

# ***A Growing Railway: Transport 2000's submission for the Rail White Paper***

## **Introduction**

Transport 2000 would like to see quality of service and value for money for passengers at the heart of the Rail White Paper, alongside measures to enable freight on rail to expand. Passenger overcrowding is now the number one complaint from passengers, the Government and rail industry have taken great steps to control and improve rail punctuality, now the next big step forward is improving conditions on board and at stations for passengers and this can only be done with expanding services and longer trains. A growing railway can contribute to wider Government policies.

## **Section 1: Why we need a growing railway**

Transport 2000 believes that the Government needs to promote and plan for an expanding railway, for a number of reasons:

- To relieve road congestion and to form part of the package for a national road pricing scheme.
- To serve new developments and support agglomeration
- To support regeneration and social inclusion
- To support the economy, notably in supporting and expanding labour markets around cities, in railfreight (especially links to ports) and in efficient business travel
- To protect and improve the environment by reducing pollution, intrusion and land take from road and air
- To help transport safety, recognising that rail is an extremely safe mode
- To provide a more comfortable service to passengers through tackling overcrowding.

## **Section 2: How to grow the railways**

### **[1] Reduction of costs**

A great deal has been done to bring down costs, particularly within Network Rail (bringing maintenance in house) but the target should be to bring unit costs in running the railway down to independently benchmarked international averages and best value. There are two further mechanisms we would like to suggest to promote a dynamic approach to reductions in cost:

The first is to test out further structural reforms in the way the railway is run. For example, giving control of the rail infrastructure on Merseyrail to the local Passenger Transport Authority, which already specifies the franchise, would allow some benchmarking of Network Rail's costs against an alternative regime. More local management of infrastructure or purchase rather than leasing of trains on, for example, Community Rail lines would be another option. We would also like in principle to see a franchise being run by the public sector to give the Government a value for money test of franchise bids (Transport for London have used East Thames Buses in this way). Further efficiency savings could be achieved by closer financial links between Network Rail and the train operating companies to produce incentives for closer cooperation.

The second proposal is for a specific "invest to save" budget to fund schemes that will reduce overall costs over 5-10 years. There are many examples around the rail network where sometimes small projects could result in lower unit costs (for example replacing level crossings or signalling). This fund, which follows a similar approach used with local government, could also be a mechanism for capital-subsidy swaps, where capital investment could reduce future subsidy requirements. An example is the Tees Valley rail network, where consultants have calculated that for an extra £42m on top of already planned renewal expenditure, the

existing lines could allow frequent light rail operation and reduce future subsidy requirement. We propose an initial £250m for this fund for 3 years, and funds should be available to train operators as well as NR.

We believe that further reductions in unit costs can come from long term planning and investment. Government should seek to compare prices of one-off projects (for example electrification or signalling) with rolling programmes avoiding peaks and troughs, to identify economies of scale from long term planning. The long term rail strategy offers an ideal opportunity to achieve such economies of scale from long term planning. Modular designs rolled out across the network – for signalling and trackwork as well as for stations – could also cut costs and we would like to see the Government and Network Rail follow up opportunities here.

We note that ORR is minded, at DfT's request, to refer the rolling stock leasing market to the Competition Commission. If there is to be an investigation, it needs to result in lower costs of rolling stock and to avoid any hiatus in the finance and delivery of new trains.

## **[2] Planning, capacity and overcrowding**

The Eddington Report has some recommendations relevant to rail. The emphasis on agglomeration and good inter-urban and international links has implications for rail, as does the support for road pricing. In principle, these should add to the case for rail, since road pricing should bring traffic to rail (even if revenue neutral, the change to per mile charges will bring road into line with rail charging), while agglomeration implies the dense development that provides the critical mass of patronage necessary for rail.

