



RAILFUTURE SCOTLAND NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2025

This is an update — rather than a traditional newsletter — of Railfuture matters in Scotland since our autumn meeting in Edinburgh, which was held on Saturday 4 October 2025. Past newsletters going back to 2003, can be read at <https://www.railfuturescotland.org.uk/news.php>.

At that meeting, after the presentations from Scottish Labour party transport spokesperson (other parties had been invited), we spent some time in small groups, discussing what our priorities should be for the future. In order to be sure that we are reflecting our members' views, I have listed the priorities from the meeting below and would ask that you reply to me giving your views on the six or seven most important, and we can focus on them next year.

Priorities in no particular order were:

1. Rebalance government spending on road and rail to be 50:50
2. Scottish government to set rail fares on all routes, e.g. Lockerbie and Reston
3. Single tickets available across all modes
4. Upgrade power supply to have electrification across all routes, with battery/electric in the interim
5. Create new lines & stations depending on:
 - (a) Population – priorities Hawick: St Andrews: Edinburgh South Suburban; Newburgh; Halbeath
 - (b) Passenger services introduced on Alloa-Dunfermline
 - (c) Visitor numbers/tourism
 - (d) Remoteness
 - (e) Glasgow Crossrail to link Queen Street and Central stations
 - (f) New ScotRail services on WCML and stations at Beattock and Symington to be re-instated
6. Accessibility standards to be defined and rolling programme of works instituted
7. Maximum freight potential and equal tariffs
8. Install passing loops on Highland Mainline (HML) and Fart North Line (FNL)
9. More work promoting rail
10. Better train services on existing routes
11. All-mode fare integration
12. Move from season tickets to travelcards or monthly pass for frequent users
13. Enhance rail services outwith central belt
14. Consistent policies re: cycle/car parking at stations including free drop-off

Please address your replies to allison.cosgrove@railfuturescotland.org.uk.

Campaign Updates

ST ANDREWS CAMPAIGN (StArLink): You will have heard the news that the St Andrews proposals have been knocked back by Transport Scotland, a great blow to those who have worked so hard for this long running campaign. We hope that perhaps a new intake of politicians after May 2026 may look at this differently.

CAMPAIGN FOR BORDERS RAIL: The good news is that the funding for the feasibility study which had been retained for several years by the DfT has at last been released to match Scottish Government funding and allow work to begin on the study. At their AGM, we heard about the proposals for CenterParcs holiday park, to be situated near Hawick, due to open in 2028.

TIMETABLE CHANGES: We are working through the changes to the new timetable. Edinburgh-Newcastle has winners and losers and we will discuss these with TPE in January. Sadly, Berwick is due to lose four LNER services a day which will mean a loss of connectivity to the town. LNER has made it clear that it is focussing on Edinburgh/Newcastle/London. However, some of the ScotRail services to Dunbar will now call at additional stations normally reserved to the North Berwick route.

If there is any rail campaign news, good or bad, in your area, please let our Secretary, Jane Ann Liston, know (janeann@louisxiv.co.uk) and she will include it in the Scottish section of Railwatch. Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and New Year and hope to see you in 2026.

Activities by Railfuture Scotland in 2025 and 2026

I attended the Cross Party Group on Rail in the Scottish Parliament. This group is well attended by the industry, and this year is considering freight transport by rail.

For 2026, we intend to ask our VP, Paul McLennan MSP, to our Spring meeting and AGM to hear his views on rail travel – he is a commuter from Dunbar to Edinburgh and set up regular rail meetings with TOCs some years ago.

Model rail shows are a great way for Railfuture to meet the public and find out what they would like to see from Scotland's railway. Once again, we had a stall at Glasgow Model Rail Show from 21-23 February 2025. We also had a stall at the Aberdeen Model Rail Show, which was held on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 October 2025.

We will be present at other shows in 2026 and could really use some help – volunteers get free entry – so if you could help for a few hours, it would be much appreciated. Please let me know if you could assist. Hundreds of people visit the Railfuture stall over the weekend so there is a lot of chat!

Rail services

In the December 2024 newsletter, I mentioned our disappointment that the trial of off-peak fares all day every day had come to an end, although the original trial period was extended from six to 12 months. The good news is that the Scottish Government announced that it would be re-introduced on 1 September 2025 and made permanent.

A new station at Balgray in Renfrewshire is due to open in 2026.

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) station usage figures have been released for April 2024-March 2025, and these show a gratifying increase in usage at a lot of stations. Last year, we reported that the new station at East Linton had 21,624 entries in its first three-and-a-half months of operation after the station opened in December 2023. It grew to 66,982 entries and exits for the full year from April 2024 to March 2025, which is roughly the same number per week as the partial year. The Leven railway line, which reopened for passenger services on 2 June 2024, recorded 185,000 entries and exits at Leven station and 45,800 entries and exits at Cameron Bridge station. Throughout 2025, growth continued across Scotland, with ScotRail experiencing a record 345,216 journeys on Friday 12 December 2025 and an even higher number expected just before Christmas for parties, markets, shopping trips, nights out, and to visit family and friends.

Other rail-based systems

In August 2025 the City of Edinburgh Council finally launched their public consultation on the proposed extension to Edinburgh Trams with a new north-south line, asking for views on which route should be chosen. Railfuture responded to the consultation.

There is great interest on the introduction of tram-trams on the South Suburban railway route, and this could be the way of finally seeing a rail service introduced.



The modernisation of the Glasgow Subway continues. The full fleet of new trains have been in service for some time, and recently platform screen doors have been erected at some stations (first was Govan, photo from X/Twitter) in preparation for the introduction of 'driverless' trains, which will initially see drivers remain until the system has been fully proven.

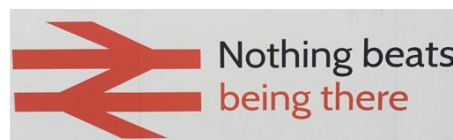
To Railfuture members reading this, I ask you to consider persuading a friend or family member to also join Railfuture. In 2025, as a cheaper option for those who prefer it, we introduced 'paperless' membership for just £10 a year, which requires payment by annual direct debit.



This year LNER has sponsored the Christmas Ferris wheel in Edinburgh (shown in the photos on the left) located between Princes Street and the railway line.

During 2025 LNER has been advertising extensively in Edinburgh city centre, with large banners on buildings. It has also made changes at Waverley station, such as moving the travel centre.

Best wishes for Christmas and for 2026, and I hope to see you at some of our events next year.



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