

Warning

The fate of Britain's railways is in the balance

Privatisation has been given the go-ahead by Parliament despite more than 80% of people being opposed to it. How it is implemented over the next few years by the Government, Railtrack, the Rail Franchise Director and the Rail Regulator is crucial. Our railways are the basis of a national public transport network which could allow everyone to be mobile without the problems of congestion and pollution associated with road traffic.

RAIL USERS MUST DEMAND:

- *There should be a guarantee of NO further line closures. On the contrary, reopenings and NEW lines must be an essential part of future policy and be publicly funded. Unfortunately there seems to be NO provision for improvements in the present privatisation process.*
- **We need a properly funded national rail authority to plan for strategic investment, within an overall transport policy, neither of which exist now.**
- *There should be increased public funding to improve standards and for strategic investment in major capital projects like Thameslink 2000, upgrading the West Coast Main Line, CrossRail and electrification.*
- **Freight must be encouraged to transfer from road to rail and thus reduce the menace from juggernaut lorries which do not pay for their social and environmental damage.**
- *Consumers must be consulted about what kind of services they want. If private operators come forward, safety and the interests of the travelling public must be paramount not the operator's financial wellbeing. The network must be kept intact. Trains should be run for people, not franchisees. Early and late trains, sleeper services, Motorail, ticket offices and station staff are already threatened. There is every sign so far that the users' interests will be ignored.*

Please turn over

● **Virtually every rail expert has already raised serious questions over the Government's privatisation plans and how it is being implemented. Rail users must urge their MPs to ensure that the improvements made by British Rail are not lost when other operators move in. The following points are vital:**

● *Track charges for freight and passenger operators must be kept as low as possible. Roads are not required to make an eight per cent return on capital investment. Nor should rail schemes. Social and economic benefits should be taken FULLY into account. Public finance should be switched from road to rail.*

● **BR staff must not be robbed of pension, travelling rights and other benefits they have gained during their career with British Rail.**

● *The national rail timetable must be made as widely available as possible. Good connections, off-peak through ticketing, cross-validity of all tickets including discounted Savers, freedom to choose routes, national railcards, facilities for the disabled, luggage and bicycles should all be guaranteed by any new rail operators, by the Franchise Director and the Rail Regulator.*

● **Property sharks and asset strippers must not be allowed to undermine the railways' role as a great national asset or its future potential as the basis of a national transport network. Bus companies must be prevented from creating local monopolies but co-ordination must be encouraged.**

*In this age of environmental awareness, the public demands improving and expanding rail services. Write and urge your MP to defend rail users. We need a coherent rail network.
Rail users must fight to maintain it. Join us.*

I wish to join the Railway Development Society and help the fight to save Britain's railways

My name.....

My address.....

I enclose cheque/postal order made payable to RDS for:

£10 for ordinary membership

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