



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

31st August 2021

Jean Contrevent

RE: RAIL FARES

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of train fares; your comments upon which I have read with interest.

Currently, some fares are regulated by the Government, which controls their price, while others are not, as train operators are free to set them on a commercial basis. Around 45 percent of rail fares are 'regulated', with increases directly influenced by Government policy. This includes season tickets on most commuter journeys, some off-peak return tickets on long distance journeys, and anytime tickets around major cities.

Train fare revenue is crucial to funding day-to-day railway operations and rail investment, which benefits passengers. For instance, rail operators have been investing in more trains, better stations and faster journeys, such as the electrification improvements to the service between London St Pancras and Corby. Any rise in rail fares helps to allow this investment to be maintained.

Nevertheless, I appreciate that fare prices may be of concern to some people and that is why the Government has frozen increases in regulated rail fares in real terms for the past seven years. Whilst there is currently some press speculation around rail fare increases for 2022, I understand the Government has not yet made a decision on ticket price increases. Indeed, the Department for Transport is currently considering a range of options as part of a 'rail recovery' package aimed at getting passengers back on the network. I have also mentioned your concerns directly to the Rail Minister and in a recent meeting I had with senior East Midlands Railway representatives - it is fair to say I am very mindful of the point you make.

I welcome that the Government also recently proposed the biggest change to the railways in twenty-five years, bringing the network under single national leadership. A new public body, Great British Railways, will own the infrastructure, receive the fare revenue, run and plan the network and set most fares and timetables. Reforms will also include a simplified ticketing system, including the roll-out of new flexible season tickets to reflect new working and travel patterns, as well as making significant roll-outs of pay as you go, contactless ticketing and digital ticketing on smartphones.

In the meantime, it may also be useful to know that there is already a number of concessionary travel schemes available - in particular, two new railcards for young people are on sale and the Government has just brought in a railcard for veterans. More details on these can be found at the following link: www.railcard.co.uk.



Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Tom Pursglove', written in a cursive style.

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**