

Detailed guide: Avian influenza (bird flu)

How to spot avian influenza (bird flu), what to do if you suspect it, and measures to prevent it.

Two improvements to ensure passengers get a better deal on rail fares

- confidence in railways given a boost as smart ticketing continues to be rolled out to modernise the network
- Transport Secretary Grant Shapps backs fares trial which provides a simpler and more flexible system for passengers
- fare trials and smart ticketing key to reforms for a modern, customer focused railway

Passengers will benefit from simpler, cheaper fares and improvements to ticketing as part of changes introduced and announced today (29 August 2019).

‘Contactless’ Pay As You Go (PAYG) journeys are being introduced for journeys at Potters Bar, Radlett and Brookmans Park as part of the Department for Transport’s smart ticketing rollout – helping to create a truly passenger-focused railway.

The department has also backed a new trial announced today that will significantly boost customer confidence and flexibility in booking train tickets, with the potential to also save passengers money.

LNER will begin trials in January 2020 of a new fare system designed to make travelling on trains simpler and clearer. Return tickets will be removed on trial routes from London to Leeds, Newcastle and Edinburgh, and in their place passengers will be able to purchase cheaper single-leg tickets, which will be more in line with half the price of a return journey.

For example, passengers currently travelling between London and Edinburgh buying a ticket at the station pay £146.40 for a Super Off-Peak Single ticket or £147.40 for a Super Off-Peak Return ticket. Under this trial, the cost of a Super Off-Peak Single would be £73.70.

[Smart ticketing video](#)

Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps said:

These announcements are vital for providing passengers with a more convenient, flexible and fairly priced experience.

New 'contactless' Pay As You Go journeys at Potters Bar, Radlett and Brookmans Park will help make travel cheaper, quicker and easier, with our smart ticketing roll-out also set to benefit passengers at Luton Airport and Welwyn Garden City later this year.

We are also taking action to simplify fares as LNER begins single-leg fares trials next year. This will save many people money with substantially cheaper single tickets, boost customer confidence, and ensure passengers up and down the country get the modern transport service they expect.

The rollout of PAYG ticketing follows ambitious plans made by train operators in 2018 to enable smart ticketing at stations across almost all of the network, with all franchised operators offering smart cards and/or barcode ticketing.

This is the result of over 5,000 upgrades to ticketing equipment at stations across the country.

This follows the Department – together with the rail industry – launching the [brand new 16-17 Saver](#) to give young people a better deal across the railways and help them and their families save an average of £186 every year.

High-flying young women and girls celebrated at Downing Street reception

Campaigners, teachers and young women were welcomed to Downing Street by the Prime Minister to celebrate the global achievements of girls in education and entrepreneurship.

Teachers and pupils mingled alongside guests including FGM campaigner Fahma Mohammed; Science Girl director Anna Zacharia; Amy Stephens, founder of 'Chicks with Bricks' – a network connecting women in the construction industry; and Belinda Parmar, activist and founder of 'The Empathy Business' – a organisation which aims to encourage companies to encourage compassion towards their employees.

The PM also met several Youth Advocates from Girl Guides, one of the UK's most well-known charities for girls and young women. These included 19 year-old Isla Gerrard, 17 year-old Emily Jenkins, and Kim Singh Sall, aged 18, who discussed their girl-led manifesto, 'Future Girl' with the Prime Minister, as well as sharing with him the findings of their 'Girls' Attitudes' survey.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

This event was a fantastic opportunity to meet so many trailblazers in the world of education and empowerment for girls and women.

We've just seen a terrific set of GCSE and A Level results – a testament to the hard graft of young people, their dedicated teachers and their families.

Girls are bagging the majority of the top grade 9 results at GCSE and narrowing the gap in subjects like physics and maths at A Level.

I'm passionate about making sure girls everywhere get access to a good education – and that's why I announced funding for 600,000 children to have the chance to go to school for the first time at the G7 summit last week.

I was tremendously inspired by the young women I've met and I'm confident their successes will encourage a new generation of female leaders.

Other Ministers attending the reception included Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, and Alok Sharma, Secretary of State for International Development; and Matthew Rycroft, Permanent Secretary at the Department for International Development.

Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education said:

This summer hundreds of thousands of young people received their GCSE, A Level and technical and vocational results, and showed what a pool of talent we have in this country.

Girls in particular have excelled themselves: for the first time, girls are now doing more science A Levels than boys, the highest proportion of GCSE entries achieving grade 4 or above were from girls, and more A Level entries from girls received A* to A.

There's always more to do though, and I'll continue working to make sure every child and young person is getting the education they deserve. That means continuing to attract and retain talented individuals in our classrooms, giving teachers the powers they need to deal with bad behaviour and bullying, and getting more young people to consider high quality technical and vocational routes so this country has the skilled workforce it needs for the future.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma commented:

Investing in quality education for girls isn't just the right thing

to do, it's the smart thing to do.

No country can truly develop and lift themselves out of poverty if half the population are locked out of economic opportunities. That is why UK aid is getting girls into school, giving them the skills they need to get a job and helping women with start-ups in Africa to grow their businesses.

I had the pleasure of meeting not just hard-working teachers and students but also female entrepreneurs who are breaking down barriers and proving an inspiration to girls around the world.

Vacancy: Head of External Communications



AAIB, MAIB and RAIB

Are you a communications professional with a talent for providing expert strategic and tactical communications advice?

Do you have the confidence to lead communications on high-profile accident investigations when the world's media is watching?

Are you able to act with tact and diplomacy with internal and external stakeholders, championing best practice in communications while respecting the sensitivities around accident investigation?

The [Air](#), [Rail](#) and [Marine](#) Accident Investigation Branches are recruiting a new Head of External Communications.

You can read more about the role and apply on the [Civil Service Jobs website](#).

Current Head of External Communications, James Hotson, talks about the role

[Head of External Communications](#)

The deadline for applications is midnight, 16 September 2019.

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Last updated 29 August 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 29 August 2019 Updated to include Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) and Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB).
2. 29 August 2019 First published.

Official Statistics: Statistical Digest of Rural England

Statistical Digest of Rural England – August 2019 (latest edition).