

Content and topics for your response

This is an extract from a briefing on Railfuture’s activities & opinions in this area – that can be read at www.railfuture.org.uk/display3385 and other Railfuture activities are at www.railfuture.org.uk/Ticket-Offices.

What follows is content you might wish to use in your submissions to [Transport Focus](#) (or [London TravelWatch](#) if the station is within their [remit](#)). These need to be sent on or before 26 July.

As you write your response (or decide to top it up), we urge you to avoid justifications along the lines of “we have always had...” and instead focus on explaining what is needed now and why. We think that these topics are very relevant:



1. Highlighting if you cannot purchase tickets online, particularly when away from home (eg not a Smartphone user).
2. The Challenges you face when using TVMs – from the ‘outside’ – eg touch screens that aren’t responsive, glare from sunlight, regularly out of order, don’t take cash – and also the ticket purchase interface. I’ve been told about a 52 step process to buy a pair of Grand Central Advance Singles at Hebden Bridge (a Northern station). If you have examples of these sort of challenges do include them (and if you can beat 52, do let me know!).
 - The Government seems to equate using a TVM with staff help is the same as buying from a member of rail staff. Any comment that can persuade them that this isn’t the case will definitely be useful; I think examples and details are essential to show it is more than a nuisance, an irritation and the like.
3. Anything you have to go to a Ticket Office to complete, because there is no alternative – in particular if you have ever wanted to get a Railcard quickly.
4. Some TOCs are offering a hub station concept where the full product set will still be available (including a refund of the cost to travel there). Is this at all practical for you? – if not, say so. I can travel from my local station to my nearest Hub station in around 6 minutes and there are 6 trains an hour, so very much unwanted, but not truly impossible – but if that station is 30 minutes away and the service is hourly, that really isn’t a credible option.
5. Concerns about the availability of toilets and waiting rooms. Whilst there are large numbers of public toilets in the UK that are unattended, and not visited by cleaning or other staff regularly, recent experience has suggested that the industry doesn’t like toilets open when unstaffed.
6. In some TOCs, there are significant or very significant reductions in staffing hours, with some stations now to only “benefit” from occasional visits from mobile staff at unspecified time. If this is relevant to you, please do comment.
 - Even in TOCs without much reduction in staffed hours, we think there will often be something to be said about increased Sunday staffing given the relative increase in weekend traffic.
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