

## Public transport in the UK: An inclusive public service

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Not heard in all of the current discussions is that UK heavy rail services are the most inclusive of our surface and sub-surface public transport services. They are accessible, at reasonable cost, to nearly all of the population who are able to get around the country either unaided or with a certain amount of support.

For the physically disabled, London Underground is increasingly making its stations wheelchair accessible, increasing numbers of long distance coaches have powered lifts to enable the disabled to access them, buses in some areas (particularly London) have wheelchair ramps – but it is the heavy rail network that historically has striven to make its services accessible for as many as possible. It isn't just a matter of the technology, it is also the way in which the ticket and the service at the stations is delivered.

But there are many many more people who need to be able to carry with them what amounts to an itinerary for their journey – and the impending loss of the 'tangerine ticket' (Govt Minister Claire Perry's words for the current orange mag stripe ticket and its associated coupons giving information such as seat reservations) will leave a hole for many people if we do not develop a replacement method for providing something tangible to carry with you to and on the train: hold in your hand, show to the member of staff assisting you, put in your pocket and wallet and purse and handbag, and thus carry with you. None of the recent proposals and discussions have provided a solution.

Minister Claire Perry may well, with that letter written to the Rail Delivery Group<sup>1</sup> on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, have opened the door for a dialogue.

More generally, very many of us want to carry a printed record of basic details of the journey that we have booked. For trains this includes train time, change of trains information, seat reservations – these are the typical details that the writer carries when travelling by train. Again the mag stripe bank card sized ticket and accompanying coupons provide that information in printed form.

Some will say that 'print at home' tickets solve the problem – not for everybody; in particular: not for the many of the older generation who travel by train but do not have the means or the equipment to print a ticket.

**There is a need to guarantee delivery, on request, of printed copies of rail tickets and associated journey itinerary information.**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-02-01/25119/> includes the letter;

Rail Delivery Group is a Membership Company to which all operators of UK heavy rail passenger services belong.

