

Timebridge
Widows Group

21 September 2004

Mr. M. Davey
Enquiries Co-ordinator
Competition Commission
Victoria House
Southampton Row
London
WC1B 4AD

Dear Mr. Davey

REF ARRIVA, S PLANNED ACQUISITION OF SOVEREIGN 17TH JANUARY 2005

As secretary of the above group I write on their behalf to complain of the level of quality of service of the Arriva's bus service.

We find that the level of customer friendly buses to be of very poor standard and feel that public transport should be there to serve the public.

Arriva has many buses with steps that the elderly. Young mums with prams, disabled people and wheelchair passengers find very difficult or impossible to board.

Sunday 4th September 2004 I boarded a bus at 23.10 hours in the town centre to go to Chells Manor only to leave a lady in a wheelchair at the bus stop unable to use the bus service due to the type of bus on offer.

On Wednesday 15th September 2004 a bus was parked in the Town Square with an Arriva and a Sovereign representative to answer questions. I made an enquiry why Arriva busses were not wheelchair friendly I was given a very detailed account of the cost of new busses with hydraulic platforms etc. I was then told that if Arriva didn't get the bid then they were not sure what would happen, as Arriva was a very big company with many more busses than Sovereign was. Why then is it that Sovereign a smaller company than Arriva has a more up to date fleets, and is more passengers friendly.

I was informed that Arriva would run the same service as Sovereign on my route, for at least two years, and it was up to the council the type of bus needed for Sunday service. Does this mean that disabled people can only go out at the discretion of the Bus Company or the council I hope not?

Please would you make sure that the people of Stevenage could enjoy a bus service that is passenger friendly to all users? Please find enclosed a list of names

Yours sincerely

TIMEBRIDGE WIDOWS GROUP

Monday, 11 October 2004

Barbara Follett MP
The Member of Parliament for Stevenage
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1 0AA

Dear Ms. Follett ,

Please find enclosed a petition from the people of Stevenage with a view to the bus service and their concern for the future.

It is our belief that members of the public should be able to use the transport on offer at all times, instead we have busses with steps and poles which are not acceptable to all users.

Since Sovereign are on the move we have been bombarded with Mickey Mouse Transport, busses that race around trying to beat the schedule busses to gain fares. This is not only dangerous but it is frustrating for passengers.

The Sovereign went a long way to make their busses as passenger friendly as possible. Now that Sovereign are moving on we are very worried on the type of bus we can expect, our travel experience at this present time is horrendous.

As Member of Parliament for Stevenage we request your help with this matter and assure us that our busses will cater for all members of the public.

Please find enclosed a letter and petition sent to Mr. Davey concerning our fears.

The council has spent a great deal of money recently on bus stop pavement levels to bring them up to standard for wheelchair passengers which are no good without the right busses

I trust this problem is as important to you as it is to us and we can expect passenger friendly service in line with the DDA. I await your reply at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

TIMEBRIDGE WIDOWS GROUP

Monday, 11 October 2004

Councillor Carol Latiff
13 Daltry Road
Stevenage SG1 4AW

Dear Councillor Latiff,

I write to inform you of our worries concerning the bus service on offer, please find enclosed a copy of the petition sent to Mr. Davey and the covering letter.

As you can see we felt it prudent to inform our MP Barbara Follett of our plight in the hope of some success with our struggle for better transport.

I trust you may be able to add some weight to our cause to help those not as able as others.

We thank you in anticipation and await your reply.