



Merton Centre for Independent Living
Vestry Hall
336 London Road
Mitcham
CR4 3UD

1st September 2023

Dear Southern Railway,

Rail Ticket Office Closures and Involvement in Equality Impact Assessment

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) is a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO) based in the London Borough of Merton. Our members are Deaf and Disabled people who support our work to push for a more equitable society.

We are actively supporting Transport for All's campaigning around the proposed closure of rail ticket offices across the country. We have signed their joint statement, which can be read [here](#).

We are writing to ask you to ensure that the voices of Deaf and Disabled people in Merton are heard when it comes to decision-making as to how the local train stations run by your company – Mitcham Eastfields and Mitcham Junction – are staffed and managed more generally.

Some of our members have told us that rail ticket offices provide support beyond that required to purchase a ticket, namely, reassurance that they will be supported to get on and off trains, as well as into and out of stations, safely. Without this support in place, we fear that your proposed changes to provision will, if realised, have a deleterious impact upon the independence of many Disabled people in Merton.

We would very much like our members to be involved in your equality impact assessment. We believe that their feedback and lived experience will support you to make decisions which ensure that your services are accessible for all. We are open to discussing ways to take this forward.

We look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

Charlet Wilson (Joint CEO) and Pippa Maslin (Policy and Campaigns Manager)

 020 3397 3119
 info@mertoncil.org.uk
 www.mertoncil.org.uk

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