



ROBERT LARGAN MP

Member of Parliament for High Peak

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Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

16 September 2020

Dear Grant,

RE: Upgrade to the Manchester-Sheffield (Hope Valley) line

We are writing to urge you to support the upgrade of the Hope Valley line between Manchester and Sheffield. This scheme is critical to the task of connecting two of the biggest cities in England and levelling-up across the country.

The Government has a responsibility to modernise the nation's railways, increasing capacity, upgrading trains, and improving journey times and reliability. Boosting connectivity in the North will help support jobs and growth, and make our local communities more attractive places in which to live and start a business.

Poor infrastructure should no longer hold back the potential of people in the North or allow left behind communities to continue being forgotten. Nowhere is this more obvious than for people travelling through the Pennines.

Trains between Manchester and Sheffield suffer from significant delays, partly because of slow-moving freight. It should not take one hour to travel 35 miles between two of the country's major cities. The region needs and deserves more modern and more frequent services.

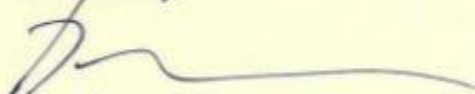
Upgrading the Hope Valley line will transform local rail services for 4.2 million people across the North, making a real difference. The scheme, if completed, would increase services to three fast trains per hour instead of one every two hours.

Work was due to start last year but it has now been delayed till 2022 with completion in 2023. We would be grateful to receive an update on the work being done to put together the business case, choose a contractor and make the final investment decision.

It is time to bring an end to the delays and cancellations that have blighted our region's rail services for decades. Upgrading the Hope Valley line will be an important step in addressing this challenge, delivering the promise of Northern Powerhouse Rail and making life better for future generations across the whole country.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Robert Largan MP
Member of Parliament for High Peak

Co-Signed by:

Paul Blomfield MP

Miriam Cates MP

Chris Clarkson MP

Gill Furniss MP

Andrew Gwynne MP

Louise Haigh MP

Tony Lloyd MP

Angela Rayner MP

Jonathan Reynolds MP

Alexander Stafford MP

Graham Stringer MP

William Wragg MP