



Department
for Transport

Callum Anderson MP
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Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill
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Our Ref: MC/00064071

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Dear Callum,

Thank you for your letter of 12 March, on behalf of your constituents, about East West Rail and the introduction of passenger services on the line between Oxford and Bletchley.

I appreciate you raising your concerns with me, and I have noted your comments. I understand how frustrating the delay to the introduction of services must be for people along the route.

There are several reasons why EWR services have not begun, but the primary one is that the commercial negotiation with Chiltern was interrupted by the unexpected General Election of July 2024 and was thus very protracted.

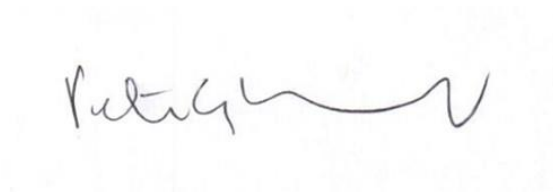
The Department continues to work closely with Chiltern and other partners to confirm a start date for the first EWR services between Oxford and Milton Keynes. For passenger services to commence, trains will need to have been modified and fully tested, and driver training will need to have been completed. Winslow station also needs to be fully handed over, and future staffing arrangements also remain to be agreed.

Once in service, by delivering new East to West connectivity across the region, EWR will provide faster journeys, open up access to employment and training, unlock opportunities for new homes and support the Government's mission to kickstart economic growth.

In addition, the programme to bring train operators back into public ownership is well underway. West Midlands Trains services were transferred on 1 February, and I expect the remaining programme, which includes Chiltern Railways, to be complete by the end of 2027. This should make the process of implementing change on the passenger rail network much simpler in future.

Thank you once again for your letter. I am doing all I can to deliver this and I hope you find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Hendy', with a stylized flourish at the end. The signature is centered on a light gray rectangular background.

Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RAIL