



# 2010 PRESS RELEASE

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## **MP wins First Capital Connect meeting with passengers**

### **February 18<sup>th</sup> rush hour date at Bedford Station**

North East Bedfordshire MP Alistair Burt said today that he was pleased that First Capital Connect managers have now fixed a date for a "Meet the Managers" session with passengers in Bedford. The meeting follows the significant criticism levelled at First Capital Connect for its recent failures in performance, and an agreement made with MPs that such meetings were essential to ensure the company understood exactly how passengers felt.

Alistair Burt said "constituents have made very clear to me that they are at the end of their tether with First Capital Connect, particularly those who use the Thameslink line to London regularly and have been hugely affected by the recent disruption in services. Whilst no one can be blamed for the weather, the drivers dispute appeared to have been poorly handled, regular changes in management have given no sense of certainty, and delayed improvements worry passengers who have already put up with a great deal.

The opportunity between 5pm and 7.30pm on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February, with the support of Bedford Commuters Association, should give passengers their chance to talk directly to the company. I was present at a similar session in St Albans last Friday which appeared to work well. I am sure that the opportunity will be taken by passengers, who are right to anticipate a significant improvement in performance if First Capital Connect is to retain its franchise".

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