

**BILLINGSHURST PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO
RAILWAY TICKET OFFICE CLOSURE CONSULTATION
JULY 2023**

From: Jo Booth

Sent: Wednesday, July 26, 2023 2:04 PM

To: TicketOffice.GTR@transportfocus.org.uk

Cc: Jo Booth

Subject: Ticket Office Closure Consultation Response - Billingshurst Parish Council

Dear Sirs,

Billingshurst Parish Councillors were asked to give their comments/observations on the potential closure of the ticket office at Billingshurst Railway Station in particular, and in the wider context of the railway network generally. The number of responses received were equally divided between outright objection and cautious support. There are, however, more reasons for objecting to the proposals than in support. For ease, I am detailing the points raised for your consideration.

Against

- The proposals discriminate against certain groups in society who may find that they are no longer able to use the railway network, specifically those with physical impairments, the blind and partially-sighted, elderly people who are not comfortable with technology, those who choose not to have technology, ie. Smartphones, those who do not use bank cards;
- Personal safety – both for members of the public and, specifically for lone-working staff members who will not have a safe and secure office to operate from;
- Emergency assistance – staff members will not be immediately available when emergencies arise or when things go wrong if they are moving around the platforms;
- Information – many people need additional information on their routes, delays, etc which is currently available via the ticket officer on duty;
- Refunds, photocards and season tickets are all currently dealt with at the ticket office and it is not clear how the proposals will support these functions in the future;
- Ticket machine failure – how will passengers pay and obtain a ticket to travel in the event that a machine is out of order, especially if they prefer to pay with cash?

For

- Ticket machines will necessarily be upgraded in order to enable passengers to obtain any type of ticket (some are, apparently only available at the ticket office);
- Staff will still be available within the station area to assist with ticket machines, general trip information and access.

Yours faithfully,

Jo Booth

Assistant Parish Clerk

Billingshurst Parish Council