However, a key missing element in the Eddington Review was any understanding of the links between transport and land use planning, and the role of linkages between these in supporting agglomeration. Rail lines (light as well as heavy rail), and the stations on them, can provide corridors/nodes around which development can be focussed. Land use planning, properly applied, can ensure that such development is dense and hence supports agglomeration, and also provides the levels and density of use that justifies rail services (the Dutch railways, have, with local and national Government, pursued this approach in practice for some years). This linkage has been missing from rail/transport planning as practised in the UK: we want to see it fully recognised in the long term rail strategy and in follow up measures. It means revision to rail demand forecasting to take account of people's willingness to use rail services in new developments designed around them, and hence planning for new/ reopened lines and stations as spines/nodes for development. We suggest that a National Policy Statement – as envisaged in the Government's recent Planning White Paper – might usefully be produced on future rail development. The White Paper suggests that rail would fall outside the scope of the Infrastructure Planning Commission, but a National Policy Statement would still be extremely valuable.

In this context, Transport 2000 would like the Government to protect disused rail corridors from development. There is some protection under PPG13, but it is partial and has not in practice prevented development on some strong candidates for future use such as lines around Bedford in the Milton Keynes Growth Area. Disused rail alignments are valuable anyway as cycle paths and wildlife habitats. Potential sites for (and indeed current) railfreight terminals also require protection. From a National Policy Statement, the Government could then direct authorities to safeguard alignments and terminal sites in Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks. Transport 2000 also calls for an independent enquiry to examine disused corridors and decide which has potential over the long term for future rail use.

This National Policy Statement should be supplemented by more detailed guidance to bring together planning policy as it relates to rail, passenger and freight. This would give authoritative guidance, for example on strategic rail freight interests for use in preparing planning strategies and at Public Inquiries and Examinations in Public, a role previously performed by the SRA. Guidance, following the model of DfT's 'Planning for freight on the inland Waterways' could inform planners of Government policy, give examples of precedent and include case studies to show best practice.

Beyond this, we would like to see frameworks established to allow for reopenings and indeed new lines and stations where appropriate. There are many locations where rail can and should serve new developments or be part of regeneration strategies: major shopping centres like Brent Cross in London, areas with new housing generating significant commuting journeys and indeed whole towns (for example Washington New Town) have changed travel patterns and rail services and development needs to reflect this. We want to see regulatory, financial and institutional barriers to new rail developments removed, funding made available and local authority and developer involvement encouraged. Network Rail's Route Enhancement Managers and the Government's Regional Planning Assessments can identify opportunities, but implementation funding needs to be made available.

Rail has a very important role to play in replacing local and long distance car based journeys. Transport 2000 would like to see rail and public transport improvement made an explicit and integral part of road user charging schemes, so that all revenue raised through road user charging is ploughed back into public transport, and public transport/rail is developed in advance of charging.

In principle, electrification improves the efficiency of the network; improves the environmental impact of rail (particularly if the electricity is from renewable sources) and improves the on-board comfort for passengers. In-fill electrification of missing links in the network is in our view justified in the short term to increase flexibility and allow through services to places close to the electrified network. This needs to be properly planned and budgeted for with clear targets being set. We also want to see a proper examination of the case for more widespread electrification, including consideration of future energy supplies and the need to lower carbon emissions from rail as with other sources of transport.

The Department for Transport and Network Rail have begun to address overcrowding (ordering 1,000 new carriages and Network Rail's £2.4 billion investment) which is warmly welcomed by Transport 2000. However, Transport 2000 would like to see the additional 1,000 new carriages being brought into use by 2010. To our knowledge the Route Utilisation Strategies examine crowding levels on some routes and then recommend the necessary expansion. This is a positive step in the right direction but Transport 2000 would like to see gathering and monitoring of passenger data being done on all routes across the country. Standards for overcrowding need to be set for the whole country; either the same as or similar to the Passengers in Excess of Capacity set for London and the South East. Without these measures overcrowding will continue to grow and spread across the network unabated and may result in passengers leaving the railways.

