



ECLIPSE

FAREHAM - GOSPORT
CUSTOMER CHARTER



www.firstgroup.com



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About BRT Eclipse

Launched in April 2012, the award-winning Eclipse Bus Rapid Transit network is designed to raise the bus experience to the next level for passengers in South East Hampshire. First's new E1 and E2 services use the new, dedicated Eclipse busway between Gosport and Fareham to bypass the heavily congested A32, giving passengers the reliability they need to plan their journeys. The new Eclipse buses are stunning, both inside and out, with their striking purple and gold livery, individual leather seats, on-board Wi-Fi, under-seat lighting, and audible and visual 'next stop' announcements. To further enhance the Eclipse experience, real-time bus arrivals information is displayed in stops on the busway, as well as at other major stops, online at **www.eclipse-bus.co.uk** and via handheld devices using the unique QR code for each stop.

Introduction

We have great pleasure in introducing the BRT Eclipse new Customer Charter. Our vision at First is to be the number one choice for public transport in addition to providing our customers with a safe, reliable and cost effective means of bus travel throughout the region.

To demonstrate our commitments to you, we have produced this Customer Charter which sets out our service pledges to our customers. We welcome comments on this Customer Charter. We guarantee that we will review it regularly to ensure that it meets our customers' needs and that it is a fair reflection of the level of service we aim to provide. Over the next few pages, you will find information on the service standards you can expect to receive from us and how we are committed to making your journey as easy as possible.

This Customer Charter applies to all bus services operated by First on the BRT Eclipse route.

We are committed to looking after our customers' interests and will continuously review what we need to do to ensure that we achieve that aim. More specifically, we will deliver consistent standards for all bus services as follows:

- ★ The provision of clear printed timetable information (where this is not undertaken by the Local Authority).
- ★ The maintenance of up-to-date roadside or bus station information (where this is not undertaken by the Local Authority).
- ★ The operation and funding of Traveline (the national travel telephone enquiry service).
- ★ The provision of user friendly internet information services.
- ★ Accurate information and assistance during disruptions to our services.

More specifically, we will:

- ★ Ensure that you are able to travel safely and in clean and comfortable conditions.
- ★ Do everything within our control to operate our services as advertised.
- ★ Treat everyone fairly and equally regardless of disability, gender, age, racial or ethnic origin, religion, belief or sexual orientation.
- ★ Treat you with courtesy and respect.
- ★ Respond promptly to your enquiries.
- ★ Investigate in detail any issues brought to our attention with a view to addressing any concerns raised.
- ★ Inform you of the standard of service you can expect from us.

If we fail to meet any part of these commitments, please let us know.

Keeping You Informed

We know that it is important for you to get information about our services prior to starting your journey and on the day you wish to travel.

Our aim is to provide you with:

- ★ Comprehensive, accurate and timely timetable information, giving the service number, departure time and stops that will be displayed at each of our principal bus stops. Information will also be available at major interchange points.
- ★ Customer information produced in a format that is clear and user-friendly.
- ★ Timetables and other information material at bus stations, travel shops and other public locations.
- ★ Advance information informing customers of changes to services as a result of Public Holidays, known road works or special events that will be produced at least two weeks in advance (where we are also notified by the relevant body in a timely manner). Wherever possible, such information will be displayed at relevant bus stops, bus stations and on our website.
- ★ As much notice as possible in the event of unplanned or emergency service alterations. We will endeavour to keep disruption to a minimum.
- ★ New timetable leaflets at least two weeks prior to their commencement.
- ★ A clearly identifiable bus route and destination. All buses will show the correct number and destination when in service and display the Sorry, out of service sign when not in service.
- ★ Information about our services on our Internet site, www.firstgroup.com and www.3.hants.gov.uk/eclipse there is also a Smartphone text version available.

- ★ Traveline provides comprehensive information on all our bus services. First will continue to promote and support this national bus information service. Traveline can be contacted on **0871 200 22 33** (calls cost 10p per minute plus network extras) or by visiting the website at **www.traveline.info**.



Hampshire
County Council



Expiry date
22 AUG 2017

Anna Guildford
633597 0201 0000 0001

Concessionary travel funded by
HM Government with your local authority



This pass is issued subject to terms and conditions.

Concessionary travel information and reporting of lost passes:

Tel: 0845 045 8355

e mail: concessionary.fares@hants.gov.uk

web: www.hants.gov.uk/concessionary-travel

If found or for cancellation,
please return to:
Hampshire Farepass
PO Box 148
Winchester
SO23 8WP



Hampshire
County Council



traveline
public transport info

0871 200 22 33

calls from landlines cost
10p per minute

www.traveline.info

123456

Buying a ticket

A full range of Day, Week and Month tickets can be purchased on bus. 3 Month, 6 Month and Annual tickets can be purchased from our travel shops and online from our website at

www.firstgroup.com/etickets.

