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Stratford Railway Station Improvements to start in 2019

The Rail User Group for train services to and from Stratford upon Avon has welcomed the news that work is due to finally get underway early in the new year on improving Stratford upon Avon's original GWR railway station. The Shakespeare Line Promotion Group (SLPG) recently approached Network Rail's new Chief Executive, Andrew Haines, to ask him why it was taking so long to get the improvements happening. Nadhim Zahawi, who recently met SLPG for an update on Stratford's train services also has added his weight to moving the improvements forward by also writing to NR Chief Executive Mr Haines.

The plans to improve station facilities were announced back in April 2015 with the then Train Operator, London Midland, attracting £500,000 from the Department for Transport "National Stations Improvement Programme" and Warwickshire County Council also contributing £250,000. However, since 2015 there have been no sign at the town's railway station of the improvement works commencing.

In their letter to Mr Haines SLPG stated "The current state of the Stratford upon Avon Railway Station does not commend it to passengers or indeed staff that work there trying to provide a service. Whether that be the booking office staff employed by West Midlands Trains or the privately operated catering outlet that continues to give a precious and excellent service from dreadfully dingy surroundings which include major wall fabric cracks. This situation has deteriorated for over three years since the improvements were announced and the joint funding from the DfT and Warwickshire County Council was approved. It is now September 2018, and we urgently need some clarity and commitment from Network Rail about the improvement work at Stratford upon Avon Railway Station."

Welcoming Network Rail's response the Secretary of SLPG, Fraser Pithie said: "We are pleased that Network Rail have been working with the train operators and Council to design and develop the planned improvements to Stratford's station. It is a shame that there has not been better communication about this but nevertheless we are pleased that construction works are due to start in early 2019. Earlier this year we initiated the formation of a Heart of England Community Rail Partnership. CRP's provide for much better communication and involve the community and key stakeholders and crucially attract other sources of funding. We now anxious for our local authorities to now get on with forming the CRP so we can work together and improve our train services and rail facilities."

ENDS

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