Dear David

Assistance for wheelchair users by train staff

I am writing about changes by train operators to staffing on trains and the implications this has for disabled passengers, and particularly wheelchair users, and their right to assistance at railway stations.

We have heard concerns that some train operators have made the second member of staff on trains non-essential, meaning that trains can run without them being aboard. This means that passengers who rely on train staff to board or disembark from trains will lose the ability to turn up and board trains at stations where they have previously been able to.

I know that the EHRC looked at the accessibility of rail transport in your 2017 report, *Being disabled in Britain*, and I wanted to ask for your views on the below points:

1. How the Equality Act 2010 applies in relation to entitlements of disabled people to travel by rail, and in particular whether a diminution of provision for disabled people could be a breach of equality law, and whether these entitlements differ depending on whether a service is provided by a private train operating company or station manager or a Network Rail managed railway station.

2. If you have considered how assistance for disabled people using rail services has changed since your 2017 report, and whether changes in practice by train operators, such as those outlined above, are consistent with equality legislation.

I’d be grateful for your views on the above points, and any advice you might have on other areas where there might be value in our considering accessibility of transport.

Lilian Greenwood MP
Chair of the Transport Committee