

Wem Ticket Machine Email received 5.3.19

Additional Comments: I hope the individual who contacted the council (and Network Rail and Transport for Wales) a few months ago complaining about the alleged safety risk of having a ticket machine on only one platform at Wem Station is satisfied with the result of that campaign - now there is no ticket machine there at all. TFW say that they intend to install machines on both platforms at a future date. Does the council intend to use its influence to ensure they do so, and get a definite date for it?

Town Council response sent 6.3.19

Dear Mr Shill

It is currently our understanding the machine has been removed temporarily and will be replaced with one that can accept cash.

Penny O'Hagan
Town Clerk

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 March 2019 10:02
To: Town Clerk <info@wem.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Station

Dear Penny,

Thank you for your prompt reply. This is the explanation I got yesterday from Transport for Wales customer relations:

"Following concerns raised that passengers could endanger themselves on the railway by crossing the tracks to buy a ticket rather than using the level crossing we have agreed with the ORR (Office of Road & Rail) to temporarily remove the TVM at Wem from Monday 4th March 2019.

As part of a project to provide additional and replacement TVM's starting in the summer, Wem will be provided with a TVM on each platform. In the interim customers are able to purchase tickets via the TfW App or buy on board from the conductor."

So that is a somewhat different explanation than the one you were given, and is clearly the result of the issue raised with the council a few months ago, which was actually a campaign to get the footbridge (removed many years ago by British Rail) reinstated. In support of that, a claim was made that there was a health and safety issue with having a ticket machine on just one platform. I thought that claim was grossly exaggerated because, although a regular user of the station, I have never witnessed someone crossing the tracks because they were late buying a ticket. Over the years I have twice seen people crossing the tracks, but that was because they arrived after the barriers had come down - they didn't use the ticket machine. I don't disagree that it would be beneficial to have the footbridge reinstated, but these days the costs quoted for doing that sort of work seem to be horrendous, so I don't see it being incurred for a small station like Wem, and now, as a result of this campaign, we have lost a very useful facility at the station. It means that people in Wem are effectively excluded from buying many of the cheap advance purchase tickets, unless they pay the extra charge to have them delivered by post.

From Transport for Wales' reference to "starting in the summer" evidently we will be without a ticket machine for months, and I fear that it will be put off again and again on cost grounds, because Wem is such a small station. The previous arrangement of having a card only (and therefore cheaper to maintain) ticket machine on one platform was a sensible compromise, and all in the years it was installed I'm not aware of a single accident attributed to it.

Could you please let me know what Wem Council will do to get a definite date for ticket machine(s) to be reinstated at the station. Sadly, I fear that if nothing is done to maintain pressure Transport for Wales will keep postponing it and eventually forget about the issue.

Regards,

[REDACTED]