



12th November 2013

Rail fares go up by twice the rate of inflation

Passengers can look forward to rail fare increases of twice the rate of inflation in the new year. Latest inflation figures show that inflation (CPI) fell to 2.2% last month, lower than expected. However, fares are due to go up by 1% more than July's RPI of 3.1% i.e. 4.1% on average - that is very close to twice the level of inflation quoted today. Not only that, but rail companies have a further 2% flexibility, meaning that the cap is 6.1% - almost three times inflation.

"We think passengers have been squeezed enough" said Bruce Williamson from the campaign group Railfuture. "The Chancellor has frozen fuel duty for motorists, so he must now do the fair thing and put an end to these inflation-busting rail fare rises. When the government was "kind" to passengers by setting the maximum flex at +2% rather than +5% what this actually did was raise fares even higher for many passengers, since the total revenue received was meant to stay the same – in other words, fares that might only have gone up by 5% might go up to 6% to compensate, for example. This sleight of hand doesn't fool us and it won't fall passengers when they feel the impact on their wallets"

"Even with fare increases of RPI +0%, which would be a step in the right direction, passengers would still be squeezed because RPI is still about 0.5% above CPI. The government always claims that it prefers to use the lower CPI figure, except when it comes to rail fare increases. Strange, that"

"The very welcome improvements to the railway that the government is delivering should be funded by generating savings through that investment (such as electrification, which allows trains to run more cheaply than diesel equivalents) and attracting more people onto the railway, not by making existing passengers pay more."

Notes to editors:

Railfuture is the UK's leading independent organisation campaigning for better rail services for both passengers and freight.

Railfuture's website can be found at: www.railfuture.org.uk

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