Extra carriages are only part of the answer to overcrowding and the need for extra capacity. We want to see better use made of the network and trains now running, and believe that a more strategic approach to timetabling would assist with this. Other European railways have adopted a national timetable and train planning system, maximising use of capacity and ensuring better connections. Although ideally strategic timetabling should be led by the industry, Government has a key role as specifier of the franchises.

Overcrowding will also need to be addressed by extra infrastructure – tracks, signalling and platforms. We support the proposals drawn up by ATOC and the Rail Freight Operators Association and expect to see progress on ATOC's 25 priorities and RFOA's "super 16" schemes (see appendix 2) within the next Control Period (2009-14) – and preferably before. Confirmation is needed of the ongoing budget for Network Rail's Discretionary Fund, used for funding smaller schemes.

There are several concerns that Transport 2000 has with the franchise process that we would like to see addressed. Firstly, the franchises themselves are too short: an average length of seven years gives operators no time to invest in large scale improvements such as new rolling stock or better facilities on board or at stations and gain a return on their investment. Secondly, some of the franchises have been issued with no or limited agreement for expansion, meaning that operators have to fund expansion such as longer trains

or extra services with no subsidy from the Government. Thirdly, the franchise specification and setting process is not transparent. We believe there should be more public information available on franchises and better public involvement in setting the specifications.

We want to see greater devolution of rail powers and funding. As part of the Government's Local Transport Bill, PTAs should be strengthened and given extra rail planning as well as bus powers. There should be freedom for LTP funding to go to rail schemes and for Regional Assemblies to move funding from local road to rail schemes in Regional Funding Allocations.

It is important that Government states its commitment to rail freight so that the industry and its customers have the confidence to commit to rail freight long-term. For private sector to invest there needs to be a guarantee that it will get return on its investment. Rail freight grants have an important role to play in proving to business that the Government is serious about supporting rail freight. In particular, FFGs are important in helping to offset the initial start-up costs of the shift to rail. Capacity and capability for rail freight to develop are critical: Transport 2000 would like to see confirmation of TIF funding for the six rail freight schemes short-listed nearly a year ago (30 June 2006) and clarity on future TIF funding for freight.

We want to see measures to reduce the impact of rail maintenance on rail, operations. In general, we want to see a 7 day/week railway, rather than the 5 or 6 day a week one we have now. The use of blockades and line closures for maintenance alienates passengers and also impacts on freight users. More use of reversible lines and a more flexible approach to maintenance generally is required, but suggestions made earlier – reopening of diversion routes, infill electrification – would also help return to a 7 day/week railway.

### **[3] Promotion of Partnerships**

Transport 2000 is working with Ned Railways and Transport Regeneration to produce a good practice guide to partnership working within the rail industry, illustrating how this can bring in new money to the railways and improve integration with other modes of transport and station facilities for passengers (see Appendix 1). At present, many local authorities, developers, community groups and others wanting to bring new business and support for the railway find it difficult to access (though the appointment of liaison officers by TOCs and Route Enhancement Managers by Network Rail has helped). We would like to see templates drawn up by NR.ATOC, DfT and ORR for investment partnerships, and formal arrangements within each franchise for the TOC and NR to liaise with developers, planning and transport authorities to steer outside investment to rail and maximise rail use in new developments.

Transport 2000 wants to see the reintroduction of rail passenger partnership funding (RPP). RPP, which was abolished in the wake of rail funding problems in 2002, paid for schemes or services supported by local authorities but which would not have national priority. Some of these schemes, for example the introduction of the direct Norwich-Cambridge service, have proved very successful and have become commercially integrated into franchises. RPP will allow local authorities to link rail development more closely with their transport and other planning and bids should be consistent with and support local and regional planning and transport policies. If RPP funding were allocated regionally as part of the Regional Funding Allocations, regions could decide to transfer additional funding to it from other budgets. We propose £1bn for RPP over 3 years initially, but with a guarantee of support beyond that horizon. Alongside this, we believe that councils should be free to spend Local Transport Plan funding on good value rail projects and schemes

### **[4] Fair Analysis**

We remain concerned at aspects of appraisal of rail schemes. Recent demand has been above forecasts, and new higher growth factors should therefore be included in rail appraisal. Benefits of rail in terms of carbon savings and other environmental factors are not fully accounted for, and we remain concerned about the requirement to allow for fuel tax lost to the Treasury in appraisal.

