

Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee
Wednesday 12 November 2025
17th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

PE2133: Expand ScotRail's Inter7City routes to include Dunfermline

Introduction

Petitioner Andrew Wedge

Petition summary Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to ensure every city in Scotland has a direct, express rail connection to each other by expanding ScotRail's Inter7City routes to include Scotland's newest city, Dunfermline.

Webpage <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE2133>

1. [The Committee last considered this petition at its meeting on 19 March 2025.](#) At that meeting, the Committee agreed to Transport Scotland and ScotRail.
2. The petition summary is included in **Annexe A** and the Official Report of the Committee's last consideration of this petition is at **Annexe B**.
3. The Committee has received a new written submission from Transport Scotland, which is set out in **Annexe C**.
4. [Written submissions received prior to the Committee's last consideration can be found on the petition's webpage.](#)
5. [Further background information about this petition can be found in the SPICe briefing](#) for this petition.
6. [The Scottish Government gave its initial response to the petition on 13 February 2025.](#)
7. Every petition collects signatures while it remains under consideration. At the time of writing, 149 signatures have been received on this petition.

Action

8. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take.

Clerks to the Committee
November 2025

Annexe A: Summary of petition

PE2133: Expand ScotRail's InterCity routes to include Dunfermline

Petitioner

Andrew Wedge

Date Lodged

6 January 2025

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to ensure every city in Scotland has a direct, express rail connection to each other by expanding ScotRail's InterCity routes to include Scotland's newest city, Dunfermline.

Background information

[The Scottish Government has announced it will seek a replacement for the High Speed Train \(HST\) fleet which operates on its InterCity routes](#), and is committed to moving more people from road to rail.

This creates an opportunity to expand the InterCity routes to include Dunfermline. This would improve connectivity between all of Scotland's major cities whilst helping boost the long awaited Alloa-Dunfermline link.

Current express services have seen tangible benefits to similar sized cities of Stirling and Perth whilst boosting access between Inverness, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow.

Dunfermline has 1 train a day in each direction to Perth; all other services only serve Edinburgh.

Providing hub stations in Fife, at Inverkeithing and Markinch, allows express services to connect with commuter communities. The West Fife area is underserved by rail, which sees huge numbers across all stations, set on the backdrop of new housing developments.

Annexe B: Extract from Official Report of last consideration of PE2133 on 19 March 2025

The Convener: The first new petition is PE2133, which is on expanding ScotRail's intercity routes to include Dunfermline. The petition, which has been lodged by Andrew Wedge, calls for exactly what it says on the tin: for the Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to ensure that every city in Scotland has a direct express rail connection to the others by expanding ScotRail's intercity routes to include Scotland's newest city of Dunfermline. The petitioner suggests that the procurement of a replacement for the high-speed train fleet, which operates on the intercity routes, should be used as an opportunity to expand the intercity routes and improve connectivity between all Scotland's cities.

As the SPICe briefing notes, Dunfermline was granted city status in 2022 and has two railway stations, both of which are located on the Fife circle line and are regularly served by direct trains from Edinburgh, Glenrothes with Thornton and Cowdenbeath. The briefing also draws our attention to ScotRail's "Fit for the Future" consultation, which included a proposal for a direct service from Dunfermline to Dundee or Perth. However, as the proposal received negative feedback, it was not taken forward.

The Cabinet Secretary for Transport acknowledges that the proposal in the petition is a reasonable one that has been given

"detailed consideration over recent years by ScotRail, Network Rail and Transport Scotland".

The cabinet secretary's response goes on to note that, although the proposal for an hourly Edinburgh to Perth via Dunfermline service was withdrawn, options to develop and enhance rail connectivity in Fife will be kept under review. The response also includes information on the appraisal of passenger services on the Alloa to Dunfermline line, which was not recommended in the set of national priorities for investment as part of the second strategic transport projects review. Again, the cabinet secretary has indicated that Transport Scotland will keep that under review, subject to a strong business case being developed and suitable funding being available to support that change.

