



Department
for Transport

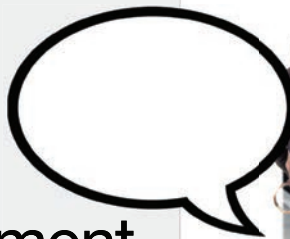


A railway fit for Britain's future

What people told us about
changing the UK's railways



Department
for Transport



About this easy read



This is the easy read of a bigger booklet by the UK Government. It is about some big changes to Britain's railways.



This easy read booklet tells you about some of the main things in the bigger booklet.



If you want more information, you can find the bigger booklet on our website:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a-railway-fit-for-britains-future



This easy read is still quite long. You do not have to read it all at once. You can just read the pages you are interested in.

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About Great British Railways



The Government wants to make some big changes to how the railways are run.



At the moment, lots of different companies run the trains in Britain.



An organisation called Network Rail looks after the tracks, most stations, bridges and tunnels.



We want 1 organisation to run most of these things.

This will be called **Great British Railways**.

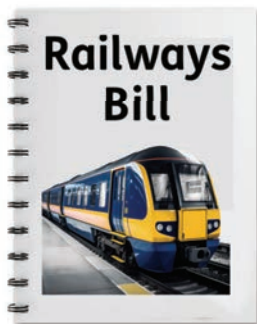
The law



We have already started to change the railways. But to make more changes, we need to change the **law**.



Laws are strict rules about how our country is run.



The first step in changing the law about the railways is writing the **Railways Bill**.



This will tell people about the laws we want to make.



The Railways Bill will help us to start Great British Railways.

About our survey



We asked lots of people what they thought about our plans for change.

People who answered our questions were:



- Passengers.



- Local councils.



- Rail and **freight** companies.
Freight means using trains to move things like food, clothes and machinery.



- Transport groups. These are organisations that work to make **transport** better for people.

Transport is things like buses, cars, trains and taxis.



- The Welsh and Scottish Governments.



- Charities, disability groups and other organisations that speak out for passengers.



We have looked carefully at everything people told us.



This booklet tells you:

- Our ideas for the changes.



- The main things that people told us about our ideas.



- What the Government said.

Leadership



Leadership is about:

- Making sure rules are followed.
- Getting everyone to work well together.
- Planning for the future.



Our ideas

We want to make the rules about running the railways easy to understand. These rules are called the **Regulatory Framework**.



The **Transport Secretary** will say that Great British Railways can run the railways.

The **Transport Secretary** works in the UK Government. They are in charge of the Department for Transport.





To run the railways, Great British Railways will have to follow all of the rules in the Framework.



We think that the Transport Secretary should make the **long-term** plans for the railways.

Long-term means looking at the future over many years.

Things people told us about leadership



The main rules about how railways are run should be written in the Railways Bill.



The rules should be easy to understand.



The **Office of Rail and Road** is a **regulator**.

A **regulator** is an organisation that makes sure things work in a fair way.



The **Office of Rail and Road** should look into it if the rules are broken. They should still make sure that the railways are safe and well run.



The Transport Secretary should be in charge of long-term plans for the railway.



Long-term plans must:

- Make sure more freight is carried using the railways.



- Make it easier for disabled people to travel by train.



- Connect railways with other types of transport. Things like bus stations, airports and ferry ports.



To make the plans the Transport Secretary should work together with:

- Other parts of the UK Government.



- Local governments in England.



- The Welsh and Scottish Governments.

What the Government said:



The Transport Secretary will be in charge of saying who can run the railways. And they will be in charge of the Regulatory Framework.



The Regulatory Framework will say what the rules are.



It also says what the different jobs are that need doing on the railways.



All companies that run trains, including Great British Railways, will need to follow the rules.



The rules will help the Government make sure that the railways work well for everyone.



The Government will expect the railways to be run well. The railways must work well for everyone.



The Office of Rail and Road will help check that the rules are followed and the railways run safely.



The Office of Rail and Road will look into it if:

- The railway is not being run safely

or



- Great British Railways are not doing a good job.



They can tell Great British Railways or the Transport Secretary how to fix it.

Listening to passengers



We want to have a stronger **passenger watchdog**. This is an organisation that will:



- Listen to passengers.
- Make sure problems are dealt with.
- Have a say about helping passengers.



The watchdog will be **independent**. This means it does not work for Great British Railways or the Government.



The watchdog will be made out of an organisation called Transport Focus.

Transport Focus already looks into problems that affect passengers.



Things people told us about listening to passengers:

The watchdog is a good idea.



It should have enough money and staff to do a good job.



The watchdog should give advice to the Transport Secretary.



It should be involved in writing the rules that Great British Railways has to follow.



