Royal National Institute of Blind People

105 Judd Street

London, WC1H 9NE

Transport Minister

Chris Heaton-Harris

Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London, SW1P 4DR

21 July 2021

Dear Transport Minister,

**PETITION: Act now to make railway stations safe for blind and partially sighted people**

Today Sekha Hall, the partner of Cleveland Gervais who was tragically killed after falling from a platform without tactile, and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), have delivered an important petition to the Department for Transport and Network Rail. 15,817 people have signed RNIB’s petition, calling for tactile paving to be urgently installed across the network and stations to be made safe for blind and partially sighted people.

As you are aware, tactile is a fundamental safety measure in stations, which many blind and partially sighted rail travellers rely on to keep a safe distance from the platform edge. Despite this, in Great Britain only around half of mainline railway stations have tactile edging. This is completely unacceptable. Without tactile, people with sight loss can and have fallen onto the tracks. In the UK, around 350,000 people are registered blind or partially sighted. However, up to 15% of people who fall from platforms are blind or partially sighted.

We, the undersigned petitioners, call for you to act urgently to address this appalling situation by funding the installation of tactile paving and measures to make all railway stations accessible. It is critical that the Department for Transport increases the pace of funding releases to Network Rail so tactile can be installed in all stations as a matter of urgency, so blind and partially sighted people can travel safely.

Yours sincerely,

15,817 signatories, and

Matt Stringer, Chief Executive Officer, Royal National Institute of Blind People