to passengers or provide further information. When my Mother had asked how long before the tram would be available she was advised that they didn't know, maybe an hour. In an attempt to get back home my Mother was left with no other option than to walk into Highbury Vale, an area that she is not at all acquainted with. She was left feeling vulnerable and exhausted due to the heat to the point whereby she was helped by a local resident at the point of fainting.

I find it absolutely appalling that you would take such action to disembark customers from the tram in such conditions with no consideration for their health, safety and wellbeing. My Mother was left abandoned in an unfamiliar area, had to put her faith in a stranger to provide support when she fell ill whilst arrangements were made for a family member to collect her and return her to her car at Phoenix Park. Had she been asked to leave the tram at the Market Square, Forest or Wilkinson Street, which are main tram stops, whereby she could have safely made alternative arrangements, she could have arranged alternative transport such as a taxi or the bus. Her health and safety was compromised by the actions of NET trams.

Whilst I acknowledge that in the latter scenario the extreme weather situation may have had an unforeseen impact on the tram network, I find it wholly unacceptable to put passengers in danger by asking them to leave the tram without support to return to their destination. Furthermore, my Mother had paid for the ticket in good faith that you would provide a service in full, to which there has been no recompense. In both scenarios NET trams have fallen short of any standards of customer service and have truly had a significant negative impact on myself and my family.

I therefore request a response in writing to this complaint with the view of restoring our faith in the ability of the NET tram network. Should you fail to provide an adequate response I will forward this complaint to Councillor Jane Urquhart who I understand is a member of the NET partnership/ development for Nottingham.

I trust you will provide a response as requested.

Yours faithfully,

14th Aug 2015

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting Nottingham Trams.

The concerns raised in your letter dated the 26th of July 2015 have now been investigated by our Service Delivery Manager.

With regard to your travel with us on the 1st of June 2015, we are satisfied that our travel officers were following procedure as stated in our conditions of carriage. Any customer found to be travelling without a valid ticket or validated pass for the journey being made, will be asked to leave the tram at the next stop. A ticket had been purchased but it was not relevant for your travel. On departing the tram our officer took you to the ticket machine to advise of the correct ticket, this was deemed to be appropriate under the circumstances rather than the issue of penalty fare notices. Our travel officers are not permitted to hold the trams as they operate to a scheduled timetable. We were saddened to read that you perceived our officer to be threatening as this is certainly not their intention. Their practise in these circumstances is to advise our customers of our terms and conditions of travel.

The unfortunate situation on the 1st of July 2015 was exacerbated by the exceptionally hot weather. Our records show that there were no previous faults with any of the trams that were in the section of track where the power failure occurred. The longer pauses your mother experienced at the tram stops prior to the disruption may have been caused by the location of the tram in front. Our customers were assisted off the tram in accordance with our health and safety procedure. When a tram fails away from the tram stop we have a duty of care to escort our customers to the nearest place of safety, in this case it was Highbury Vale tram stop.

With a disruption it is difficult to estimate how long it will be before service can resume. All available travel officers immediately went to the nearest tram stops to assist in whatever way they could. We can assure you that any customer wishing to remain at the tram stop was more than welcome.

We are sorry to read that your mother felt unwell and do hope that she had a speedy recovery, may we kindly ask that you extend our best wishes to her. We will gladly recompense her for the fare paid, this will be a complimentary day pass valid on the date of

her choosing. Please provide us with your mother's name, address and the date she wishes to travel. This can be sent to info@thetram.net quoting reference 19947.

We apologise that we were unable to meet yours and your mothers' customer expectations on these occasions, we sincerely hope that you both continue to travel with us enabling us to restore your good opinion.

Your complaint has been recorded and will be viewed by our Senior Management Team.

Kind Regards.

Louise

NET Customer Services