



Department
for Transport

From the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Andrew Haines
Network Rail

Dear Andrew,

I am writing to you regarding my concern over the prevalence of graffiti on Britain's rail network and its impact on passengers and the general public.

Britain's railways have a long and distinguished history and as a national asset are worthy of pride. I want us as a nation, particularly as we continue our focus on improving and developing our national infrastructure as we recover from COVID-19, to feel proud of our rail infrastructure and public spaces by ensuring that they are maintained to a high standard.

The blight of graffiti, however, can have an impact on the confidence of passengers as they return to safely using the railway, and on the wider public view of our national infrastructure and public transport. Much more than that addressing visible signs of crime and anti-social behaviour such as graffiti helps to create an environment of respect for the law. This helps to prevent more serious crimes on and around the railway network, thereby promoting passenger safety.

It is important therefore for users of the railway to have confidence that problems relating to graffiti will be fixed quickly, and that the onus should not

always be placed on the passenger to report incidents in order to bring about the swiftest resolution.

I fully support the £1 million programme of work that Network Rail safely undertook in the Spring to target graffiti, which followed my challenge to do more on graffiti, in addition to its current annual £3.5 million programme of anti-graffiti measures. This represents a positive step in the right direction while showing ambition.

Tied to the issue of graffiti is that of trespass, which in many cases enables graffiti. This can have extremely serious consequences for individuals' safety and cause significant delays for passengers. I also welcome the work being undertaken by the Trespass Improvement Programme, in particular around the successful "You vs Train" campaign.

Going forward I would also ask you to review your response time to complaints about graffiti and produce long-term plans to ensure that Network Rail is using all the tools and innovations available to address and prevent graffiti, as well as ensuring that Network Rail plays its part in cross-industry cooperation to improve the experience of passengers, such as its ongoing work with the British Transport Police to harden the network to unlawful incursions. Tackling graffiti will provide greater confidence for passengers and, as I mention above, create an atmosphere where we discourage more serious crimes by addressing visible signs of anti-social behaviour.

In line with the Prime Minister's recent supportive comments of the upcoming Great British September Clean, I believe that it is up to everyone in the country to do their bit in keeping the nation graffiti and litter free, and I am firmly resolved to keep our railways clean and maintained to the highest standard.

I will be pleased to take part in the launch of further action against graffiti in the future, and I look forward to seeing the results of your current efforts to focus extra attention on creating a cleaner network in South East London, which I know is in addition to normal planned spending on tackling graffiti. I would also welcome an update on the work being undertaken by the Trespass Improvement Programme as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT