

CORRESPONDENCE FROM MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- 1.1. A member of the public has written to the Committee and to the tram operator with regard to the level of customer service that was provided during the period of tram disruption that occurred in July.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. The views of the Committee are sought.

3. DETAILS OF CORRESPONDENCE

- 3.1. On 21st July, the correspondent parked at Hucknall Park and Ride with the intention of travelling on the tram to the city centre. This was one of four days on which trams were unable to operate between David Lane and The Forest because of the damage caused to the overhead line by a defective tram pantograph.
- 3.2. During the period of disruption, a bus replacement service operated from Bulwell Bus Station to transport customers who had travelled from Hucknall to the Forest Park and Ride, from where they were able to continue their southbound journeys. The bus station is approximately 170 metres from Bulwell Tramstop. Regular public address announcements were broadcast on platforms and on trams to inform customers of the alternative arrangements, and posters were displayed in tram shelters. This information was also displayed on the NET website and on social media pages. At the time that the correspondent travelled, two members of staff were deployed at Bulwell Tramstop to assist customers.
- 3.3. The correspondent did not hear the passenger announcements at Hucknall and did not see the posters and he was hence unaware of the disruption to service before boarding the tram. He therefore purchased tickets from a platform ticket machine. Once on the tram, the correspondent complains that the public address announcements were inaudible and that, on alighting at Bulwell, the bus replacement service was difficult to locate and too distant from the tramstop for his mobility impaired companion to access. He therefore returned to Hucknall on the tram and drove into Nottingham in his car.
- 3.4. The correspondent considers that the information provided to customers was inadequate and that the location of the replacement bus stop was inconvenient. He has therefore requested that the tram operator refunds his fare.
- 3.5. Nottingham Trams have apologised to the correspondent for his poor experience and for the inconvenience caused and have offered him a full refund for the tickets purchased.

3.6. A copy of the correspondence can be found at Appendix A.

Andy Holdstock

NET Project Office

Nottingham City Council

1. Letter from Correspondent of 22nd July

NET Tram disruption Friday 21st July 2017

My companion and I regularly use the tram to travel between Hucknall and Nottingham city centre.

On Friday 21st July we parked our car at Hucknall and purchased 2 Day Adult tickets from the ticket machine at the edge of the car park and proceeded onto the platform to board the tram.

It was only when on the tram that it became apparent there was a service disruption and the tram was only travelling as far as David Lane.

There was an announcement over the PA in the tram but this was inaudible and it appeared from other passengers that there was a bus replacement service operating from Bulwell.

There was confusion over the temporary arrangements, but it appeared we had to leave the tram at Bulwell to catch a bus replacement service to a further tram stop.

However, the bus replacement service was operating at some point distant from the tram stop and this option was not viable as my companion has mobility limitations, it was also unclear how to find the location of the service.

The only viable option was to return by tram to Hucknall and travel by car into Nottingham city centre.

This episode was disappointing for many reasons as we were only made aware of the tram service disruption after having already bought tickets, additionally there was confusion over alternative arrangements, and then the inconvenience of having to use a car to get to the city centre.

There should have been better contingency planning which included clear notification on the ticket machine at Hucknall that there was a service disruption, if this had been the case then we would not have purchased tickets. We have taken photographs of the ticket machine which show no indication of a disruption to the service.

I would also suggest that if you are going to run a replacement bus service between tram stops then at least ensure the bus service departs from the tram stop itself and not some unclear distant point.

We are great fans of the tram service and hope to use the system again in future and we understand that there will be unavoidable disruption from time to time, but please next time use better contingency planning and notification to ensure that passengers are made aware of the disruption before ticket purchase, it was a very disappointing episode.

I am seeking a refund for the £8 spent on the 2 Adult day tickets (copies of tickets attached) and look forward to a speedy reimbursement

Yours Sincerely

2. Email of 26th July from Nottingham Trams

Good Morning [REDACTED]

We are sorry to hear your journey was delayed after the disruption to service on the 21/07/2017. This was a result of a section of overhead line needing to be replaced at Basford. On close inspection not only did we have to replace the overhead line but also the supporting structure.

We do aim to run a full and uninterrupted service at all times and sincerely apologise for the inconvenience caused to yourself.

We fully appreciate the frustration at the inconvenience caused during a disruption to service, performance levels for NET are predominantly very high and a disruption as severe as that on the 18th-21st of July 2017 is very rare.

We have been updating our social medias and website with any disruptions to our service so the message of any increased wait times and alterative transport options was available for all to see.

We also had messaged going out to all stops via our PA system. We apologies for the inaudible PA announcements as reported in your letter and email.

Please accept our apologies that we could not assist you to complete your journey and are happy to offer you a refund.
For a day's travel £8.00.

If you would like the refund by card. Please contact us on 0115 9427777 with your long card number.

If you would prefer a cash payment, please take the this email into our Travel Centre on King Street where a full cash refund will be provided.

We do hope you have not been deterred from journeying with us in the future and can confirm your feedback will be passed on to our Senior Management Team.

Kind Regards