

Between 1997 and 2013, rail fares leapt by 22%, while road users have experienced a 9% drop – exactly the wrong priority. Rail isn't really 'private' anyway – 60% of the network is owned by state-backed foreign companies. And this 'private' system takes £4 billion in public subsidies every year. Labour's response is to require the state to bid for franchises it already owns – at millions of pounds a time. As Caroline says, a privatised railway 'is a blatant transfer of public money to private interests at the expense of the taxpayer and rail passengers'. Bringing the railways back into public ownership would cost very little if it was done as existing franchises fell due for renewal. This will:

- Save money;
- Mean a better deal for passengers;
- Allow local authorities to plan and run local services;
- Increase the scope for the democratic involvement of local communities in planning and running railways; and
- Reduce congestion and improve safety.

In addition on the railways, we would *not support HS2* (the proposed high-speed network). The money to be spent on this hugely expensive project, which at best will reduce journey times for a few passengers, would be much better spent on improving the conventional rail connections between various major cities, improving the resilience of the existing network to climate change and reopening lines and stations that have been closed.

DECARBONISING TRANSPORT

The major challenge for our transport system is to decarbonise it and end its reliance on fossil fuels. We would:

- End the wasteful and destructive *national major roads programme*, saving £15 billion over the Parliament.
- Spend part of this £15 billion on improving and subsidising public transport, with an average *fare reduction* of 10% costing £8 billion over the Parliament, fixing potholes in existing roads and investing in walking and cycling.
- Support *walking and cycling*. In particular, we would ensure that pedestrians and cyclists get their fair share of road space and would spend at least *£30 per head* on them over every year of the Parliament. Funding should be allocated flexibly to make safe, convenient routes that address the needs of pedestrians and cyclists while reducing any risk of conflict between them.
- Support the *re-regulation of bus services to provide a better, more reliable service*.
- End the favourable *tax treatment of aviation* and have a separate target for *aviation emissions* of below 37.5 million tonnes CO₂ equivalent a year.
- *Stop airport expansion*, in particular *no new runways* at either Heathrow or Gatwick, and ban night flying.
- *Invest in electric vehicle charging points* for buses and taxis, and for cars where there are gaps in the network of public and community transport.
- Incentivise *consolidation of white van deliveries* so that last-mile deliveries can be made by cargo bikes and electric vehicles in local areas.

AFFORDABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Instead of prestige projects such as HS2 and new runways, we need to prioritise local transport and make sure it is accessible to everybody. The Green Party would:

- Prioritise affordable *local public transport*, accessible to all, including those with disabilities.
- Support *free local transport for pensioners*, including the existing local bus pass scheme and the Freedom Pass in London.
- Extend *free local public transport to young people* and students, costing around £4 billion a year.
- Develop regional smart payment systems with integrated ticketing, like the London Oyster system.
- Extend networks of public transport to include rural areas.