

LABOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR MITCHAM AND MORDEN

Mr Mike Brown
Commissioner
Transport for London
Windsor House
42-50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

09 January 2017

Dear Mr Brown,

Re: Mitcham Eastfields to Balham – ‘reasonable journeys’ complaint

I am writing regarding an issue that I believe must be resolved between both TfL and Southern Rail, regarding train ticket acceptance on London buses.

A constituent of mine has a valid train ticket, as she travels to work from Mitcham Eastfields to Balham, Monday to Friday. My constituent rightly feels it is totally unfair that her train tickets are not accepted on buses between Mitcham and Balham – at times when the trains cannot be relied upon.

Southern’s website states that rail tickets can only be used for the following ‘reasonable journeys’, but makes no mention of travelling between Mitcham and Balham.

London Buses:

Rail tickets can be used for reasonable journeys between:

- *Tulse Hill and West Norwood on routes 2, 432, 468, 68 & 196*
- *Crystal Palace and Beckenham Junction on route 358*
- *Peckham Rye and Herne Hill via North Dulwich on route 37*
- *Queens Road Peckham and New Cross Gate on routes 171, 177, 436 and 136*
- *Route 405 between Redhill and West Croydon via Merstham*

This seems extremely unfair for my constituent. For instance, last week, she arrived at Mitcham Eastfields to get the 8.41am train to Balham – however it was not showing up on the display board. The only train that was showing up was the the 9:33am to Victoria and the first stop on that is Clapham Junction.

Therefore, my constituent walked from Mitcham Eastfields station to Fair Green to get the 355 bus which travels directly to Balham.

However, on entering the bus the driver informed my constituent that her ticket would not be accepted, as this was not on the ‘ticket acceptance route’.

Siobhain McDonagh MP

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
020 7219 4678 (tel)
mcdonaghs@parliament.uk

I agree with my constituent that this is extremely unfair. My constituent had a ticket to get from Mitcham Eastfields to Balham, and she was attempting to board a bus taking her to Balham, from Fair Green (the closest bus stop to Mitcham Eastfields for her route to work). My constituent believes that it is unfair that Southern had not informed TfL that this *should* be an acceptable route – and as a result of this failure of communication, my constituent had to pay her fare, despite the fact that she *already* had a ticket to Balham, but there were no trains running. Not only did she face the inconvenience of an additional ten minute walk and a long bus journey – she also had to pay twice for the inconvenience of that journey.

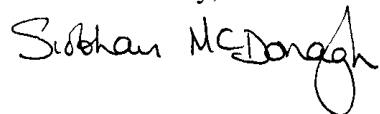
Similarly, later on that week, my constituent left for work in the afternoon, to get the 2:30pm train to Mitcham Eastfields from Balham. Upon arrival she was informed there would not be any trains in that direction until 4:30pm. Needing to get to work, she took a train to Streatham Common and walked to Balham. Like most of your passengers, my constituent has many responsibilities, including a part-time job, and caring for children and elderly parents. The added strain makes this completely unpalatable.

I would appreciate it if you could consider my constituent's suggestion of putting the 355 bus route to Balham on the ticket acceptance scheme, not only for strike days but for during this current work to rule period. This is because of the service at Mitcham Eastfields which is below par. I understand that my constituent has already been in touch with Southern Rail's Complex Case Team.

However, as this is an issue that affects both TfL and Southern, a copy of this letter is being sent to both groups.

I very much look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Siobhain McDonagh MP

Cc – Mr Charles Horton, Southern Rail