

Rail fares pledge will not help working people, say Greens



19 April 2022

Responding to the Government's announcement that some train fares will be cut for a five-week period from April to May, Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack said,

"This slapdash pledge won't counter the decade of soaring rail costs. Covering only off-peak travel and failing to cover half-term mean that those most squeezed by rail price hikes won't see the benefits of this scheme. If the government really wanted to help those facing rising prices they would force rail companies to permanently cut commuter fares."

"In France [1], Germany [2] and New Zealand [3], governments are taking bold action to cap rail fares at a price that is affordable for everyone. The UK should be following that lead and going further by permanently bringing down rail prices on routes that people use consistently. To truly reduce the cost of living and ensure that the greenest option is the cheapest option, we have to reduce fares for all train users, including commuters.

"We also need investment in reliable and affordable buses, which have been woefully neglected by this Government. Scotland, where the Greens have introduced free bus travel for under-22s, shows that free bus travel is possible and effective [4]. Bus services are facing meltdown unless there is a rapid and urgent increase to funding to build back passenger numbers after the pandemic."

ENDS

Notes to editors

1

Rail travel in the Greater Paris area has been capped at €5 (excluding airport travel).

<https://www.thelocal.fr/20220307/rail-travel-in-greater-paris-area-capped-at-e5-per-ticket/>

2

Germany is offering all citizens the use of regional transport for only €9 per month for three months.

<https://www.thelocal.de/20220324/german-taxpayers-to-receive-e300-lump-sum-for-energy-costs/>

3

New Zealand is reducing public transport fares by 50% for a similar period.

<https://www.cittimagazine.co.uk/news/road-user-charging-tolling/new-zealand-halves-public-transport-fares-amid-global-energy-price-increases.html>

4

<https://greens.scot/news/the-scottish-green-budget-deal-2021-22>

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