HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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

Reference No. HW67104 31 March 2025

Dear Lord Hendy

I am writing to seek an update on the status of Ebbsfleet and Ashford International stations, as well as the future of cross-Channel rail services in Kent.

As you will know, Eurostar services to these stations have been suspended since 2020, causing significant disruption to residents and local businesses – many of whom specifically established themselves here because of the Eurostar service.

I understand that Virgin Group, Heuro, and Evolyn have expressed interest in operating cross-Channel services. Given these developments, I would appreciate an update on the following:

- What steps is the Department for Transport taking to facilitate the return of international rail services to Ebbsfleet and Ashford?
- Are there ongoing discussions with potential operators to utilise these stations?
- What infrastructure improvements, if any, are planned to support the resumption of services?

The reinstatement of these services would provide a substantial boost to our local economy, support our environmental goals with rail fare being a more environmentally friendly way to travel, and ease pressure on roads leading to Dover.

I look forward to your response and welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Whately MP
Member of Parliament for Faversham and Mid Kent