

Campaign for Better Transport: Tax aviation fuel to fund rail fare freeze

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Campaign for Better Transport is calling on the Government to introduce a fuel tax on domestic flights and use the money to fund a rail fare freeze for 2023.

As reported, the Department for Transport has said it intends to keep any fare increase below inflation.

The amount rail fares increase each year is calculated using the retail prices index (RPI) measure of inflation from the previous July.

- **Campaign for Better Transport calls for rail fare freeze as RPI forecast hits at 17.7%**
- **Campaign for Better Transport asks Chancellor to help rail passengers with cost-of-living-crisis**
- **Campaign for Better Transport urges people to sign up to support initiative**

RPI in June was 11.8 per cent, but ahead of the rate for 2023 being announced on Wednesday, the DfT has confirmed it would not be increasing fares as much as the July figure, but it is not yet clear how much lower the rise will be.

A Department for Transport spokesperson said: “The Government is taking decisive action to reduce the impact inflation will have on rail fares during the cost of living crisis and will not be increasing fares as much as the July RPI figure.

“We are also again delaying the increase to March 2023, temporarily freezing fares for passengers to travel at a lower price for the entirety of January and February as we continue to take steps to help struggling households.”

July’s RPI is used by the government to set the following year’s annual rail fare rise and is expected to around 12 per cent. Whilst Ministers have pledged to spare passengers a double-digit fare rise next year, it is still unclear how much fares will go up.

Campaign for Better Transport says that taxing kerosene on domestic flights at the same rate as it taxes petrol and diesel for car drivers would help cut carbon emissions from domestic aviation and raise £1.53 billion, enough to fund a rail fare freeze to encourage more people to travel by rail.

Paul Tuohy, Chief Executive of Campaign for Better Transport, said: “It’s absurd that the Government chooses to place no tax on aviation fuel, yet heavily taxes petrol and diesel for drivers. Taxing kerosene would help reduce domestic flights and save carbon, and the money raised could pay for a rail fare freeze next year to make the trains cheaper and encourage more people to use them.”

With 13 per cent of all UK flights starting and finishing in the UK, the charity is calling for more to be done to reduce domestic aviation. As well as a kerosene tax, the charity is calling for the Government to commit to switching half of domestic flights to rail and making train tickets cheaper to compete with budget air fares.