



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Jon Jones-Pratt Esq,
Chairman, West Somerset Railway PLC
The Railway Station
Minehead
Somerset, TA24 5BG

10th August 2020

Dear Jon,

DCMS Application

I am writing in support of the application of the West Somerset Railway to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport support package for the heritage sector.

Within my constituency, the West Somerset Railway is the one of the principal tourist attractions, and visitors to the railway use local accommodation and catering and chose to extend their stay to visit other attractions such as Hestercombe Gardens because of the railway.

Apart from being a local employer, it also provides worthwhile and useful opportunities for volunteering in an area with an elderly population for whom time spent on the railway enriches their lives and encourages social contact and regular exercise.

The railway is also important to the local economy through its purchase of local supplies and in providing opportunities for skills training for younger volunteers as well as work experience and opportunities for team building.

The WSR has worked closely with our main line train operator GWR to provide a rail service connection, which I launched last year, and which improves local connectivity to the railway itself and its principal museum at Bishops Lydeard, in my constituency, as well as to all the other tourist attractions along the line like Cleeve Abbey, Dunster Castle and Minehead. Without it, Taunton Deane would be economically and culturally poorer.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Pow'.

Rebecca Pow
Member of Parliament for Taunton Deane