The watchdog should do some of the things that the **Rail Ombudsman** does now.



The **Rail Ombudsman** checks complaints made by passengers.

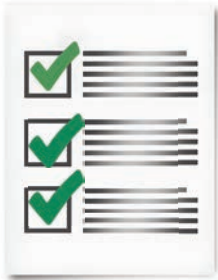


A **complaint** is when you tell someone you are unhappy about something.



What the Government said:

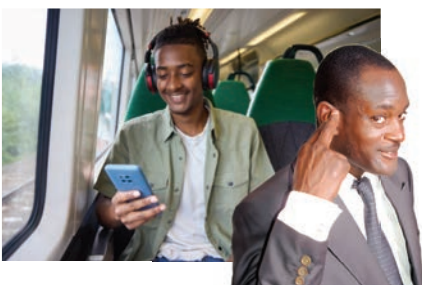
We will set up a strong watchdog.



Transport Focus already do a lot of this work.



We will change Transport Focus and give it more jobs to do.



The passenger watchdog will:

- Listen to passengers.



- Give advice to Great British Railways and the Transport Secretary.



- Find out about people's experiences of using the trains.



- Find out why people make complaints. And they will work with the Rail Ombudsman to fix them.



- Check that Great British Railways is doing a good job. And check that they are following the rules that the watchdog has helped to write.

Running the trains



Great British Railways will decide which trains run, and when they run.

There will be passenger trains and freight trains.



Most of the passenger trains will be run by Great British Railways.

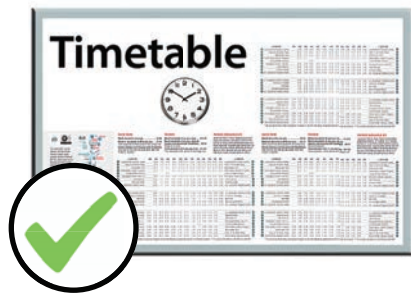


Other companies will run freight trains and some passenger trains as well.

Things people told us about running the trains:



Great British Railways should follow rules when they decide which trains can use the tracks.



Great British Railways needs to make sure that there are enough trains, at the right times.



The new laws should help Great British Railways to make decisions fairly. And that they will work well with other rail companies.



Some people are worried that Great British Railways trains may use the tracks more than trains run by other companies.



Other companies should be able to tell the Office of Rail and Road if they think a decision is not fair.



The Office of Rail and Road should be able to tell Great British Railways to change a decision if it is not fair.

What the Government said:



There will be new laws about deciding which trains use the tracks. And laws about how much it will cost to use them.



Great British Railways will make these decisions, but they will also have to follow the rules.



This will help to make sure that the decisions are fair.



Rail companies will be able to complain to the Office of Rail and Road if they think something is not fair.



Other rail companies will pay Great British Railways, so they can use the tracks. The amount they pay must also be fair.

Money



The UK Government and the Scottish Government will give Great British Railways most of the money it needs to run. This money is called **funding**.



They will look at this amount every 5 years. This will help to see what funding Great British Railways will need for the next 5 years.



Things people told us about money:

Most people agreed with our ideas.



They said it is good that Great British Railways will be able to plan 5 years ahead.



Some people said it should be more than 5 years.



What the Government said:

We will check the funding every 5 years.



It is hard to make plans about money for more than 5 years, because things change. Things like what the Government needs to spend it's money on and how much it costs.



The Railways Bill will say how the funding will be worked out.



Great British Railways will write plans about how they will spend the money.



The UK Government and Scottish Government must agree to the plans.



The Office of Rail and Road and the Passenger Watchdog will read the plans. The Office of Rail and Road can give advice to the governments.



Great British Railways will show everyone the plans and any changes that have been made.



The Welsh Government and some local governments will also be asked what they think.

Selling tickets



Great British Railways will sell train tickets to passengers.



They will make a new website and **app**. An **app** is something you can use on a smart phone or a tablet.

A smart phone is like a mini computer but you can use it as a phone too.



Other companies will also sell tickets.



There will be **discounts** like those for young people, disabled people and older people.

A **discount** means you pay less for train tickets.



At the moment, discounts are given using railcards.

These are cards that some people can get. It means they pay less for their tickets.



Things people told us about selling tickets:

Most people said that Great British Railways should decide how much passengers should pay for tickets.



The Transport Secretary should set the rules for how Great British Railways decides the prices fairly.



People still want to be able to get and use railcards.



Most people said that Great British Railways should sell tickets from its website and app.



People said there should also be ticket offices and ticket machines at train stations.



Lots of people said that other companies should also be able to sell tickets.

What the Government said:



Great British Railways will have more control over the price of tickets than the rail companies do at the moment.



The Transport Secretary will set the rules for how Great British Railways will decide on prices fairly.



