



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill
Rail Minister
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

4 December 2024

Dear Minister

Access for All Funding – Platform Six, Upminster Station

Thank you for your previous comments on this matter.

In your response, and that provided by the Minister for Local Transport in response to a WPQ on 31 July, you both advised that the government was still considering the best approach to the Access for All programme. Consequently, neither of you were able to advise on the next steps for specific stations, including Upminster Station.

Given these responses, I was disappointed to note that there were no direct references to this vital programme, or other efforts to improve accessibility of the rail network, within the Autumn Budget. In light of this, I would be grateful if you would be able to provide an update of the government's consideration of the Access for All programme and how it intends to improve accessibility of the rail network.

As I set out in my initial correspondence, Upminster Station is a busy interchange on the London rail network, connecting c2c passengers with District Line services and, via platform six and the Liberty Line, Elizabeth Line services. However these services continue to be inaccessible to those unable to navigate stairs. The project to provide step-free access to platform six is popular, having previously received the support of over 1,000 petition signatures, the operator of the station, the local authority, London Assembly Member and a local disability charity.

It is therefore concerning to learn that the current operator of Upminster Station, c2c, has not yet received funds to complete the feasibility study to advance the project. I would be grateful if you could confirm whether the funding for the completion of feasibility studies for the 50 stations referenced in the 24 May publication is still retained by the Department for Transport or if they have been provided to Network Rail for distribution.

If these funds remain with the Department, please could you advise further on any outstanding decisions before they can be released. If the funds have been provided to Network Rail, please could you clarify any instructions issued for their disbursement.

Finally, the status of this project has become even more opaque with today's announcement that c2c will be among the first train operators to be brought under public ownership. As the soon-to-be operator of the station, it is imperative that the Department make clear whether it intends to make all of its platform accessible to all of its passengers.

With kind regards, *Julia*

Member of Parliament for Hornchurch & Upminster

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