

Members Event
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LONDON
TRAVELWATCH

Campaigns & Advocacy Report

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Ticket offices

Our work over the past few months has been heavily dominated by the ticket office consultations. We received proposals from 9 train operating companies (TOCs) to change the opening hours of, or in most cases close, the ticket offices at 269 stations in our geographical remit. This was in parallel to a similar process involving ticket offices in the areas covered by Transport Focus.

The consultation period made clear there were deep concerns from the public and stakeholders regarding the proposals to close ticket offices. Together with Transport Focus we received 750,000 responses to the consultation, the vast majority of which were objections. We thank everyone for their input into the consultation, which helped inform our decisions.

Additionally, though train companies made significant improvements in recent weeks to the original plans to close ticket offices, for example agreeing to revert to current staffing hours at most stations, we believe that substantive issues remain. This includes concerns about the ability of passengers to easily buy the right ticket for their journey and get advice and information, and the ability of Disabled passengers to get timely and reliable assistance.

Following our analysis of both the consultation responses and the details of the proposals themselves, we came to the conclusion that we must object to ticket office closures at all stations under consideration in our remit. We (along with Transport Focus) published this decision on 31 October. Shortly after the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed that the DfT would be asking all train companies to withdraw their proposals, and closures would not be proceeding.

There was significant media interest (more details are available in the communications update). Additionally, we received a positive response from stakeholders, who generally welcomed the decision. This includes from passenger groups, charities representing Disabled people, and politicians from across the political spectrum.

This work has heightened awareness of London TravelWatch amongst stakeholders and the public. We hope to harness this to build and strengthen strategic relationships with select politicians and MPs, and build on our engagement with the public (and the insight they bring).

Moving forward with personal security

We are finalising the design of our report into how LGBT+ Londoners experience the transport network (the non-designed draft has been shared with Board members). This is based on research we commissioned Galop, the UK's LGBT+ anti-abuse charity, to conduct. This includes a quantitative survey with over 600 responses from LGBT+ people who travel in and around London, and qualitative research with transport stakeholders and those who work with and support the LGBT+ community.

We are planning to publish the report in mid-November, ahead of a session by the London Assembly Transport Committee on personal security on transport. We have liaised with the committee's staff to help shape the planned discussion, and will be feeding in topline findings from the report. We have also been invited to speak on the panel.

In the meantime we supported Hate Crime Awareness Week on our social media channels, including re-sharing our research on personal security. We've also been engaging with transport operators and policing authorities on the recent increase in Antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents in London and their plans to tackle the problem on the transport network.

A better deal for passengers

We continued to campaign against the withdrawal of the Day Travelcard, including signing a [joint open letter](#) to the Mayor asking him to reverse TfL's proposed withdrawal. We're pleased that it has since been announced that Day Travelcards will be maintained after a deal was reached between TfL, train operators and the Government. While this is positive, it will result in a small increase to these fares (in addition to the annual fare increase).

Any other updates

- We attended the bi-monthly Travel Demand Management (TDM) Forum for London, which focused on planned engineering work over the festive period. The group also discussed learnings from GTR's decision to suspend services to Brighton on the day of Brighton Pride due to industrial action.
- We met Network Rail, discussing their performance, upcoming engineering work and the transfer of Abbey Wood from Network Rail to TfL.
- We've continued to meet TfL to discuss ongoing issues. Recent topics have included the branded "takeover" of Bond Street station (temporarily renamed Burberry Street station), TfL funding and personal security on the network.
- We attended a roundtable on bus stop bypasses, where TfL presented their findings from their investigation into potential safety and accessibility issues.