



2010 PRESS RELEASE

ALISTAIR BURT MP
North East Bedfordshire

burta@parliament.uk

0207 219 8132 /01767 313385
01234 314491 /07764 364452

DATE 23rd February 2010

Page(s) 1

PRESSURE KEPT UP ON FIRST CAPITAL AND THAMESLINK PROGRAMME

North East Bedfordshire MP has welcomed last week's 'Meet the Managers' session at Bedford station with First Capital Connect. Such meetings had been demanded by local MPs along the Thameslink route on behalf of passengers affected by recent poor performance, which had caused much anger.

Alistair Burt said 'There seemed to be a good turnout by FCC staff, and I hope passengers were able to tackle them, and ask questions they had wanted to raise. I would like to thank Bedford Commuters Association for their help in arranging the session.

I believe public expressions of anger have had an impact on the Company. They must now deliver on their promises of improved reliability, and continue their programme of investment which passengers pay a great deal for. If not, their future would be at risk'

Mr Burt also attended a meeting of the All Party Thameslink Group in the House of Commons Tuesday 23rd February to discuss the current progress of the scheme with Network Rail and FCC.

'I am disappointed to hear of the delay until 2016 due to technical difficulties of work at London Bridge, but recognise how important it is to get things right. The tragedy in Brussels last week reminds us all of the pressures on a busy rail system, operating at peak capacity at rush hour in a capital city.

The programme still aims to have the Blackfriars rail and underground link back in service by the end of 2011. Whilst we remember the long disappointment associated with the ill fated Thameslink 2000, this programme is now finally proceeding, and the Parliamentary oversight of the All Party group enables scrutiny to be delivered on constituents behalf.'

<ENDS>

Contacts: Alistair Burt MP 0207 219 8132 / 07764 364452