Department for Transport

Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill
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Toby Parkins
Interim CEO
Cornwall Chamber of Commerce
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6 July 2026

Dear Toby,

Thank you for your letter of 18 May, to the Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP, Secretary of State for Transport, about the proposal for superfast Wi-Fi across the Great Western Railway (GWR) intercity fleet. I am replying as the Minister for Rail. I apologise for the delay in responding to your letter.

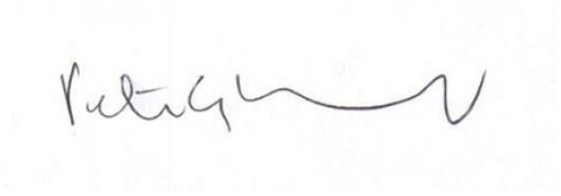
I am grateful to you for setting out the case for investment and for highlighting the current trial on GWR. I welcome the progress made through the pilot carried out on a GWR Intercity Express Train since November 2025, and I note the strong performance you describe, including improved connectivity, higher data capacity and positive feedback from passengers.

The Department is committed to improving Wi-Fi connectivity for our train passengers. My officials at the Department for Transport Operator are working closely with the Peninsula Taskforce to ensure as much early preparation is done before GWR comes under public ownership so that passengers on those routes benefit from our plans to roll out low earth orbit satellite (LEO) connectivity for on train Wi-Fi. The team is in the midst of completing the business case to release the funds and working through the procurement strategy alongside.

Trials with operators such as GWR and London North Eastern Railway, using LEO have proven this technology provides high speeds – up to 200 megabits per second, enabling passengers to receive a much better mobile connection through the on-train Wi-Fi than they receive today. Network Rail's Project Reach will also address mobile connectivity in 57 mainline tunnels which will complement the rollout of LEO.

Thank you once again for your letter. I hope you find this reply helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Peter, Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RAIL