We will participate in local concessionary travel schemes allowing concessionary passes subject to local scheme rules.

We will seek to serve you in a professional and efficient way.

Please ensure you always hold a valid ticket/pass while travelling on our services. First has a policy where a standard ticket (subject to terms and conditions of carriage) may be issued at the discretion of our Inspection Team for the following ticket offences:

- ★ Out of date ticket/pass
- ★ Incorrect Zone usage
- ★ Over riding
- ★ Scanned and defaced ticket/pass
- ★ No ticket/pass presented on request
- ★ Any other ticket irregularities as identified by the Inspection Team

Customers with special needs

We are constantly looking at ways of improving services for our customers with limited mobility who wish to travel by bus.

We will try to provide spaces as far as is practicable in our vehicles for customers using standard wheelchairs or powered wheelchairs up to a maximum width of 67cm and length of 120cm.

Unfortunately, mobility scooters and other motor operated mobility vehicles cannot always be carried. If you would like us to undertake an assessment of your mobility vehicle for authorisation to travel, please contact our Customer Service team (see Contact Us on back page). They will make the necessary arrangements for you. You will then receive a “Passport to Travel” showing that your mobility vehicle is acceptable for transportation on our vehicles.

Our drivers will always endeavour to stop as close to any kerb as is possible and to use the ramp where fitted. We would expect our drivers to do this as a matter of course, but please ask if this does not happen.

We will consult with the Royal Institute for the Blind and Action on Hearing Loss regarding information on our buses. Eclipse buses have audio announcements on board to inform our passengers of the next stop.

First is pleased to support the Guide Dogs Travel Charter. For further information, please e-mail guidedogs@gdba.org.uk.



- ★ We work closely with local disability groups to establish productive relationships.
- ★ We work closely with local organisations to promote the Safe Haven scheme which has been set up to offer people with learning difficulties a place to go if they encounter a problem. First has agreed that the travel shops and bus stations in our operating area will be safe havens, and that our staff will do what they can to help a person in distress. You can download your own Safe Journey card from our website at www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/hampshire/bus_access/safe_journey_card/

All BRT Eclipse vehicles are low floor, easy access buses which are designed to carry wheelchairs and buggies.

On board these vehicles there is a dedicated space for one wheelchair user. If the wheelchair space is occupied by a non-wheelchair user, the driver will ask them to vacate the wheelchair space and move to another part of the vehicle.

There is limited space for buggies on board our vehicles and will vary according to the interior design of the vehicle. If the spaces are already occupied, customers may be asked to fold the pushchair or buggy in order to travel. Wheelchair users have priority over unfolded buggies on board the vehicle, please do not be offended if the driver asks you to fold your buggy and move to another part of the vehicle.



Bus service standards & facilities

- ★ We aim to operate all of our services to the published timetable and try our best to ensure that they run on time. We regularly monitor the reliability of our services and make changes to improve them.
- ★ We will continue to aim for improved standards of punctuality and reliability.
- ★ All our drivers will be adequately route trained and familiar with the service they operate.
- ★ Wherever possible, in cold weather our buses will be appropriately heated. We will try to ensure adequate ventilation in hot weather.
- ★ Our buses will be checked every day before entering service to ensure that they are well maintained.
- ★ Our buses will undergo a full inspection regularly and MOT test at least every 12 months.
- ★ All Eclipse buses offer our customers free WiFi.



- ★ We will review the bus service we offer regularly and listen to the views of our customers when making any changes. The emphasis will be on improving services wherever possible in line with customer usage.
- ★ All drivers on our vehicles will be easily identifiable and will present a good image, wearing full uniform and name badge.
- ★ Certain causes of delay are outside the control of the bus industry. These include and are not limited to traffic congestion, vandalism, security alerts, road accidents and severe weather conditions which similarly affect other modes of transport. During such disruption we will always endeavour to keep our customers informed and to provide alternative services, where possible.
- ★ We will maintain travel shops in a good condition, ensuring that leaflets and other information are available and up to date.
- ★ Where bus stations are under our control, we will endeavour to keep them clean and to have litter and graffiti removed as soon as possible.
- ★ All posters displayed at our bus stations and travel shops will be current, appropriate for the location and professionally produced. We will not allow hand-drawn, written signs or written posters unless it is an emergency situation.



