

Improving every journey



Annual plan
Contract period 1
October 2025 – March 2026



Contents

Introduction

Strategic Focus

Objectives and goals

Objective 1.1 – Be reliable and resilient

Objective 1.2 – Be open and transparent

Objective 2.1 – Be customer led

Objective 3.1 – Be community-centred

Objective 4.1 – Be environmentally responsible

Conclusion



Introduction

The Caledonian MacBrayne corporate plan 2025–2031 sets out a bold and transformative strategy for delivering ferry services under the third Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services (CHFS3) contract.

Rooted in our organisation's enduring purpose — **to navigate the waters, ensuring life thrives wherever we are**, the plan articulates a long-term vision to **deliver a reliable ferry service, which is sustainable, integrated, safe and accessible – one which actively supports the economic and cultural prosperity of the Scottish island, coastal and peninsula communities we serve**. It supports delivery of the Scottish Government's Islands Connectivity Plan and broader national priorities, placing communities at the heart of service delivery.

This annual plan translates the strategic direction of the corporate plan into actionable goals for the specific year, ensuring that each step taken contributes meaningfully to our vision and long-term objectives.

Purpose of the annual plan

Our annual plan exists to: operationalise year-specific priorities; allocate resources effectively; and track progress against strategic commitments. It provides a structured framework for delivery, ensuring that actions taken across the network are aligned with both community needs and Ministerial expectations. By setting clear goals and performance measures, the plan supports organisational alignment, transparency, and accountability, enabling Caledonian MacBrayne to demonstrate and deliver public value and continuous improvement in our service.

The total cost to deliver this plan, including the services outlined in the specification, is £188.5 million — comprising £179 million in resource funding and £9.5 million in capital funding. This funding underpins the operational and strategic commitments set out in this document.

Scope and timeframe

This annual plan covers the period 1 October 2025– 31 March 2026, the first period of the CHFS3 contract. It applies to all ferry services operated by Caledonian MacBrayne across the Clyde and Hebridean network.



Strategic Focus

Our primary focus for this year, and subsequent years, is to deliver the service as outlined in the CHFS3 specification, which will be shaped by several key factors:

- The transition to a publicly controlled service model.
- The introduction of new vessels and infrastructure upgrades.
- Ongoing challenges including aging assets, climate-related disruptions, and workforce pressures.
- The imperative to deliver value for money amid constrained public funding.

Strategic priorities for the year

In response to these factors, our strategic priorities summarised below, focus on delivering practical solutions that strengthen reliability, accessibility, integration, and sustainability.

- Enhance reliability with new vessels, proactive maintenance, and built-in protected maintenance time.
- Deepen community engagement through structured forums, the Ferries Community Board, and enhanced local consultation.
- Enable seamless travel via integrated ticketing, real-time journey planning, and partnerships with other transport providers.
- Cut environmental impact by implementing the Low Carbon Plan, improving fuel efficiency, and preparing for the introduction of new electric vessels.
- Advance accessibility through the Accessibility Strategy, advisory boards, and inclusive design initiatives.

These priorities are underpinned by measurable objectives and goals that guide delivery across the network, evidenced by delivery against agreed key performance indicators.

As Caledonian MacBrayne embarks on a new chapter under the CHFS3 contract, this annual plan reflects our ambition to lead with integrity, innovate with purpose, and serve with pride. It is a statement of our commitment to improving every journey — not just technically, but socially, economically, and environmentally — for the communities who rely on us every day.



Objectives and goals for 2025/26

The Caledonian MacBrayne corporate plan 2025–2031 is built around the four strategic priorities of the Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP), which serves as the cornerstone of ferry policy in Scotland. These priorities reflect the Scottish Government's commitment to delivering ferry services that are reliable, accessible, integrated, and environmentally responsible. CalMac's corporate objectives and goals are directly aligned to these priorities, ensuring that every action taken contributes to improved outcomes for island, peninsula and coastal communities.

To ensure consistency and clarity in delivery, the annual plan cascades the corporate objectives and goals into year-specific actions. This structured approach creates a clear line of sight from long-term strategy to operational delivery, enabling us to track progress, allocate resources effectively, and remain accountable to both Scottish Ministers and the communities we serve.

