

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

October 2017

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the railway.

Personally I have been impressed with the transformation in our railways in recent years. The number of planned train services has increased by 29 per cent since privatisation and over 3,800 extra trains ran per day in 2015-16 compared to 1997-98.

Compared to 1996-97, there are 2,500 more carriages on the railway and the frequency of services on many key long distance routes has doubled. Train operating companies also employ 14 per cent more staff than in 2010.

I do, though, fully understand the concerns that rail passengers have with the cost of train fares and their impact on household budgets. However, thanks to action by Ministers, regulated rail fares have risen no faster than inflation for four years running. Although any increase in regulated fares is regrettable, it is important to remember that record amounts are being invested to achieve better train services. This investment means better stations and new state-of-the-art trains and better stations which will help cut journey times, provide better connections, and stimulate growth across the country.

Decisions on the staffing of train services are a matter for train operating companies, who have a legal responsibility to ensure their staff receive the necessary training to safely carry out their duties. You may be interested to know that safety on the railway has continued to improve in recent years and this is the tenth year in succession with no passenger or workforce fatalities in train derailments or collisions, the longest such period on record. The UK has one of the safest railways in Europe, with figures showing that in the most recent period the United Kingdom had the lowest number of railway fatalities per train kilometre out of the 28 European countries that submit data to the European Railways Agency.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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