We also want to see all decisions on rail policy subject to the same appraisal discipline as other transport measures. The New Approach to Appraisal should be fully and transparently applied to decisions such as franchise specifications and fares increases, so that the benefits and disbenefits are clearly identified.

As noted earlier, we want to see rail appraisal and modelling take account of land use changes and linkages, so as to recognise the increased propensity to use rail in denser development and with local demand management such as parking controls.

#### **[5] A more integrated transport network**

Consideration of how people get to and from stations is critical. Current rail industry plans include significant increases in station car-parks, and there is also a lot of funding going into development of “parkway” stations. While of course car parking and parkways have their place, exclusive emphasis on access by car is unsustainable in environmental and social exclusion terms, and causes unacceptable congestion in many locations. The work by Steer Davies Gleave for Passenger Focus (“Getting to the Station”) has highlighted the problems caused by relying on car access. The growth projections for rail will add to these problems. Parkway stations can also lead to downgrading of local branch lines and stations, thereby forcing more people to drive to and use the parkway stations. For congestion, social and environmental reasons, much more work needs to be done with bus operators and local authorities to get away from the dependency on the private car to get to the station and look more towards other modes.

“Travel Plans” for stations can provide in our view an acceptable framework for considering and planning for all kinds of station access. Travel plans are now widely used for workplaces and schools: they involve surveying and benchmarking current means of travel and then a plan with targets for changing this, often targeted at reducing single or low occupancy car use. At stations, travel plans would have the benefit of bringing together the rail industry, local transport/planning authorities, rail users and relevant local community groups (who often suffer from parking displaced from stations). Barriers to non-car access to stations outside railway premises – for example road layouts that are dangerous or unattractive to pedestrians or that inhibit bus access – can be identified along with action within the railway’s control. Options and solutions will vary from site to site, but travel plans can allow flexible approaches that recognise this. The concept of station travel plans has been warmly welcomed by many rail operators and we want to develop pilots in partnership with the industry and DfT and willing local authorities. Ideally, Transport 2000 would like to see all major stations having a travel plan to reduce single occupancy car travel to stations and greatly improve integration with other modes of transport such as buses, bikes and taxis to give a seamless journey to passengers.

Beyond this, Transport 2000 would like to see much greater support from the Department for Transport and indeed from operators and Network Rail for innovative solutions to ‘getting to the station’ such as PlusBus and TrainTaxi (a fixed charge, shared taxi service operating from more than 100 stations in the Netherlands). Cycle hire schemes could also work at many locations. These measures could provide much better access to rail for socially excluded people who do not have access to a car (of which there are still millions) and help to reduce the carbon footprint of the overall rail journey by promoting more environmentally friendly methods of transport to the station. Transport 2000 would like to see the Government help these initiatives to get properly off the ground with more funding, help with promotion and advertising and using its influence to ensure participation from across the rail industry.

#### **[6] Improvements for Passengers**

**Fares:** The overall cost of motoring (cost of purchase, maintenance, fuel, tax and insurance) has fallen in real terms by 8.6 per cent between 1997 and 2005. Over the same period, bus fares and rail fares have risen by 14.5 per cent and 5.0 per cent respectively. [Source: Office for National Statistics]. Regulated rail fares in January 2007 went up by 4.3% which was greater than the level of inflation [Source: Passenger Focus, November 2006], and current franchise agreements and policies envisage further above inflation fares rises.

