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Delivered free to 45,000 homes in Weston and the villages

The Gazette

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Bleak Future for Rail Passengers

Weston MP John Penrose has criticised the above inflation increase in rail fares from 1st January 2009 and has written to the Minister for Transport asking for more carriages to increase the size and frequency of local trains

John said: "This time last year we were celebrating because First were laying on more intercity trains at rush hour, which cut overcrowding and made rail travel a better alternative to battling through junction 21 with the car every morning. But now it looks like we're on a downward slide again.

"People wouldn't mind paying a bit more to travel by train if the service was getting better. But too many of our trains are still over-crowded with people squashed onto them like sardines during

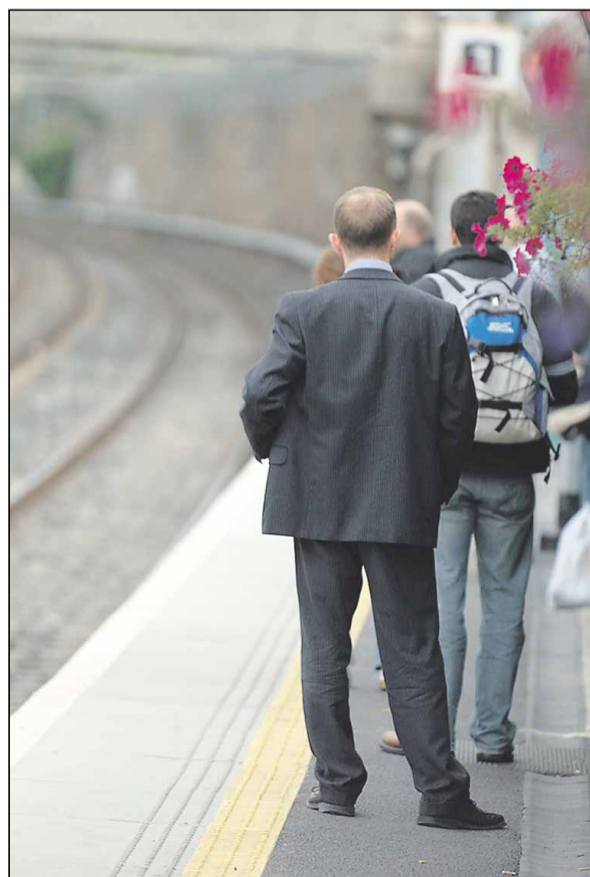
the morning and evening peaks.

"Overcrowding looks set to get worse too as the Regional Spatial Strategy will impose 12,000 new homes on Weston without improving the rail service or road links to cater for the population increase.

"We have to do more to increase the size and frequency of our local trains, so people can see they're getting value for money and that there's a decent alternative to taking the car on the M5 into Bristol each day."



■ John Penrose MP campaigning in Parliament for more rail carriages



■ Residents left waiting for the next train

Winter 'Sunshine' in Weston Hospital



■ John Penrose with one of the volunteers in the Sunshine Radio studio in Weston Hospital

MP John Penrose became a DJ for the day when he joined local volunteers at Sunshine Radio in Weston Hospital for a special Christmas broadcast

During the show the Weston MP joined the team playing patients song requests. He said: "Weston Hospital's patients bring with them an amazing range of musical tastes. We went round the wards asking for requests, and got everything from Doris Day to the Killers.

"Best of all was the atmosphere in the studio itself. Sunshine Radio relies entirely on volunteers who give up their time to cheer up people in hospital. They're a great bunch of people who clearly enjoy what they do. You couldn't ask for a better demonstration of generous Christmas spirit."

John Penrose MP - Working for you all year round