

# National Rail vow to keep welcome addition after petition

# Station ramp fight takes step forward

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**A CAMPAIGN to permanently keep an access ramp at a train station has taken a major step forward.**

Villagers in Albrighton want to keep the temporary ramp, which was installed early last year to replace a 130-year-old listed footbridge which was removed for refurbishment during a £1 million revamp.

Elderly people, passengers with wheeled suitcases and those with pushchairs were delighted by the addition, but horrified when it was announced that it was only a temporary measure.

Residents produced a 1,700 signature petition and Network Rail agreed not to knock it down and have now said that a new lighting system will be installed around it.

## Maintenance

London Midland, which runs the trains on the line, has also agreed to carry out maintenance and pay the electrical bills for the new lights.

And mobile phone operator EE, which owns some of the land affected, is also supporting the scheme.

Albrighton, Boningale, Donington with Boscobel and Tong parish councils are all in talks over carrying out risk assessments and insuring the new walkway.

Councillor Malcolm Pate said: "Many people have continued to work very hard on this issue. A ramp team of councillors and the civic society has done much legwork liaising with other parties.

"Shropshire Council has prepared various options for a new footpath, joining up with the foot of the ramp in order to make the area safe for both pedestrians and traffic.

"However, there is still much more work



**We are ramping the campaign up – Rod Smith and Peter Woodman view the popular access ramp at Albrighton's railway station**

to do in ensuring that the ramp remains in place permanently, but that is what everyone is working towards."

The ramp, which connects Station Road to platform one, has been hailed as a real improvement to accessibility at the station.

There were fears that Network Rail would breach the Equality Act if it kept control of the ramp because it was not disability compliant.

The ramp was set to be removed last August, but residents were granted a stay of execution by Network Rail for the ramp to be left in place while locals found a way to ensure that they were able to keep it there permanently.

MP Mark Pritchard has also added his support to the campaign.

He previously held a meeting with London Midland Trains and representatives

from Shropshire Council, parish councils and Albrighton Civic Society in May to see what progress was being made.

Following the decision to grant a stay of execution, he said: "Many councillors and residents have worked very hard on this issue over many months.

"There is still much more work to do, but I think the general view is cautious optimism," he said.