

Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition PE2133: Expand ScotRail's Inter7City routes to include Dunfermline, lodged by Andrew Wedge

Brief overview of issues raised by the petition

Dunfermline railway services: Dunfermline, granted city status in 2022 as part of Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, has two railway stations – Dunfermline City and Dunfermline Queen Maragret. Both stations are located on the Fife Circle line and are regularly served by direct trains from Edinburgh, Glenrothes with Thornton, and Cowdenbeath. One direct Edinburgh to Perth service calls at both Dunfermline stations every day.

Inter7City services: Inter7City branding is used by ScotRail for through services linking Edinburgh and Glasgow with Aberdeen and Inverness, with intermediate stops including Dundee, Perth, and Stirling. These services are normally operated using High Speed Train (HST) rolling stock.

Introduced into revenue service in 1976, HSTs (also known as Intercity 125) were the workhorse of Britain's intercity rail network until they were slowly retired by intercity operators in the late-2010s as new Class 800 rolling stock entered service. Taking advantage of this availability, the then Abellio ScotRail decided to lease 25 HSTs for Inter7City services. ScotRail HSTs entered service from 2018 following substantial refurbishment and the shortening for their formation to accommodate expected passenger numbers. They offered a higher quality passenger environment, more suited to longer journeys, than the commuter focused rolling stock previously used on these routes.

The Scottish Government recently started a procurement exercise for rolling stock to replace ScotRail HSTs, with entry into service expected in late 2026 or 2027.

Fit for the Future timetable consultation: [ScotRail ran a "Fit for the Future" consultation](#) between 11 September 2023 and 23 October 2023 that considered possible changes to rail service patterns and timetables in Fife. [ScotRail's feedback on this consultation](#) stated that:

"A small number of responses asked for a direct service from Dunfermline to Dundee or Perth. As part of the Fit for the Future consultation ScotRail proposed that services between Edinburgh and Perth should call at all stations via Dunfermline and Cowdenbeath. However, the increase in journey time for customers traveling between Perth, Ladybank, Markinch, and

Edinburgh was met with resistance. We listened to our customers and opted for services between Edinburgh and Perth operating via Kirkcaldy. A limited stop service via Dunfermline would have a comparable journey to the all-stations service via Kirkcaldy, but this would have to be an additional service or some stations would see an hourly service when they have a half-hourly service today. As noted above, running an additional service from Edinburgh to Perth calling at limited stops would cost the public purse between £2.5 million and £3 million. As such, we are not proposing to take this forward.”

Alan Rehfish
Senior Researcher
27 February 2025

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at spice@parliament.scot

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