



**NRG**

***Newbridge Rail Group***

## **Newbridge Rail Group Take Their Case to Leinster House**

A delegation from NRG – Newbridge Rail Group went to Leinster House this week to meet local TD and Minister for State, Sean Power. Also in attendance was a delegation from Irish Rail.

Minister for State Power had called the meeting to progress the long outstanding issues that effect rail users in Newbridge. Since the rail group was formed almost three years ago, some of the more basic facilities have not been addressed, such as shelters and lighting. In spite of three public meetings, commitments and promises Newbridge has fallen behind the rest of the rail network notwithstanding the fact that rail users in Newbridge pay more per mile than any other rail user in the country.

NRG also took the opportunity to continue their objection to the imminent introduction of pay parking. NRG's objection is based on the following:

- Adding another €500 annual to the most expensive rail ticket in the country
- No guaranteed car park space – consumers could pay in advance for a service that's not guaranteed
- No security of vehicle
- Revenue will not be directed back into Newbridge railway station
- Cost of using the rail service is no longer attractive

The NRG delegation made an impassioned plea to Irish Rail to reconsider this penal charge on the basis that Irish Rail has failed to understand the real problem affecting rail users who avail of parking facilities – how do you get to the train station. Newbridge rail users are discriminated against when compared to the services their fellow rail users from Sallins and Hazelhatch enjoy who have the option to avail of a free shuttle bus to and from the station. All the while rail users from Newbridge pay more for this service!!

NRG advised the Minister and Irish Rail that their analysis of passenger numbers using Newbridge railway station indicated a fall of circa 20%. This figure was not contested by Irish Rail. Irish Rail were advised by NRG that the reason for the fall off was falling attractiveness of their service in compared to the option of using the car; the new N7, the upgraded Red Cow junction plus the introduction of barrier free toll roads has made driving more appealing.

The Minister requested that Irish Rail revert to him with a progress report on the infrastructural issues affecting the rail users in Newbridge, commenting after the meeting the Minister stated



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"The meeting provided an opportunity to explain clearly to Irish Rail that Newbridge rail users could no longer be asked to pay top prices for very poor facilities. Investment in the Newbridge Station was urgently required and he looked forward to a commitment from Irish Rail in making that investment"

NRG were delighted to have the opportunity to present their case in Leinster House and thanked the Minister for his intervention, NRG are hopeful that this latest development will yield some action

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