



MK Rail Users

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A Better Deal for the New City's Rail Users

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16 March 2009

Mr. Steve Banaghan,
Managing Director,
London Midland,
PO Box 4323,
Birmingham,
B2 4JB.

Dear Steve,

I received with anticipation, the news that London Midland would be making a gesture to those who have suffered the degeneration of service since the launch of the new timetable. London Midland's failings are well documented and I see no need to go into them here, only to say that they are of such magnitude that it was anticipated, but not expected, that compensation would be paid at a level commensurate with the hardship your Company has caused.

I think it is fair to say that a 'Thank You' of 3 days "free travel" falls considerably short of what your beleaguered passengers should expect. This 'Thank You' represents no cost implication to London Midland and indeed, to the traveller, it, at best, only delays by three days the payment of the already astronomical cost of travelling to and from work. At its extreme, it will actually result in increased revenue for London Midland, should those 3 days push the ticket holder from one fare year into the next (of course assuming that you will be allowed to not reduce your fares in the event of negative inflation). It is also cynical to select a band of passengers who had valid tickets between two arbitrary dates in February, when some will have suffered at the height of your troubles, yet, for whatever reason, did not have a valid ticket within this period.

You are aware that we have a very successful website and before responding we canvassed visitors to the site to express their views on your 'Thank You'. As an astute person, I know you will not be surprised that we received no favourable comments and indeed it is fair to say that without exception they found the words 'Thank You' thoroughly insulting and the level of the gesture one akin to a two fingered gesture rather than one of remorse.

For the sake of goodwill towards your Customers, MK Rail Users urge London Midland to show genuine remorse for a service badly delivered, reconsider the wording of your announcement and make the compensation in monetary terms at a level that reflects the shambolic level of service passengers have had to endure over the last 3 months and indeed prior to that.

In this instance, we will look back, to the days of Silverlink when passengers were treated with respect and, when service was disrupted, recompensed at a level that reflected the breakdown in the service they offered. Maybe you can look back and learn.

I do hope you can respond in a positive vein and finally support your claim that 'Customer is King'

Yours sincerely

Philip Lawton
Chair, MK Rail Users

MK – Campaign for Real Rail