

## New timetable for ticket office consultation

Train operators are extending the time available to respond to a consultation reviewing “how tickets are sold” at stations by an extra five and a half weeks. It means passengers will now have until 1 September to complete the consultation, which they can do online on their local train company website or by visiting [www.transportfocus.org.uk](http://www.transportfocus.org.uk) or [Londontravelwatch.org.uk](http://Londontravelwatch.org.uk). Operator information about the consultation will be made available in accessible formats.

In increasing the time available, train operators are “listening to feedback and hope that more people will have the opportunity to have their say in to changes to how tickets are sold at stations”.

The **Rail Delivery Group** added: “Together with the extensive and on-going engagement with accessibility groups, as well as the independent passenger watchdogs scrutinising the proposals, the responses will shape final plans so that all passengers are supported as railway retailing is updated for the smartphone era. In addition to these proposals, the rail industry continues to roll out improvements to ticketing such as pay as you go and single leg pricing.”

“Although local plans vary, overall the proposals aim to bring staff out from behind ticket office windows to provide more support for customers buying tickets and navigating stations, as they move in to new, multi-skilled ‘customer host’ roles.

“An estimated 99% of all transactions made at ticket offices last year could be made online or on ticket vending machines (TVMs). Where needed, TVMs across the network will be upgraded to sell a greater range of tickets and in rare cases where customers are unable to buy the ticket they need at a station, they would be able to buy on their journey, at a ticket selling facility en-route or at their end destination. Across the network as a whole, many ticket retailing facilities will remain open at busy interchanges, smoothing the transition.



Rail union, RMT hits back and declared today the consultation extension on the future of rail ticket offices is wholly inadequate and called for the whole “disastrous closure programme to be abandoned”.

Following mass campaigns by RMT, disabled and passenger groups, the train operators and their “paymasters in government have been forced to extend ticket office closure consultations until September 1.”

According to the RMT over 1,000 ticket offices are due to be closed with the loss of over 2,000 railway station staff.

RMT General Secretary **Mick Lynch** said: “Campaigning by our members on stations across the country alongside tenacious disabled peoples groups and passenger bodies has forced rail bosses and ministers to admit the original consultation was not fit for purpose and must be extended.

“Although our pressure has forced their hand, it is still a deeply flawed and a wholly inadequate consultation process which we are considering challenging legally in the courts.

“Our campaign to save ticket offices, protect our members jobs and look out for the best interests of all rail passengers will only intensify in the coming weeks.

“20,000 rail workers will walk out on 29 July in pursuit of a negotiated settlement on job security pay, conditions and saving ticket offices.”

Would you like to see ticket offices at Epsom, Ewell East, Ewell West and Stoneleigh stations closed? Write in your view to Epsom and Ewell Times.

Image: Epsom Railway Station ticket office today.