

Rail Fares and Renationalisation

Conference notes that on 16 August the latest inflation figures were announced, revealing that RPI inflation was 5%. Conference recalls that the government announced in the Budget that they would allow regulated rail fares to increase by RPI plus 3%.

Conference condemns both the government and the rail companies for overseeing likely fare increases of 8% on regulated fares and 13% on unregulated fares, and notes that the UK already has the most expensive railways in Europe. Conference believes that these proposed fare rises will damage the economy, discourage rail use and push more people into poverty.

Conference congratulates shadow transport secretary Maria Eagle MP for supporting the 'Stop the Fares Hike - Fair Fares Now' demonstration – alongside trade unions, environmentalists and transport campaigners – outside London Waterloo station on 16 August.

Conference notes that as well as being the most expensive for passengers in Europe, Britain's railways also cost the most to maintain and renew, and less reliable now than in the days of British Rail.

Conference believes the failure to provide a cost effective and reliable railway in Britain is a direct result of the privatisation of the railways under the government of John Major, and reaffirms 2003 conference policy to renationalise the railways.

Conference therefore resolves to campaign against the proposed fare rises, and believes that any future Labour government should:

- Renationalise Britain's railways
- Reduce the real cost of fares to passengers
- Invest in new infrastructure and capacity to encourage a shift to rail from road and air