

MP to Press Minister for Electrification of Shrewsbury to Wolverhampton Railway Line



Shropshire's political leaders are to meet transport minister Chris Heaton-Harris to lobby for the electrification of a major rail line through the county. Currently, only diesel trains can use the Shrewsbury-Wolverhampton line. In September, Network Rail called for the route to be upgraded. Shrewsbury MP Daniel Kawczynski has secured a meeting with the minister to make the case for the electrification of the railway line between Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton. Shropshire Council's cabinet minister for transport, Councillor Steve Davenport, will also attend the meeting. Mr Kawczynski said he would also be meeting officials from Network Rail in order to keep pressure on the Government. He said, "as well as the obvious environmental benefits of having emission-free trains along the route, he said electrification would also boost the county's economy. At the moment, if you take the direct to train to London, it has to change engines at Birmingham because the line is not electrified," he says. There are clearly benefits of getting the latest rolling stock into Shrewsbury and increasing the number of trains coming along the line."

The 30-mile stretch, which forms part of the West Coast Main Line franchise, serves stations at Bilbrook, Codsall, Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal, Oakengates, Telford and Wellington. The need to upgrade the line was highlighted after Network Rail was asked by the Government to draw up plans to remove all diesel-only trains from the railways of England and Wales by 2040. The plans, which propose that almost all non-electrified parts of the West Midlands rail network should be converted, will now be submitted to the Government for consideration as part of its Comprehensive Spending Review.