

PE2120/F: Permanently remove peak fare pricing from ScotRail services

Transform Scotland written submission, 4 April 2025

Transform Scotland welcomes the opportunity to respond to Petition PE2120, calling for the permanent removal of peak fare pricing from ScotRail services. We strongly support this petition and urge the Scottish Government to reconsider its decision to reinstate peak fares, which contradicts its own climate and transport objectives.

Scotland's railways are a vital public service, providing crucial connections for work, education, and leisure while offering an essential alternative to car travel. Given the Government's commitment to reducing car traffic by 20% by 2030, **reintroducing peak fares is a counterproductive move** that makes train travel less attractive and undermines efforts to shift travel patterns towards public transport.

The off-peak fare removal trial was a rare and much-needed intervention that simplified Scotland's complex and often costly ticketing system. The trial removed the financial penalty for peak-hour train use – a burden that car users do not face, and demonstrated the potential for a more equitable, transparent, and accessible rail fare structure. Scrapping the trial, without a clear strategy to improve affordability and accessibility, **risks reinforcing car dependency** at a time when we need to be encouraging modal shift to rail.

Scotland's rail fares are among the highest in Europe, making travelling by train an expensive option for many. A permanent removal of peak fares would help **rebalance transport pricing**, ensuring that public transport is a more viable and attractive alternative to car travel. [Public transport passengers have seen massive real-term fare increases over the past 15 years](#), while the cost of driving has remained relatively stable.

Transform Scotland urges the Scottish Government to take a long-term, strategic approach that prioritises fare affordability and improved service reliability with investment in rail infrastructure. Removing peak fares permanently is a simple yet effective measure that would make train travel more appealing and help Scotland achieve its traffic reduction and climate goals.