

ScotRail changes proposals to close ticket offices

February 25, 2022



ScotRail has announced that three ticket offices proposed for closure will now remain open for at least two years and it will add back a total of 33 hours to opening times.

The train operator said it has put forward changes following 1,500 responses from the public to the consultation by Transport Focus on changes proposed to the opening hours at 120 ticket offices across Scotland.

ScotRail says even before the pandemic, customers were increasingly using online options or Ticket Vending Machines, rather than ticket offices. There has been a 50 per cent drop in the use of ticket offices over the past 10 years.

This dramatic shift in customer patterns prompted a review of the opening hours of ticket offices for the first time since 1991 to see if the needs of customers are still being met. The assessment has considered where there is a decline in tickets sales at stations, the opportunities that exist to reduce fraudulent travel, and how to increase revenue through more revenue protection teams.

It was proposed to amend the opening hours at 117 ticket offices and close three entirely.

A public consultation on the proposals was held last month, which was organised by Transport Focus, the independent watchdog for transport users.

Following the feedback and after considering the views of Transport Focus, the train operator is now proposing to add back a total of 33 hours to ticket office opening times. This is mainly made up of an extra ten or fifteen minutes at some of the stations such as Bellshill, Wemyss Bay, East Kilbride and Larbert.

Three ticket offices proposed for closure – Carlsdyke, Clydebank and Woodhall – will remain open for at least two years while ScotRail carries out a review to consider whether new housing and incentives for businesses by local authorities will increase ticket office sales.

ScotRail will improve its proposal for stations that serve hospitals by broadly maintaining current staff hours at Dalmuir and Hyndland, and will also agree to open Wishaw ticket office on a Sunday giving a seven-day staff presence.

In addition, ScotRail will also:

- Implement Transport Focus feedback and strengthen tourist and leisure travel ticket offices at Girvan, Thurso, Inverclyde, and Wick, deploying staff on-site beyond the current proposed hours.
- Retain current staffing hours at 51 of the 117 ticket office proposed to change their hours. This means that at 51 stations the number of hours staff will be available to support customers at the station will not change, even if they are no longer behind the ticket office window.
- Have staff on-site beyond current hours at 12 stations.
- Redeploy staff at 54 ticket offices to create three mobile teams and new high-profile customer support at Glasgow High Street, Paisley, and Partick stations.
- Publish its own Diversity Impact Assessment when the process is complete.

The train operator confirmed that affected staff in ScotRail will not lose their jobs because of any changes to ticket office opening hours, and that rather than being about cutting jobs, this is about adding value for our staff and customers.

ScotRail will now work with Transport Scotland and the Scottish Government to discuss the next steps in considering these proposals.

Phil Campbell, ScotRail Head of Customer Operations, said: “The changes we propose to make as a result of the public consultation demonstrate we are listening to our customers and creating an environment that improves safety, customer support, and the helpfulness of staff.

“The safety, comfort and wellbeing of our customers is a top priority, and we will always listen to what passengers and people who use our stations have to say.

“We believe this proposal takes into account most of the issues we identified as important in our original plan as well as the views of the public.

"We are on course to deliver a railway that is modern, safe, and reliable which will serve customers even better in the future."

Photo credit: ScotRail