



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Charlotte Harries
Senior Public Affairs Manager
Network Rail

Our Ref: RF34688

8 April 2025

Dear Charlotte,

Re: Failure of steps to platforms at Biggleswade Station in January 2025.

Thank you for your letter of 2nd April responding to my query into the inspections of Biggleswade station footbridge in January and February 2024.

As you state in your letter, the urgent inspection in February 2024 identified issues with the stair brackets and recommended corrective measures to be taken. It remains unclear whether these improvements were implemented, and if they were, why the staircase failed in January this year, causing platform closures and significant disruption over several days.

Notwithstanding the traveller inconvenience, and in some cases lost income due to being unable to get to work during the staircase closure, there is also the health and safety concern to be addressed. During the morning and evening rush hours, up to twenty or thirty people could be on the footbridge steps at any one time, creating significant stresses due to weight and movement. This could have had the potential to cause a major failure and posed a risk of severe injury.

Considering this, I'd be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

1. Were the recommended measures from the February 2024 inspection implemented in full at Biggleswade station?
2. If so, why did the staircase fail less than 12 months' later, requiring scaffolding support until a full repair was completed in February 2025?
3. Prior to the January failure, was there an identified risk that the staircase to the platforms was compromised? If so, how was this risk communicated, and to whom?
4. Have similar issues been identified at other stations in Bedfordshire? If so, have corrective measures been implemented at these locations?

Yours sincerely

Richard Fuller MP

Cc: Mr Richard Crook