

# Join the Campaign to re-open the Shrewsbury Railway Station – Abbey Foregate Footpath

linking Abbey Foregate with Platform 3 of the railway station

The footpath, shown as a solid mauve line below, was a station access used on match days at the old Gay Meadow football ground – now Riverside Meadow housing. It links the drive between the Wakeman Building and the railway bridge on Abbey Foregate with platform 3 of the station which itself extends across the River Severn railway bridge.



The present train operator franchise expires in October 2018. During the first half of 2017, the four shortlisted bidders (Arriva Rail Wales, Abellio Rail Cymru, KeolisAmey and MTR) are preparing final bids in the run-up to submission in July. There is a short window of opportunity to convince bidders to include the re-opening of this second station access (It is possible the station may then be transferred to the West Midlands franchise)

There have been attempts over more than 10 years to re-open this path. The scheme has had intermittent support from Shropshire Council and stronger support from

Network Rail: in May 2012, Mark Langman, Network Rail Western Route Managing Director, offered £50,000 towards reinstatement costs, but that offer has now lapsed.

The scheme has been persistently opposed by Arriva Trains Wales, the current train operator, who would prefer to keep the single station entrance for ease of operation.

The case for opening the footpath as a second access:

- In the last 10 years, passenger numbers have grown by more than 50% - in 2015/16 there were almost 2 million arrivals and departures (ORR data). If the trend continues, numbers are expected to exceed 3 million by the end of the forthcoming franchise – well over double the numbers at the start of the existing franchise, contributing to further congestion on the station forecourt and to town increased centre traffic – and creating an obligation on the rail industry to contribute to relief measures
- A pick up/drop off point in Abbey Foregate, with parking in this area augmenting the existing station parking, would reduce town centre traffic and promote walking and cycling. This footpath would considerably improve access to the station from the South and East
- The walking distance from Abbey Foregate to the station would be reduced from 1,150m via English Bridge and St Mary's street to 390m using this path
- The path may also be used by people walking through to Castle Gates, but larger stations have such permissive access. For example, in Inverness there is a major thoroughfare between the bus station and town centre via platform 7 [detail at <http://tinyurl.com/InvStation>].
- Platform 3 is the least used platform (1 train /hour) and is outside the gate-line barrier which protects platforms 4 – 7.

**In late April / early May an open letter will be sent to Shropshire Council and direct to franchise bidders, making the points outlined above and 'signed' by as many Shrewsbury organisations, businesses and private individuals as possible. To support the campaign for this second station approach and have your / your organisation's name added to the open letter, please email Michael Willmot at [AbbeyRailPath@zoho.com](mailto:AbbeyRailPath@zoho.com) giving your name, postcode, and name of organisation if applicable.**

**PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO OTHERS WHO MIGHT WISH TO SIGN. To request an electronic or paper copies of this flyer, for further information or to offer help/support in this campaign, either use the above email address or phone 01743 588654.**

Thank you.

Michael Willmot, now living in Shrewsbury, is Chair of the North Staffordshire Community Rail Partnership and was previously involved in successfully campaigning for the opening of a second access to Stoke-on-Trent station from the west (Stoke) side.