

NEWS RELEASE

Friday 3rd July 2009

Dept for Transport breaks its promises to North West

The news that the government has gone back on its pledge to provide new train coaches to tackle overcrowding on trains in the North West is unwelcome but not surprising given the track record of the Dept. for Transport.

Chris Dale, Chairman of TravelWatch North West said today, "It looks like train passengers will have to endure overcrowding on inadequate little trains for the foreseeable future and it will be little wonder if they abandon the railway over coming years and return to the roads. The DfT appears to be completely out of touch with the needs of the North West and proves it time and time again. So much for the environmental agenda! It appears to be obsessed with London and the South East and it is about time ministers and civil servants had an excursion away from their ivory towers in London and took a look at the real world."

Numerous examples of excessive overcrowding on inadequate trains have been witnessed in all parts of the region as passenger numbers have grown as well as many incidents of passengers being left on stations because trains are so full.

"This is not just happening in the urban conurbations at rush hours, but there are examples in more provincial towns and villages at all times of the day and at weekends", added Mr. Dale. "The government does not seem to care about passengers' welfare in the North West."

TravelWatch North West calls on all transport authorities in the region to work together to survey overcrowding on trains both inside and outside the rush hours and to compile and publish a document of evidence to draw further attention to the issue and to urge a much needed rethink from the DfT.

ENDS

Notes:

The DfT has recently announced that only 106 of the originally promised 180 new train carriages will be supplied to Northern Rail.

Further information – contact Chris Dale on 07948 551809