We do not support this policy, for several reasons. Train fares in Britain are already some of the highest in Europe. Which? compared the cost of peak and off-peak return travel between major cities in six European countries, looking at journeys booked a month in advance and for the next day. They found Belgium was the cheapest for all journeys, and France, with an extensive network of high-speed rail was also one of the cheapest for tickets booked in advance. They compared cost of next day peak-time journeys of about 300km and the results were a shockingly bad reflection on Britain's train fares:

| <i>Journey</i>      | <i>Price</i>  |
|---------------------|---|
| London – Manchester | £202 (this drops to £112.60 for two standard singles) |
| Berlin – Hamburg    | £78.07  |
| Madrid – Cordoba    | £56.10  |
| Paris – Dijon       | £54.38  |
| Ostende – Liege     | £23.83  |

(All prices based on autumn 2006 figures)

Not only are Britain's fares some of the most expensive in Europe they are also incredibly complicated, for example, 26 different single fares were counted on Virgin Trains Manchester to London service. To get cheap fares passengers have to plan a long way ahead, accept severe restrictions and be prepared to be flexible – this is fine for holidays which are planned ahead, but for most business and short-break journeys it is unrealistic to expect passengers to plan a month in advance. Which? have described train fares in Britain as complex and a rip-off. [Source: Saving you Money, Which? magazine, November 2006, page 19]

High fares on peak travel, complex ticketing and restrictions on off-peak travel are having a big impact on socially excluded people, particularly people on low-incomes who do not have access to a car and need to travel by train to access employment, education and health facilities. Research published by Passenger Focus in July 2006 showed that 49% of passengers didn't feel the railways offered value for money. 70% of leisure passengers had decided not to travel by train because of the cost of the ticket, with 44% of those choosing to travel by car instead. 60% of business and commuter passengers thought tickets were unfairly priced. [Source: Passenger Focus Annual Report for 2005-06]

Clearly fares need to be urgently reviewed. Transport 2000 recommends:

- A level playing field with motoring costs. Motoring costs need to rise at the same level as inflation, now below it. Current low motoring costs act as a disincentive to rail travel.
- Simplifying ticket choices to make it more transparent for passengers
- Bringing the cost of next-day and walk-on tickets peak journeys more in line with other European countries
- Bringing more flexibility into off-peak travel

The attempt to use high rail fares to discourage people from travelling at peak times has failed on the London routes with significant commuter flows, because many employees do not have that much flexibility about what time they start work and because the peak time doesn't start until 9.30am. Government needs to work with employers and unions to improve flexible working as a mechanism to influence when passengers travel to work. The National Business Travel Network, which Transport 2000 runs for DfT, has already identified opportunities for flexible working as part of workplace travel plans and smartcards may allow more flexible approaches to season ticket fares that allow more flexible working.

**Ticket buying facilities.** According to research carried out by Passenger Focus in March 2007, passengers have to queue for far too long to get a ticket from a machine, particularly at large stations. The research showed that off-peak 48% of passengers have to queue for longer than the industry's guidance of three minutes; during peak times this drops to 11% queuing for longer than the recommended 5 minutes. Passengers can waste an awful lot of time queuing to buy tickets which adds to their overall journey time and the perception that train travel is slow.

Transport 2000 would like to see targets for recommended queuing times met. The Department for Transport needs to put pressure on industry to make sure enough ticket facilities are installed and operational in stations to cut passenger queue times and that those ticket machines are evenly spread across large stations, not confined to one area. [Source: Mystery shopping – buying a rail ticket, Passenger Focus March 07].

**Stations.** While there have been station improvements and more are planned, many stations are still substandard in terms of facilities and conditions. Personal security is a key issue: help points and CCTV are welcome but staff presence is important – siting shops and other facilities on stations can help provide staff presence where full rail staffing is not justified. We want to see significant improvement in station facilities, in terms of waiting areas, toilets, refreshments, accessibility and information. Rising passenger expectations will require this, as it has on trains. Current divisions of responsibilities at stations between Network Rail and Train Operators do not help achieve station developments. We would like to see franchise conditions amended to include and encourage rail development.

