

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

September 2021

Dear Constituent

Thank you for your email about train fares.

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 per cent 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. Any rise in rail fares helps to allow this 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 decided 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 welcome that the Government also recently proposed the biggest change to the railways in 25 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. I hope that Darlington will be the home of GB Railways, with the jobs and opportunities this would bring to our town. I have recently written to Ministers on this matter, and you can find out more here:
<https://www.petergibson.org/news/department-transport-responds-call-bring-new-great-british-railways-hq-darlington>

These reforms will also include a simplified ticketing system, including the rollout 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.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

Constituency Office: 34 Duke Street, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL3 7AQ Telephone: 01325 711711

Email: peter.gibson.mp@parliament.uk Website: www.petergibson.org



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 Veterans' railcard. More details on these can be found at the following link:

www.railcard.co.uk

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

yours sincerely

Peter Gibson

PETER GIBSON MP