The Railways Bill will say that some groups of people must get discounts on train tickets.



Great British Railways will sell tickets to passengers. Tickets will be sold online and at train stations.



Other companies will also be able to sell tickets.



If the other companies feel that they are being treated unfairly, they can complain to the Office of Rail and Road.

Devolution



Devolution is when areas of the UK make their own decisions. These decisions are about things that affect people in their areas.

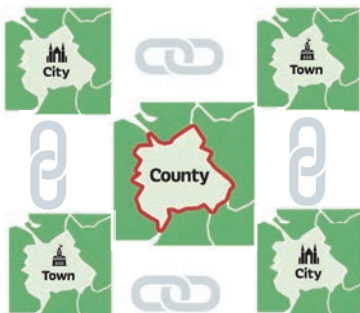


The people who make these decisions are part of:

- The Scottish Government



- The Welsh Government



- English **Mayoral Authorities**.

A **Mayoral Authority** is when councils in an area join together.



They are led by a person called a **Mayor**. The Mayor can make decisions for the whole area.



The UK Government works closely with these people on lots of things. This might be things like railways.



Things people told us about devolution:

Great British Railways should make the final decisions about running the railways.



They must also work closely with leaders from governments and the English Mayors.



Some people said that Great British Railways should also work with local councils.



People said they are not sure how Great British Railways and **ScotRail** will work together.

ScotRail is the railways in Scotland.



Some people are not sure how Great British Railways and **Transport for Wales** will work together.



Transport for Wales is in charge of running the trains in Wales.



The Railways Bill should be clear about how Great British Railways should work with other rail organisations.



Some people said that Great British Railways should run all rail services in Scotland, Wales and England.



What the Government said:

Great British Railways will make the final decisions about the railways it runs.



The Transport Secretary will set out how Great British Railways will work with the UK Governments and English Mayors.



This will be written in the law and other plans.



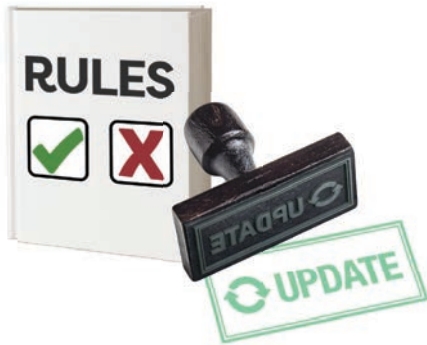
Great British Railways must make sure that trains run well, in and out of Scotland, Wales and England.



Great British Railways and Mayors will work together. They could work on things like stations and **accessibility**.

Accessibility means how easy something is for everyone to use or get around.

Train driver licences



When people learn to drive trains, they must take tests and pass exams.



When they finish training, they are given a **train drivers licence**.



A **licence** shows that drivers know how to drive trains safely.



We want the Transport Secretary to be able to update the rules about train driver licences.

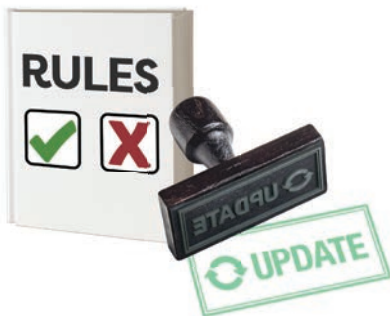


Things people told us about train driver licences:

People agreed that the Transport Secretary should be able to update the rules about train driver licences.



Before licences are changed, lots of people should be asked what they think.



What the Government said:

The Transport Secretary will be able to update the train driver license rules.



They will have to ask people what they think about any changes.

These changes will help Great British Railways to:



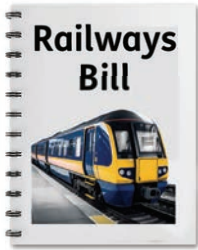
- Find and keep train drivers

and



- Make railways safer.

Next steps



All of these things will be in the Railways Bill, because we want them to become law.



The things people told us will help us to make the Railways Bill better.



We will take the Railways Bill to **Parliament** in November 2025.

Parliament is where people called politicians meet to talk about the work of the Government.



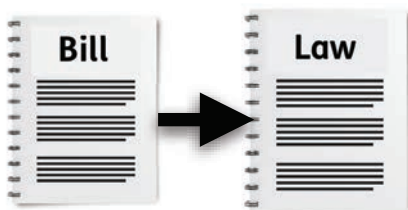
The politicians can read the Bill and ask for more changes.



When the politicians agree with the Bill, it will go to the King.



When the King says yes to the Bill, this is called giving **Royal Assent**.



When the King gives Royal Assent, this means that the Bill becomes a new law.



When the Bill becomes law, we can set up Great British Railways.

