

## RDG redesigns rail tickets

Network Rail and the Rail Delivery Group have mocked up a planned new design for the traditional orange rail ticket, in an effort to make it simpler, easier and clearer for passengers.

"As part of the industry's efforts to help more people feel

confident that they have the right ticket for their journey, we've worked with passengers to help redesign the famous orange ticket," said an RDG spokesman.

The current design has been in place since the 1980s.



## DfT launches consultation into penalty fares...

The Department for Transport has launched a consultation into the appeals process for rail penalty fares.

An estimated £240 million is lost through fare evasion each year, according to the Association of Train Operating Companies. And the DfT says 120,000 journeys a day made by fare evaders are being subsidised by rail passengers and taxpayers.

The DfT states the consultation is not about changing the amount charged for the penalty fare, but to make administrative changes to the process for passengers appealing against a penalty that they have been issued.

Train operators charge penalty fares if a passenger is found to be travelling without a valid ticket. Passengers may appeal if they think they have been incorrectly or unfairly charged, either through the Independent Revenue Collection and Support (IRCAS) or the Independent Penalty Fares Appeals Service (IPFAS).

Under the new proposals:

- Train operators must remove the reference to criminal sanctions in letters chasing penalty fare payment.
- All appeal bodies must adopt a 'stop the clock' measure, meaning those appealing do not have to pay the penalty fare until a final ruling

has been reached.

- All appeal bodies must be independent of transport operators and owning groups.
- Regular 'health checks' of the system must be made by government.

Shadow Transport Secretary Lilian Greenwood said: "It's disgraceful that on top of the soaring cost of travel, passengers are being hounded through the courts for making honest mistakes. Reform is needed."

However, Rail Delivery Group Director General Michael Roberts said: "The industry is working hard to help ensure passengers feel they are being fairly treated."

## ...as Passenger Focus makes plea for penalty fairness

Passenger Focus has renewed its call for the rail industry to treat passengers fairly when they are unable to produce a 'valid' ticket.

The passenger watchdog has released an update to its 2012 *Ticket to Ride* report, highlighting that train operators need to find better ways of separating situations where an honest mistake has been made from those where passengers have purposely tried to avoid paying.

PF Chairman Colin Foxall said: "It is right that train companies should take steps to stop those who try to evade paying fares. But those who have made an innocent mistake and been caught out by the many rules and restrictions should be treated with understanding, and not immediately assumed to be guilty."

The report says that clearer

information for passengers when they are buying a ticket and clearer guidelines for staff issuing penalty fares is key.

Responding to the report, Director General of the Rail Delivery Group Michael Roberts said: "The

rail industry understands the concerns raised by the report and the need to get the balance right between taking a firm approach to fare dodgers while fairly treating those who make an honest mistake."

### Comment Barry Doe, Fares and services expert, RAIL

I have never liked penalty fares - they presume guilt until innocence is proven and that is not right.

Ticket machines can fail or your bus can be late, meaning you have to jump on a train at the last minute. Or you might genuinely forget a railcard on the day. The system should be flexible enough to allow for that, but it isn't.

The railway should do more to collect fares. If you forget a railcard then yes, you pay extra, but you should be able to get it back by presenting the railcard later (perhaps minus an admin fee). The test, to me, is always: would John Lewis do it this way? Penalty fares fail that test.



Visit [www.railmagazine.com](http://www.railmagazine.com)

## “Quote...

**“Passengers rightly expect that we take strong action against fare dodgers. But passengers penalised through no fault of their own must be treated fairly.”**

**CLAIRE PERRY**

*Rail minister launches proposals for a new, fairer system for appealing against penalty rail fares.*

**“It’s disgraceful that on top of the soaring cost of travel, passengers are being hounded through the courts for making honest mistakes.”**

**LILIAN GREENWOOD**

*Shadow Rail Minister says reform of the rail penalty fare system is needed now.*



**“Those who have made an innocent mistake and been caught out by the many rules and restrictions should be treated with understanding, not immediately assumed to be guilty.”**

**COLIN FOXALL**

*Chairman of Passenger Focus launches the Ticket to Ride report asking TOCs to “play fair” with passengers who don’t have a ‘valid’ ticket.*

**“It may be tempting to jump a light to shave a minute or two off your journey. But every time you do, you endanger your life and the lives of other road and rail users.”**

**BECKY WARREN**

*British Transport Police Inspector highlights the dangers of level crossing misuse.*

**“There is no one magic bullet solution to improving platform safety.”**

**NEAL LAWSON**

*Director of Operations and Maintenance Services at Network Rail explains the challenges represented by safety on platforms.*