The Access for All programme is welcomed by Transport 2000 and the station Accessibility Fund is a great step in the right direction, benefiting thousands of passengers and opening up the railway to many new passengers. Transport 2000 would like to see much bolder planning for station accessibility targets in the 30 year rail plan with a target set to make the 90% most used stations fully accessible by 2020.

**Better information.** The National Passenger Survey (autumn 2006) showed that 78% of passengers were satisfied with information availability at stations. This is very positive. However, there is no excuse in this age of technology, for every station and indeed every platform in the country to have real time audio and visual information. The White Paper should set a target for this to happen by 2015.

One area within the rail industry where there is a skill shortage that has a direct impact on the passenger is in the area of the provision of passenger information. The number of people involved in the direct provision of passenger information on the railways has been falling steadily over the years. To some extent it has been compensated for by the increase in on-line or other technological alternatives for information provision. The presumption here is that everyone has access - and is able - to use new technology. Public transport cannot be expected to work effectively without sufficient information about the networks and the services that run on them. More effort needs to be made to recruit and train information staff at stations and on platforms.

## **[7] Rail and the environment**

Rail already has a good record on the environment, and especially with higher occupancy this has improved in recent years. The industry, with Government encouragement and led the Rail Standards and Safety Board, has been developing a sustainability strategy and looking at practical ways of improving its environmental record, and we welcome this. Some of the comparisons with other modes are misleading: claims made by motor and aviation industries on their environmental record are not always accurate, and improved fuel economy in cars has resulted in increased mileage and also “trading up” to more powerful models, negating the benefits. That said, rail should improve its performance: experiments with meters in trains, regenerative braking, biofuels and hybrid engines are all welcome (though the concerns about sustainability of biofuels expressed by many commentators needs to be considered). Improving the energy efficiency and reducing waste at stations would also be useful. These measures should be rolled out across the network, with Government help where necessary: the Government should require environmental strategies in franchise bids as part of this.

Government also has a role in helping the industry go further. A step change in rail's environmental footprint would be obtained from transferring Network Rail's electricity supply to renewable energy. As one of the largest users, NR could thus kick-start demand for renewable energy. Further electrification would in this

context reduce rail's carbon footprint significantly. As noted above, we believe a full independent examination of the case for further electrification, along with other traction options, is required.

There is a danger that "environment" and "sustainability" will focus exclusively on emissions: the railway has other environmental impacts, positive and negative, including on biodiversity and landscape. Biodiversity strategies for the railway have been drawn up in the past and should be revisited in collaboration with statutory and non-governmental wildlife and countryside groups.

We also note that the environmental record of the railways should include journeys to and from the station as above.

## **Conclusion**

The UK needs a growing and successful railway network. The challenges set by growing road congestion, the demand for sustainable communities and urban regeneration, and the need to protect the environment whilst continuing to transport people and goods, require a strategy for the railways that focuses on expanding rail capacity. In the longer term, new high-speed lines may be needed; in the short term, we need to see plans to lengthen platforms and trains, put in extra lines and signals and build new stations and freight terminals to serve new and growing markets. Cost savings rather than increases in already high fares levels should finance these improvements. Improved passenger facilities, development of rail freight and partnerships to enable the railways to be integrated into local transport strategies and to form the centrepiece of new developments are also required for a growing railway. Transport 2000 calls on Government to consider and include all these measures in its strategy for rail.

## Summary of key Transport 2000 aims for the Rail White Paper

### Reduce rail costs

- Bring the costs of works in line with international averages
- Test out further structural reforms that could result in economies
- An “Invest to save” fund to provide for capital improvements resulting in lower running costs
- Long term rolling programmes and modular designs to bring down unit costs

### Planning

- Better links between rail planning and land use planning, recognising the links between high density development and rail use
- A National Policy Statement on rail development (passenger and freight), supplemented by more detailed guidance, including safeguarding disused rail corridors and sites for new stations and railfreight terminals
- A framework and funding for new/reopened stations and lines where justified (see also partnerships, below)
- Improved rail services to be part of road user charging packages, with revenue from charging going towards rail/public transport

