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for Transport

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Dear

Selaine

Thank you for your letter of 6 October, about reopening the facilities in Barnstaple bus station.

I found our discussion at the recent conference very useful, and I am grateful to you for bringing your concerns about the bus station to my attention. I recognise that the facilities in the bus station have been important to members of the public for many years, and the inconvenience a lack of toilet facilities in more recent times may have caused.

Given the incidents that have occurred in the building and the risk to the public, you will appreciate the importance of ensuring appropriate safety measures are put in place if the facilities are to be fully re-opened to the public.

I would like to reassure you that my officials are in close contact with Devon County Council and last met with them on 21 August, where the issue was discussed. As you know, Devon County Council fully support the initiatives to improve Barnstaple Bus Station and have allocated part of their £14.1 million Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding allocation to improve the external areas of the building, such as bus shelter and signage upgrades (to support given that the external area of the bus station remains fully operational with buses continuing to use this during operating hours).

I am also aware of plans to transfer the ownership of the building to Barnstaple Town Council – who plan to re-open it with new refurbished public facilities, including toilets and a café.

However, further decisions about investment in the bus station are a matter for Devon County Council and the District Council themselves.

Thank you again for raising this important issue with me.

Best wishes,



RICHARD HOLDEN MP

MINISTER FOR ROADS AND LOCAL TRANSPORT

P.S. Thank you, as ever, for your tireless campaigning on behalf of North Devon. I look forward to visiting Tavistock with you soon to see what is on offer and the improvements you're supporting.

Richard