

9 August 2010

Haymarket Station - one lift short!

Two lifts are to be installed at Haymarket Station in Edinburgh connecting the footbridge with platforms two and three and with platform four as part of the long awaited general improvements.

Jim Tolson MSP for Dunfermline West was somewhat surprised to hear that platform zero and one would not be included in the improvements to the station access and wrote to Steve Montgomery, Managing Director of ScotRail and Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change urging them to look again at the situation.

Jim commented "I have been contacted by a number of concerned constituents regarding the lack of consideration for passengers. No direct lift access from platform zero and one means that rail users unable to use the stairs will need to leave the platform via the station car park and then re-enter the station via the front entrance and the ticket barriers. This is certainly not the easy option for the passengers – whether they are wheelchair users, parents with prams or carrying heavy luggage. At the moment, many customers in this position are travelling into Waverly to pick up trains in order to avoid the awkward transfers at Haymarket.

I have now had a reply to my letter to ScotRail and have been informed that they consider that platforms zero and one are fully accessible from the car park. However, the letter did add that they have recruited extra staff who will be dedicated to assisting with luggage and customer transfers, and ensuring a smooth interchange at the station – I think they are going to be busy!

Surely it would be more cost effective for Scotrail to install the lift now rather than later and save them a good deal of embarrassment. I know money is tight in the public services but I think they should take heed of the old adage - 'if a job is worth doing, it is worth doing right!'"

Ends