To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to accelerate access for train-operating companies delivering services (a) to the South West and (b) nationally to new passenger rolling stock.

Improvements in rolling stock are part of the Government’s investment in the railways that will deliver better journeys for passengers.

In relation to the South West of England specifically, in July 2015 the Department announced that Great Western Railway would be acquiring 29 brand new Hitachi AT300 bi-mode trains for longer distance services between London and the South West of England.

Nationally, new train procurements including Thameslink, Crossrail and the Great Western/East Coast Intercity Express Programme will see over 5000 new carriages delivered to operators between now and the end of 2020.

In 2016 alone we have announced that over 1900 new carriages will be delivered by the franchising programme over the next five years, including over 500 into the Northern and TransPennine franchises, 211 for Great Western, 150 for Great Northern and 1043 for East Anglia.