We have also received a submission from the petitioner, which comments on the cabinet secretary's response and suggests that a small amount of feedback from Perth residents and a minor increase in journey time due to the additional stops in north Fife resulted in Dunfermline losing out on the proposed hourly Edinburgh to Perth via Dunfermline service. The petitioner draws our attention to the growing populations in Dunfermline and west Fife, with further housing developments under construction, and emphasises the need for further investment in the infrastructure to support that growth.

Mr Wedge also raises concerns about the extensive journey time for passengers travelling from Fife to Glasgow or Stirling and suggests that ScotRail could make use of existing but less-used lines to offer direct express services, which would also help to reduce pressure on existing pinch points such as Haymarket.

That is a fairly comprehensive introduction to the new petition, as we have received some detailed responses. Do colleagues have any comments or suggestions for action? Given the cabinet secretary's response, I am not sure that there is anything that we can do directly in relation to the petition. There might have been more information to seek, but I feel that we have had quite strong direction at this stage. Do colleagues feel that there is more that we could do?

Fergus Ewing: My instinct is that you are probably right, and in saying that I am mindful of the huge pressures on the transport budget in all respects. Having said that, the petition is a new one, so I wonder whether we could write to Transport Scotland and ScotRail to ask whether the proposal to reopen the Alloa to Dunfermline line for passenger services will be reviewed in light of what the petitioner has described at some length in his response to the minister as the very significant housing development in the west Fife area, and general development in that area around Rosyth and so on. We could also ask what consideration has been given to using connections to provide rail services linking Dunfermline with Glasgow and Stirling without the need to go via Edinburgh.

That would at least get on the record from Transport Scotland and ScotRail what exactly they are saying about that. I strongly suspect that, once we get the responses within a few weeks, we may conclude that, with the elections next year, the issue is really a matter for debate at that time and of each party setting out its priorities for what improvements it would support in the next session of Parliament. That would be part of the process. However, because the petition is a new one, we owe it to the petitioner to try to get that further information, at the very least.

The Convener: I was looking for ways in which we might be able to do that, so I am content with that suggestion. Are colleagues content that we proceed on that basis?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Annexe C: Written submission

Transport Scotland written submission, 30 April 2025

PE2133/C: Expand ScotRail's InterCity routes to include Dunfermline

Thank you for your letter of 21 March where you ask specific questions relating to this petition following the meeting of the Committee on 19 March.

- whether the proposal to reopen the Alloa to Dunfermline line for passenger services will be reviewed in light of “significant housing development” in the West Fife area

While it has been noted that the reopening of the Alloa to Dunfermline rail line to passenger service was not recommended by the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2), this does not preclude responding to local or regional opportunities or need, as they arise.

It is recognised that there may be regional priorities and there remains a path for regional or local rail projects to come forward, subject to a strong business case being developed and suitable funding being available.

Transport Scotland, in their role as a Key Agency, routinely works closely with local authorities in the preparation of their Local Development Plan and would welcome any future discussions relating to rail infrastructure and land use planning, particularly in the very early stages of plan preparation. This ensures that the necessary process is followed and appropriate colleagues are involved early in any discussions. If sufficient future travel demand from West Fife is identified, then Transport Scotland would consider this within the appropriately developed business case for re-opening of the line for passenger services.

- what consideration has been given to using existing connections to provide rail services linking Dunfermline with Glasgow and Stirling, without the need to go via Edinburgh.

ScotRail previously operated a direct service from Kirkcaldy to Glasgow during the peak times, however, following electrification of the Edinburgh Glasgow line, it is as convenient for passengers to travel via Haymarket and change onto an electric train there. This has the additional benefit of delivering more journey opportunities, rather than the previous offer of a single Kirkcaldy to Glasgow commuter train per day.

The railway in Fife is not yet electrified, meaning that any direct services running between Fife and Glasgow would need to run diesel trains on a majority electrified route. This would have a negative impact on the speeds and reliability of the electric service and require additional diesel rolling stock, which is in short supply. Additional diesel rolling stock would need to come from other routes in Fife or other parts of the diesel network.

The connection at Haymarket for passengers from Fife is high quality, both fast and reliable, and this is reflected in how well it is used. However, the question of a direct

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service could be revisited once decarbonisation (partial electrification) of the Fife route is further advanced.

I trust this is helpful.

Rail Directorate