



HOUSE OF LORDS

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Wendy Morton MP
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Dear Minister,

1. As Chair of the House of Lords Built Environment Committee, I am writing to follow up on our short inquiry into the Government's proposed reforms of rail fares and ticketing and their impact on consumers. My warmest congratulations on your appointment.
2. In November, we published a [letter](#) to your predecessor (attached) outlining our recommendations. We were grateful for the Government's timely [response](#) and were pleased to note that the Government agrees with many of our recommendations. However, we have identified several significant gaps and would be grateful for your response.
3. The **Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail** promised to "simplify the current confusing mass of tickets". The evidence we received led us to suggest that introducing three simplified fare categories under the 'anytime, off-peak and advance' structure would offer consumers greater clarity. The Government has not yet set out how Great British Railways (GBR) will simplify fare structures. What are your (or GBR's) plans to simplify fare structures?
4. We also urged the Government to consider implementing **single-leg pricing** for shorter journeys. We heard that single-leg ticketing could deliver better value for customers, help to facilitate contactless payments, and has been successfully delivered in many other European countries. Whilst the Government informed us that a trial of single-leg pricing on London north Eastern Railway had been "well-received by passenger interest groups", the response did not indicate where other such trials will take place, or offer a timeline as to when single-leg pricing may be rolled out more widely. What are the Government's plans regarding single-leg pricing?
5. Whilst we welcome the Government's commitment to roll out **digital ticketing** across the network, we note the absence of further detail as to how, when, where and by whom this rollout will take place. The commitment to invest £360 million in rail reform is welcome, but greater clarity is needed. We called on the Government

to move quickly to integrate barcode and contactless technology more widely across the network. How does the Government intend to roll out its programme of digitalisation and will this be delivered before the introduction of GBR?

6. Evidence to our inquiry indicated that the **flexible season ticket** provision is not satisfactory. For passengers, the savings are often negligible, and buying a flexiseason ticket requires them to know how many journeys they will make upfront. We appreciate that the Government will conduct a 12-month review of flexiseason tickets, but we urge it to revise the product, through measures like extending the validity period beyond the current 28-day limit and revising the pricing so that it is more competitive against other products. We feel such revisions would encourage more passengers onto rail. Will the Government revise flexible season tickets?
7. The Government has acknowledged our concern that split ticketing can undermine public trust. Given that it will be setting GBR's priorities, we urge the Government to set the expectation that a **through-fare will always provide the cheapest option** and that split ticketing will be redundant. Do you plan to set this as an objective for GBR?
8. Although the Government "values **third-party retailing**", it has not committed to ensuring that all retailers, including GBR, will operate on fair commercial terms. A level playing field would give independent retailers the capital to innovate and market their products. Evidence to our inquiry highlighted that third-party retailing in other countries has successfully grown the market. What oversight will there be of commission rates, including for GBR, to ensure that retailers will be treated fairly?
9. I am copying to Huw Merriman MP, Chair of the Commons Transport Select Committee. We look forward to working with you in the future as part of our ongoing interest in rail.



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