



Statement against the planned closure of rail ticket offices.

25th July 2023

The GM Older People's Network and the GM Older people's Equality Panel understand that it is proposed that up to 50 ticket offices in Greater Manchester are set to close. As representatives of older people in Greater Manchester, we oppose the proposed closure of ticket offices across the country.

We are concerned that the impact of the proposal on groups such as older and disabled people has not been assessed or understood. The feedback we have received on this matter confirms that older people fear there will be major difficulties using the train system if the proposed changes are not halted to give time for proper impact assessment.

Being able to speak to a member of staff in a ticket office can offer the opportunity to ask questions and seek reassurance that the right ticket is obtained, any appropriate assistance is arranged and payment is made more securely. The closure of ticket offices will increase inequality by hindering access to the public transport system.

Moving all access to ticketing onto digital platforms will not be a positive change for people who may not have access to an app or may not feel confident using a digital machine.

The opportunity to contribute to the consultation has been very limited, both in the time allowed and the fewer options for non-digital participation.

In light of these concerns, we recommend a halt to the proposed closures to allow for a more comprehensive consultation and review of accessibility measures, safety protocols, and staff training to create a more inclusive and secure public transport system.