### Capacity and overcrowding

- A clear plan for tackling overcrowding over the short, medium and long term, by expansion rather than pricing people off
- Overcrowding standards for all operators, not just London/SE ones, with data publicly available
- Commitment and go-ahead for at least some of the key projects to deal with pinch points and provide for capacity: the ATOC 25 schemes, the Rail Freight Operators’ “super 16”, Thames link, Birmingham New Street
- Measures to return to a 7-day railway: diversion routes, infill electrification, crossovers, alternatives to blockades /complete closures
- More strategic timetabling to make best use of capacity and improve connections
- Review the franchise process to ensure increasing capacity is built into the franchise; to lengthen franchises to encourage investment by operators; to be more transparent and inclusive in setting franchise specifications.
- Confirmation of TIF funding for the six rail freight schemes shortlisted nearly a year ago (30 June 2006) and clarity on future TIF funding for freight
- Continuing the budget for Network Rail’s Discretionary Fund, used for funding smaller schemes

### Partnerships

- **Integrate rail into the transport and planning strategies of local and regional authorities:** Stronger rail as well as bus powers for Passenger Transport Authorities within the new Local Transport Bill; freedom for LTP funding to go to rail schemes and for Regional Assemblies to move funding from local road to rail schemes in Regional Funding Allocations (RFA). Reintroduction of Rail Passenger Partnership funding (RPP) to promote partnerships in developing rail services. RPP could be allocated regionally and hence add to the RFA pot.
- **Active encouragement of third party investment and involvement in rail:** templates for investment partnerships and formal arrangements within each franchise for the TOC and NR to liaise with developers, planning and transport authorities to steer outside investment to rail and maximise rail use in new developments
- **More encouragement of long term station investment and upgrading:** amendment to the station leasing contracts within franchises.
- **Station travel plans** (see below)

## Fares

- **A move away from continuing increases in already high peak fares.** Over time, bringing the cost of next-day and walk-on tickets peak journeys more in line with other European countries
- **Level playing field with motoring costs.** Motoring costs need to rise at the same level as inflation, now below it. Current low motoring costs combined with rail fares rises act as a disincentive to rail travel.
- **Simplifying ticket choices** to make it more transparent for passengers
- **Bringing more flexibility into off-peak travel**, including work with employers and unions on flexible working and ticketing to support this

## Improving passenger facilities and integration

- Less emphasis on car access to stations, and promotion of "Station travel plans" as a framework for agreeing strategies for future access, including promoting non-car access (as discussed)
- Support for national initiatives with national standards and national promotion to reduce car use for journeys to/from stations and to create door-to-door offers: train-taxis, PlusBus, cycle hire etc.
- Audits and improvements to bus information and facilities at stations
- Upgrade station facilities such as waiting areas, toilets and refreshments
- Upgrade ticketing to make it faster and easier, with less queuing
- Make the 90% most used stations fully accessible by 2020
- All stations and all platforms to have real time audio and visual announcement by 2015
- Measures to address skills shortages in providing passenger information

## Environment

- Government support for stretching rail's environmental lead, by requiring environmental strategies in franchise bids
- Recognition that rail's environmental footprint includes journeys to and from stations and initiatives to reduce car use for these journeys (see above)
- A proper examination - or commitment to one - of the environmental pros and cons of different rail traction options, including a full examination of the case for large-scale electrification (and a recognition of the downsides as well as potential upsides of biofuels)
- Consideration of switching rail's electricity supply to renewables as a means of significantly reducing rail's environmental footprint and also supporting demand for renewable energy

## Analysis

- Fair analysis of rail against road and other transport schemes, including full accounting for benefits from rail schemes such as carbon reduction, especially when allied with supporting measures like land use policies. Review requirement to include fuel tax lost to Treasury as a disbenefit of rail schemes
- Proper appraisal of the full costs and benefits of all rail decisions, including franchise specifications and fares policies
- Review rail forecasting to take account of recent unforeseen growth