



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill,  
Minister of State,  
Department for Transport  
London SW1P 4DR

LONDON SW1A 0AA

21 August 2024

Dear Lord Hendy,

The area of Whitehill and Bordon in the new constituency of Farnham and Bordon includes a former military town with extensive development work and a rapidly growing population of around 15,000 people. Increase in local infrastructure includes new housing developments, a regenerated town centre, health, sports and banking hubs.

Unfortunately transport improvements haven't kept up with the pace of this expansion and as a consequence, it is a town where local residents are still heavily reliant on their own transport, unable to rely on an efficient, more environmentally friendly public transport. Across Whitehill and Bordon, there is no train station and bus services are not frequent or reliable enough for commuters to use on a regular basis.

Under my predecessor in the area, the Rt Hon Damian Hinds, there was a discussion between the various local decision makers (including the district council and the transport authority) about whether the introduction of a rail link bus between Whitehill and Bordon and its nearest train station, Liphook (or even nearby Bentley station), could be an option to address the public transport needs of the town. This could be a through-fare service, negotiated with the respective bus operator, where individuals could use a shuttle, rail link bus, to then link Whitehill and Bordon to northbound trains to London and Guildford as well as southbound trains to Petersfield and Portsmouth.

A rail link bus would bring enormous benefits to residents living in the town and nearby villages but could also relieve the pressure on the station car park at Liphook which I'm aware struggles to cope with existing demand, particularly at peak times. From speaking to my predecessor and members of the East Hampshire District Council, I am aware that the Southwestern Railway franchise agreement is up for renewal in May 2025, so this feels like a timely moment to have the conversation.

To do so, I am requesting a meeting with you to discuss the scope for the shuttle bus to be included as a requirement in the next contractual agreement. In addition, I would be grateful for the contact details of the relevant civil servants, so that I can link them with local civic leaders to ensure that whatever the future of Southwestern Railway, and Great British Railways, the people of Bordon are finally properly served by public transport.

Yours sincerely,

**Gregory Stafford**

**Member of Parliament for Farnham and Bordon**