Priority 1: Reliable and resilient

- Objective 1.1: Be reliable and resilient
 - › *Goal 1.1.1: Provide a consistently safe and reliable ferry service.*
- Objective 1.2: Be open and transparent
 - › *Goal 1.2.1: Create greater trust, support stakeholders to be more informed, and foster stronger relationships.*

Priority 2: Accessible

- Objective 2.1: Be customer led
 - › *Goal 2.1.1: Provide a smooth, seamless and frictionless travel experience.*
 - › *Goal 2.1.2: Provide easier and more equitable access to ferry services.*
 - › *Goal 2.1.3: Ensure customers can book and travel when they need to, with fair fares and sufficient capacity.*

Priority 3: Integrated

- Objective 3.1: Be community-centred
 - › *Goal 3.1.1: Deliver a ferry service which more accurately reflects community needs.*
 - › *Goal 3.1.2: Build a strong, capable local workforce.*
 - › *Goal 3.1.3: Help communities thrive by supporting local businesses and creating lasting community value.*

Priority 4: Environmental impact and low carbon

- Objective 4.1: Be environmentally responsible
 - › *Goal 4.1.1: Create a cleaner and healthier environment.*

Priority 1 – Reliable and resilient



Objective

1.1 Be reliable and resilient

Goal(s)

1.1.1 Provide a consistently safe and reliable ferry service

To deliver this objective we will :

- Introduce into service MV Isle of Islay and take delivery of MV Loch Indaal to enhance the reliability of the fleet.
- Provide a second crew on the Sound of Barra service to support the provision of two-additional return sailings, optimising inter-island connectivity and significantly enhancing the resilience of the service to and within the Western Isles.
- Provide a winter Claonaig-Lochranza service, providing essential additional resilience to the Arran communities during disruptions.
- Continue the vessel condition assessment programme to enable early detection of age-related deterioration, allowing proactive maintenance and reducing unplanned service interruptions.
- Use data analysis to define critical spares, ensuring availability of essential parts for timely maintenance and enhanced service resilience.
- Integrate protected maintenance time into new timetables, including cascaded vessels, to maintain reliability and ensure continuity of service.

We'll know we've achieved our goal when:

- Customers are experiencing fewer cancellations and delays due to technical faults.
- New vessels deliver a more comfortable, reliable and efficient service, with improved accessibility and capacity.
- Disruption caused by vessel outages is reduced, thanks to a more resilient and flexible fleet.

We will measure this through the following Key Performance Indicators:

- Vessel availability rate (%)
- Sailings cancelled due to technical issues (port and vessel) (%)
- Actual reliability (%)
- Actual punctuality (%)
- Passenger accident ratio
- Near miss ratio
- Lost time incident frequency
- Vehicle accident ratio
- MAIB Reportable Incidents

Priority 1 – Reliable and resilient



Objective

1.2 Be open and transparent

Goal(s)

1.2.1 Create greater trust, support stakeholders to be more informed, and foster stronger relationships

To deliver this objective we will:

- Publish summary details of FOI requests on our website to ensure openness in public engagement and consistent disclosure of requested information.
- Publish Board minutes to provide visibility of governance decisions and enhance stakeholder confidence in the organisation's leadership and transparency.
- Publish corporate, business, and delivery plans to clearly set out organisational priorities, commitments, and performance expectations, providing these in English, Gaelic and Easy Read versions to better reflect customer needs.
- Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement strategy including the creation of a senior local authority forum, continued FCB support, and standardised Terms of Reference for ferry committees to promote consistent, inclusive, and transparent collaboration.

We'll know we've achieved our goal when:

- Customers can easily find clear, up-to-date information about how we're performing and what we're working to improve.
- People feel better informed about our priorities and are more confident that our decisions are based on real needs and feedback.
- Stakeholders tell us they can see how we're delivering on our commitments — and where we're being honest about challenges.

We will measure this through the following Key Performance Indicators:

- On-time publication of performance stats on website (%) *
- FOI information published on time (%)
- Delivery Plans published on time (%) *
- Delivery plan milestones delivered on time (%) *
- Board minutes published on time (%) *
- Timetables published on time to agreed deadlines (%) *

* Measured annually

Priority 2 – Accessible



Objective	2.1 Be customer led												
Goal(s)	2.1.1 Provide a smooth, seamless and frictionless travel experience 2.1.2 Provide easier and more equitable access to ferry services 2.1.3 Ensure customers can book and travel when they need to, with fair fares and sufficient capacity.												
To deliver this objective we will: – Advance digital concessionary travel, including under-22s, to streamline access and improve the customer experience through simplified digital processes. – Upgrade telephony systems to increase customer service capacity, improve call handling, and enhance overall user satisfaction. – Establish an Accessibility Advisory Board to provide structured input from disabled passengers and advocacy groups, strengthening inclusive service design and delivery. – Pilot a solution to improve wayfinding and accessibility for visually impaired passengers across key terminals. – Embed changes to the block booking Terms and Conditions to reduce last-minute cancellations, minimise no-shows, and improve overall vehicle deck utilisation. – Continue to evaluate and where appropriate roll out the deck space pilot in response to community requests. – Evaluate mechanisms to measure unmet demand to identify gaps between service provision and customer needs, informing future service planning. We'll know we've achieved our goal when: – Journeys feel more seamless, as services are better aligned with those of other transport providers. – Customers with disabilities tell us the service feels more accessible, inclusive and responsive to their needs. – Customers benefit from fairer pricing, with clear evidence that shows reforms such as free travel for under-22s and islander fares are being delivered. – More customers can secure space on sailings at the time they need and vehicle deck space is managed more efficiently, with fewer unbookable sailings due to underused capacity. We will measure this through the following Key Performance Indicators:<table><tbody><tr><td>– Customer OSAT (%)</td><td>– Accessibility appreciations / complaints</td></tr><tr><td>– Customer trust score (%)</td><td>– Delivery of accessibility audit actions on time (%)</td></tr><tr><td>– Customers using digital systems (%)</td><td>– Average vehicle deck utilisation (%)</td></tr><tr><td>– Ease of travel score (%)</td><td>– Block booking utilisation (%)</td></tr><tr><td>– First contact resolution</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>– Complaints per 000 passenger</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>		– Customer OSAT (%)	– Accessibility appreciations / complaints	– Customer trust score (%)	– Delivery of accessibility audit actions on time (%)	– Customers using digital systems (%)	– Average vehicle deck utilisation (%)	– Ease of travel score (%)	– Block booking utilisation (%)	– First contact resolution		– Complaints per 000 passenger	
– Customer OSAT (%)	– Accessibility appreciations / complaints												
– Customer trust score (%)	– Delivery of accessibility audit actions on time (%)												
– Customers using digital systems (%)	– Average vehicle deck utilisation (%)												
– Ease of travel score (%)	– Block booking utilisation (%)												
– First contact resolution													
– Complaints per 000 passenger													

