

27th September 2019

Mr Andrew J. Baker
Plusnet CEO
A9D,
BT Centre,
81 Newgate Street
London EC1A 7AJ

Dear Mr Baker,

Mobile Account: 64727482

As a longstanding Plusnet broadband/phone customer, I decided to change my mobile service to your company in order to consolidate my communications into one provider. As my previous supplier was EE, I was assured that transfer would be simple and seamless as they apparently host the PlusNet mobile platform. I therefore signed up to your service on 16th September and received a replacement SIM card the next day. I was told that PlusNet would complete the PACS changeover on Wednesday 18th September.

1. While an intermittent service was available on 18th September, the signal strength was noticeably poor and inferior to that which I had with EE prior to the changeover. On speaking to your helpline, I was advised that this may be the case while the changeover was in progress and that I should wait until after midnight when the service should become fully effective. I was advised to reset my network settings on my iPhone 6 which I did....several times.
2. On 19th September, there was no change: the signal was still very poor (between no service to one bar), while I could make calls there was a very poor connection, I could send and receive texts but was unable to receive any calls. I once again tried to do a network reset and rebooted the phone several times all to no avail.
3. I called your helpline on 19th and was told that the SIM card might be damaged and a replacement would be sent out immediately. I would then need to call PlusNet to get the replacement card activated.
4. I received the replacement card on Friday 20th September and called through to activate it. I was then told this may take an hour or so to become fully functional. I once again did a network reset and reboot just to make sure. The signal was still mainly "No Service" occasionally making it to one bar at my home address. Even travelling around the signal strength was noticeably very poor with little or no 4G availability even within large townships such as

Farnham and Basingstoke where I had previously experienced a stable 4G service with EE.

5. I called your helpline once again late Friday (19/9) afternoon and was told that I needed to provide 3 examples of failed incoming calls. I offered these but was told that due to time restrictions I would need to collate 3 new examples on Sunday and phone them through before 10pm. I received very specific instructions about recording the exact time of each call, type of call (incoming), number called from and the error message/tone received. These calls needed to be spaced at no less than 2 hourly intervals. I was very unhappy but nonetheless agreed to do this. The CSR, Molly, said she would credit my account with £7.00 by way of compensation for the inconvenience.
6. Over the weekend I decided to do a complete reset/restore of the iPhone prior to arranging the three examples. I then called your helpline as instructed (just after 6pm) with the examples. The CSR I spoke to at first was reluctant to accept the examples and said it wasn't possible to record these on your system because it was Sunday! I pointed out that this was the specific instruction I had received which was subsequently confirmed by email. The CSR asked if I'd tried the SIM in a different phone, which I had not because a) this had not been requested and b) I didn't have a spare phone available. However, if Plusnet provided me with one then I would be pleased to try. After much reluctance, he finally agreed to record the example data.
7. I decided to bring forward my plans to replace my mobile so ordered an iPhone 11 which I received on 24th September. Having set this up, the signal remained weak to "No Signal", once again I could make poor quality outgoing phone calls but could not receive incoming ones. I can send and receive texts but this of course might be because of iMessages.
8. I decided to call the helpful CSR lady I spoke to the previous Friday to advise that I had changed my phone and that the exact same problems remained. She was very apologetic because it seems the data submitted by Leon on Sunday had not been done correctly and your tech people had rejected the request. She said I would therefore need to re-submit a further three examples but that in addition, each call would need to be made from a different post code area so I would need to drive around and check post codes from different areas!!!! I am sure that you will understand my complete anger at this especially as Leon had appeared reluctant to assist and there was still no prospect of a quick resolution. The CSR lady offered me a £10 credit for my inconvenience. I rejected this because money is not the issue, I just want my mobile phone number to be restored to full operational use either with Plusnet or any other service provider. She then said she could put me through to her floor manager. I agreed but gave up waiting having already spent a lot of time calling Plusnet

(and having been disconnected on my first attempt while being transferred having first gone through the lengthy security checks to no avail).

9. I submitted a further set examples on 25th September to Paul with all of the details previously requested and the addition of calls from IP, RG and GU post codes thanks to friends and colleagues who agreed to help! I asked about how this would be followed-up. After all, had I not called earlier I would have been none the wiser about the failed set of initial examples! I was told that either he or Molly would contact me but that in all likelihood, I would receive an engineers call first. Not reassured, I said that I would nevertheless call back that Friday.
10. So on Friday 27th September, surprise, surprise, nothing has happened. I spoke to Craig your CSR who said that no results or rejections had been received from your "Ops Team" and that I should call back on 2nd October if I hadn't heard anything sooner, as 5 working days were required. I pointed out that each time I call I am told a resolution would be forthcoming in 5 days but so far, we're at 10 days with no service and not once has a CSR actually contacted me. I only discovered the Plusnet submission error because I had called back on 25th, no one had contacted me (not that I can receive calls of course but an email or text asking me to call would have been possible). Craig said he understood but the seemingly omnipotent "Ops Team" were now dealing with the matter and under no circumstances could they be approached or pressed to expedite. It seems that customer inconvenience is not really a high priority for your Ops Team. Craig told me there was no way to escalate the urgency, even though the delay was entirely Plusnet's fault. Craig said his department was dealing with a lot of complaints and unhappy customers, which given my experience is hardly surprising!

You clearly have major problems with the way in which you deal with customers. With the exception of Leon, all of the people I have spoken to have been very polite, courteous and empathetic and are clearly well trained. However, politeness and training is pointless if they are not empowered to take meaningful action or the ability to escalate where a recourse is beyond their pay grade. Instead they rely upon kicking the can down the road hiding behind the 5 working day principle to conceal inactivity, presumably in the faint hope your omnipotent, uncontactable Ops Team find a solution, or perhaps better still that the problem will self-resolve. Failing that, there is a chance the customer will give up and to put it the crudely, buggers off to become another service providers problem. At a very basic level, all that was needed was for someone from your CSR or Ops Team capable of picking up a phone and dialling my mobile number and they would have instantly realised there was a problem. Having done that it would have avoided the entire need for timed examples from different post codes. This is so basic and simple that I feel almost embarrassed to have to point it out to you. Your

service model is fundamentally flawed so long as it remains subservient to an unchallengeable and rigid technical function remote from the customer.

If you have read this letter you will have wasted precious and unnecessary time as a CEO dealing with a matter that should have been resolved within 24 hours by any competent junior team member. Your wasted time of course pales into insignificance compared to that I have spent dealing with it.

If you really cannot cope with business in the mobile market, perhaps you should consolidate around services like broadband and telephone where you offer a good product and service to match. At the very least, you should advertise that changing to your mobile service may cause service reliability issues and that delays of several weeks in resolving such problems are possible. Hardly a good marketing platform I agree but least it would be more honest. To help you with this, I have now posted my experience on the MoneySavingsExpert forum to alert others to the sort of issues I have encountered.

I expect you to look into this matter and sort it out. I expect a full written explanation.

Sincerely yours,