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Dear All,

Bus passenger disruption hits the headlines again in the West of England

Just over a year ago we saw James Freeman from First West of England apologise for the impact on passengers as a result of the poor performance of buses in Bristol and the wider region. Today we see the same.

The flagship Metrobus has been subject to serious delays in South Gloucestershire as a result of heavy congestion and roadworks, leaving passengers stranded and subject to long delays.

We know that passengers are frustrated, the West of England scored poorly in our Bus Passenger survey last year, which we launched in Bristol in March 2019 and hoped this would re-invigorate efforts to improve services, but a year later we continue to see the same headlines.

Passengers want reliable bus services they can trust to travel around this region. Negative headlines will also discourage current non-users from trying the bus.

We urge the local authorities and First West of England to work together, through an effective bus partnership or alliance, to tackle the impact congestion is having on the delivery of bus services across the area. The local authorities should collectively develop a consistent approach to managing traffic in the region to minimise the impact congestion has on bus services. In particular we want to see:

- A consistent approach to the management of the highway network – passengers don't recognise administrative boundaries and expect local councils to work together to manage traffic.
- Actively manage and co-ordinate roadworks to minimise disruption.
- Enforcement of bus stops, bus lanes and waiting restrictions so that buses are not held up by indiscriminate parking.
- Provision of bus priority to protect buses from the congestion hotspots.
- Improved communication to passengers when disruption does occur.



We urge all parties to come together and work towards stabilising the performance of the bus network in the region, short term direct action is now needed to restore passengers' confidence in their bus service.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Smith
Chief executive