Priority 3 – Integrated



Objective	3.1 Be community-centred
Goal(s)	3.1.1. Deliver a ferry service which more accurately reflects community needs. 3.1.2 Build a strong, capable local workforce. 3.1.3 Help communities thrive by supporting local businesses and creating lasting community value.
To deliver this objective we will: – Continue to embed the Enhanced Engagement Model through our area manager network to strengthen collaboration with communities and stakeholders through more structured and inclusive engagement. – Continue to work with communities to design timetables for new vessels to better reflect community needs. – Develop a Community Benefit Plan to expand apprenticeships and early careers opportunities, encouraging local talent into the ferry workforce. – Publish a Workforce Equalities Plan to promote diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity across all areas of employment. – Reinstate the Community Fund to support local initiatives that deliver social and economic value in the areas served. – Strengthen support for local suppliers to boost regional economies and promote sustainable, community-based procurement. We'll know we've achieved our goal when: – Community representatives and stakeholders feel heard and see their input reflected in decision-making. – Community trust is growing, and customers tell us the service better meets their needs through regular feedback and surveys. – Applications from island and coastal communities are rising, particularly in hard-to-fill or historically underrepresented roles. – Stronger partnerships with tourism and community organisations are in place, evidenced by joint campaigns, shared events or co-branded materials. We will measure this through the following Key Performance Indicators: – OSAT Islander (%) – Trust score Islander (%) – Community engagement hours (hr) – Employees from diverse groups (%) * – Employees living locally within communities (%) * – Local products sold onboard (%)	

Priority 3 – Environmental impact and low carbon



Objective	4.1 Be environmentally responsible	
Goal(s)	4.1.1 Create a cleaner and healthier environment	
To deliver this objective we will:		
– Enhance fuel monitoring across the fleet to support emissions reduction, optimise consumption, and inform future sustainability measures. – Implement a Low Carbon Plan to reduce the environmental impact of operations and support national net zero targets through more sustainable practices. – Continue to support the introduction of the new small electric vessel replacement programme into the fleet which will significantly reduce emissions and noise. – Support efforts by CMAL to explore the use of alternative fuels to support the transition to low-emission ferry operations for the remaining CalMac fleet.		
We'll know we've achieved our goal when:		
– Feedback from communities shows greater satisfaction with environmental efforts, and that changes reflect local priorities and concerns. – Local communities experience less pollution as new vessels are introduced. – More waste is being recycled or reused at terminals, with less litter and fewer single-use items in local public spaces.		
We will measure this through the following Key Performance Indicators:		
– Reductions in Scope 2 and 3 emissions – Waste recycled (%) – Waste sent to landfill (%)		

Conclusion

This annual plan marks the first step in delivering on our long-term vision: to deliver a reliable ferry service, which is sustainable, integrated, safe and accessible – one which actively supports the economic and cultural prosperity of the Scottish island, coastal and peninsula communities we serve.

It sets out clear priorities for the year ahead — improving reliability, enhancing accessibility, deepening community engagement, advancing integration, and reducing environmental impact — while recognising that these are part of a broader transformation journey.

The actions outlined here will not complete that journey, but they will lay the foundations for meaningful, measurable progress. By introducing new vessels, strengthening partnerships, embedding inclusive practices, and accelerating low-carbon initiatives, we are building the resilience and capability needed for the future.

Our ambition is simple yet profound: to improve every journey, not only in technical terms but in the social, economic, and environmental value we deliver. This plan is a commitment to that ambition — a commitment to lead with integrity, innovate with purpose, and serve with pride as we move forward into the next chapter of CHFS3 and beyond.

