

## Major delays on London and Peterborough East Coast line

**Thousands of passengers on one of the UK's key rail routes are being advised not to travel after overhead power lines caused major delays.**

No trains were able to run on the east coast mainline between London and Peterborough during rush hour.

The problem was caused by a power line failure in St Neots in Cambridgeshire.

Two of the four lines have been reopened, but [Network Rail](#) has advised people heading to or from stations south of Peterborough not to travel.

A Network Rail spokesman said more than 1 km (0.62 miles) of overhead line equipment was damaged at St Neots.

He added: "Two of the four lines have opened to diesel traffic, allowing a limited service to run.

"From around 2pm we will be able to 'coast' East Coast electric trains under the damaged area which will allow more services to run where rolling stock is available."

"East Coast services are stopping additionally at Huntingdon and Peterborough to allow First Capital Connect passengers to make connections."

### **Passengers stranded**

Network Rail said it will take a couple of days to repair the line but it expects to have a full service running by 06:00 GMT on Thursday.

The problems began on Tuesday night when about 200 people were stranded at King's Cross after the last train to Leeds was cancelled.

One passenger said they were put on a coach to Peterborough at 03:40 but it was involved in a minor accident in Huntingdon.

The East Coast mainline is the main link between London and Edinburgh and also serves major cities in Yorkshire.

Network Rail said all four lines between Biggleswade and Peterborough had been blocked and advised people to defer journeys until Thursday, adding that Wednesday's tickets would be accepted.

First Capital Connect said replacement buses were running between Peterborough and Biggleswade but warned that journey times could be extended by an hour.

It is thought many of the passengers stranded overnight had been to the Arsenal's Champions League game against Bayern Munich at the Emirates Stadium in north London.

Jonathan Selwyn said his family got on the 23:30 GMT train at King's Cross and were kept on for about four hours with no information, when they were put on a coach to Peterborough.

"We were heading up the motorway and found ourselves careering through the central reservation," he said.

"I'm here with my 12-year-old son, my 15-year-old son, my wife and 80-year-old mother. It's bit of a nightmare."

Mike Manning had been to the Millwall v Peterborough football match and was also kept on the 23:30 train for several hours before

getting on the coach which crashed.

**'Exceptional situation'**

He said: "The coach started rattling, I thought it was going to tilt over but fortunately everyone is safe."

Everyone on the coach got off at about 05:00 GMT and were kept in a lay-by until another replacement bus came to take them to Peterborough.

Earlier a spokeswoman from East Coast Trains said it was "very sorry" for what happened to the stranded passengers.

"It was an exceptional situation at King's Cross," she said.

"We kept passengers on the train while we were waiting for updates from Network Rail.

"It is unacceptable if they had no information and we are looking into what happened.

"We can understand it was awful for the passengers and it was not only annoying but hugely inconvenient."

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