How you can assist us

- ★ You can assist us in providing a safe and high quality bus service by always ensuring that you:
- ★ Do not speak to the driver whilst the vehicle is moving (unless in an emergency situation).
- ★ Signal to the driver in good time that you wish to get on or off the bus.
- ★ Allow people off before you get on.
- ★ Say where you are going and, wherever possible, give the driver the exact fare.
- ★ Please have your passes and fares ready for inspection when boarding the vehicle, including Concessionary Bus Passes.
- ★ Hold on to the handrails when you stand or move down the vehicle. Sit down when seats are available and stay seated until the bus has come to a complete stop at your destination.
- ★ Please ensure the volume on personal stereos, MP3 players and other such appliances is kept to a minimum.
- ★ Always use the luggage racks, where available, and avoid obstructing the aisles with baggage.
- ★ Please vacate seats for disabled passengers when required.
- ★ For the comfort of other passengers, please refrain from putting your feet on the seats or consuming food on the bus.
- ★ A mother has the right to breastfeed her baby in public. This includes doing so on any of our buses. Please respect that babies need to be fed when they are hungry in order to avoid unnecessary distress. First fully supports this right.

Safety and environmental issues

- ★ The safety of our passengers is of paramount importance to us.
- ★ All staff employed by First receive health and safety training as part of their induction training.
- ★ All our drivers are regularly tested for alcohol and drug consumption.
- ★ We are constantly reviewing health and safety issues and identifying areas for continuous improvement, thus reducing the risk to our staff and our customers.
- ★ We have set up internal communication systems to ensure that all of our staff are aware of changes to standards and to make sure our customers comfort and safety is given our highest priority.
- ★ First is committed to working in partnership with Councils, employers and other agencies to promote green travel in the region.
- ★ Many of our vehicles are fitted with full CCTV for both customer and driver security.
- ★ We train our drivers in advanced driving techniques to ensure you are always safe when travelling on our buses.
- ★ The environment is extremely important to us. We are constantly striving to reduce our waste, energy usage and work more efficiently. All of our vehicles use ultra low sulphur diesel in order to reduce carbon emissions.
- ★ All of our vehicles are fitted with DriveGreen units which provide instant feedback to our drivers regarding their style of driving and enable drivers to make smarter and safer driving decisions on the road.

Smoking Policy

- ★ It is against the law for anyone to smoke on public transport and therefore a strict no smoking policy applies on all services operated by First.
- ★ Drivers are not permitted to smoke on buses at any time.
- ★ Electronic cigarettes are not permitted.

Alcohol and drugs policy

- ★ Customers are not permitted to drink alcohol or have an open alcohol container on any of our services.
- ★ The driver may refuse to carry any passenger under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs.

Bicycles

- ★ We are unable to carry bicycles on our services. However, folded bicycles will be carried where suitable space exists.

Dogs

- ★ A dog day rider fare may be applicable.
- ★ Acceptance is at the driver's discretion.
- ★ Where dogs are brought onto our services, customers are asked not to allow their dogs to occupy a seat.
- ★ Where there is more than one dog, please note that it is at the driver's discretion as to whether or not more than one dog is conveyed.
- ★ Recognised assistance animals travel free.

Lost Property

If you have any lost property enquiries for First bus services in Hampshire, please contact the relevant Travel Shop or Customer Service team – details can be found on the back page of this booklet.

To claim your property, you will need to provide proof of identity. Perishable goods will not be kept for more than 24 hours. All other property will be kept for one month.

In accordance with the Public Service Vehicles (Lost property) Regulations of 1978 Schedule 2, First in Hampshire charges a fee of £2.00 to claimants of lost property.

If you are unable to collect your property from one of our Travel Shops, we will accept a SAE or collection by a courier at your cost and risk for us to send it on to you.

Responding to your comments

We greatly value your comments. We promise to genuinely and honestly investigate each and every complaint we receive. You will receive an initial acknowledgement within 3 working days and a full written response within 10 working days (except where a return telephone call has been requested). In the event that our investigation requires more than 10 working days, we will update you on a regular basis.

We keep a continuous watch on the number of comments and complaints, and this information is used to improve our services.

We acknowledge good service through a Superstar scheme. We encourage our customers to nominate members of staff they would like us to consider for such an award. Leaflets are available from Travel Shops or by visiting www.firstgroup.com/superstars.

Customer Promise

We are proud of our Eclipse service. However, on occasions, things can go wrong and we may fail to deliver to our high standard and to you, the customer.

To recognise this, First is pleased to announce the new Eclipse Customer Promise.

What is our Customer Promise?

Our Promise to you is that when things do occasionally go wrong, we will recompense you for your inconvenience with free travel.

When can I claim?

The Customer Promise entitles you to claim against a failure where First was responsible for your delay. This would be where a bus failed to operate, operated more than one minute early or more than 5 minutes late from a registered timing point.

When is First at fault?

We will refund your travel costs with free travel where the problem was caused by our failure through breakdown or an error on our part.

Examples of situations where we would not be responsible for failures are severe weather disruption, road closures, vandalism to a vehicle or industrial action.

First is not liable for any loss (including consequential loss) or extra costs incurred as a result of a bus delay or cancellation of a service. If you are travelling to meet a connection with another service, we would request you allow sufficient time.

