

Network Rail
George Stephenson House,
Toft Green,
York,
YO1 6JT

Richard Fuller MP
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA

Wednesday, 2nd April 2025

Dear Richard,

RE: Inspection of Biggleswade Station Footbridge: 13th January 2024 and 15th February 2024

Thank you for your letter dated 17 March to our regional managing director, Jake Kelly, about the difference in findings between two inspections of the footbridge at Biggleswade station. As the senior public affairs manager for our Eastern region, I will be replying on his behalf.

We visually inspect our structures every year, with a detailed inspection carried out every six years. The outcome from January 2024 is based on the visual inspection of the structure the examiner found on site that day. All our examiners are extensively trained, and robust competency checks are regularly undertaken to ensure they meet our standards. Inspection reports are then checked by our Asset Engineers at a portfolio level to assess the asset against the wider network and prioritise work as needed.

The steps at Biggleswade were assessed at a risk score of 6 on our risk matrix, which continues to 25. This means that, although it was seen as having reduced capability, the chance of an incident happening remained low. However, during work in February 2024, additional issues were identified with defective stair brackets, resulting in the second urgent site inspection.

Since this event, we've reviewed our processes to prevent similar incidents like this from happening again. We also inspected all our footbridges across the East Coast route with similar steel fixings to identify any potential faults. Any footbridge found to have similar weaknesses during these inspections has undergone work to replace the steel fixings. At Biggleswade, all stair brackets were replaced in February 2025.

If you'd like to discuss our inspection process in more details, please do let me know and I'd be happy to arrange a meeting to discuss this further.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlotte Harries". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Charlotte Harries
Senior Public Affairs Manager for the Eastern Region

cc: Cllr Hayley Whitaker, Julian Vaughan, Clerk: Biggleswade Town Council