How do I claim?

If you feel that we have let you down and you wish to claim against a particular journey, simply retain your ticket or pass and complete a Customer Promise claim form. These are available to download from our website or pick up from our Travel Shops (see back page). **www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/hampshire**

Fill in the details of what happened and attach, where possible, the ticket from the journey involved.

Once completed, simply seal with your ticket inside, and post back to us at the address on the form.

Our team will then investigate your claim and will respond to you within 10 working days of receipt of your form. The Customer Promise has been welcomed by the independent passenger watchdog, Passenger Focus.

For more details of the scheme, contact the First Customer Service team (see back page).

Independent bodies

Bus Users UK

BUS USERS UK, formerly known as NFBU, is an independent group which was formed to give bus passengers a voice. If you feel that we have not dealt with your complaint in a satisfactory manner, please contact this independent mediation body.

Bus Users UK, P O Box 119, Shepperton TW17 8UX

Tel: **01932 232574**, Email: **enquiries@bususers.org**

For details of your local representative, please visit: **www.bususers.org**

Passenger Focus

We work closely with Passenger Focus, an independent passenger watchdog set up by the Government to protect the interests of bus and rail travellers. They regularly carry out passenger research which is then fed through to bus and rail operators, such as First. For more information on Passenger Focus, please visit **www.passengerfocus.org.uk**.

Have your say

We are fully committed to delivering a bus service that is safe, reliable and service driven, but here at First, that is not enough. We also want to know what you want, what you think, what products you like and what you would like to see more of. We regularly invite customers to join the various feedback events we carry out throughout the region and to have a view and say on a wide range of issues including: product development, service improvements, reliability and customer communications to name but a few.

If you would like to be invited to customer events, please apply by e-mailing your contact details and address to the Customer Feedback Team on **buscustomerpanel@firstgroup.com**.



Travelling for the first time? Easy step by step guide

It's this easy with our step by step guide...

1. Firstly, find out which bus takes you where you want to go. Helpful timetables with maps are available online at **www.firstgroup.com** or you can call Traveline on **0871 200 2233** (calls cost 10p per minute plus network extras) where staff will be happy to help you plan your journey. Alternatively you can visit www.traveline.info.
2. When the bus approaches your bus stop, the number and destination of the service will be displayed on the front of the vehicle.
3. To stop the bus, signal clearly to the driver by raising your arm and when it stops carefully step aboard. Many of our buses can lower the suspension to make getting on and off easier just ask the driver if you need help.
4. Your driver will be happy to advise you on the appropriate ticket for your journey. Having the correct fare will reduce the delays, but change is usually available if you do not have the right money. Where change is not available you will be given a change ticket which can be exchanged for cash at the Travel Shop or used towards your next journey on bus.
5. All you have to do then is to find a seat, sit back and enjoy your journey. Many of our buses have special zones where buggies and shopping trolleys can be safely parked.
6. When you want the bus to stop, simply press the bell once in good time and remain in your seat until the bus comes to a stop.

Now you have arrived at your destination without the worry of having to find a parking space or change for the meter. All you have to do is enjoy the day!

FIRST TRAVEL SHOPS

Times of opening may vary according to seasonal demand.

★ Fareham

2 Vannes Parade

FAREHAM

Hampshire PO16 0BX

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday 08:30 – 17:00

Saturday 09:00 – 15:30

★ Gosport

Gosport Bus Station

South Street

GOSPORT

Hampshire PO12 1EP

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday 08:30 – 17:00

Saturday 09:00 – 15:30

★ Portsmouth

The Hard Interchange

PORTSMOUTH

Hampshire PO1 3PA

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday 08:00 – 17:00

Saturday 08:00 – 16:00

★ Southampton

5a Pound Tree Road

SOUTHAMPTON

Hampshire SO14 1ND

Opening hours:

Monday to Friday 08:30 – 17:00

Saturday 09:00 – 15:30

USEFUL INFORMATION

HOW TO CONTACT US

If you have any complaints, suggestions or comments about our services or enquiries regarding fares or tickets, please contact us by one of the following methods.

WRITE TO US AT:

FIRST
Empress Road
SOUTHAMPTON
SO14 0JW

E-MAIL US ON: contactwestofengland@firstgroup.com

TELEPHONE US ON: 0870 010 6022

Please note that our Customer Service team is available from 07:00 to 19:00 Monday to Saturday and 07:00 to 18:00 on Sunday.

For information about our timetable, please visit www.firstgroup.com or call Traveledine on 0871 200 22 33 (calls cost 10p per minute plus network extras).

For Lost Property, please contact the following numbers:

Fareham, Gosport, Portsmouth and
Waterlooville – 02392 863353

Southampton 02380 224854



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