

Improving every journey



Annual plan
Contract period 2
April 2026 – March 2027



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Introduction

This second annual plan marks a steady progression in our journey under the CHFS3 contract. Building on the mobilisation work of Contract Period 1 (CP1), we now begin to embed the systems, relationships and capabilities that will support long-term transformation across the Clyde and Hebridean network.

Our purpose — to navigate the waters, ensuring life thrives wherever we are — continues to guide us. But we recognise that meaningful change takes time. This year is about consolidating early progress, strengthening the foundations we've laid, and preparing for the more visible benefits that will emerge in future years.

We are introducing new vessels, refining our operating model, and deepening our engagement with communities and stakeholders. These steps are part of a wider shift towards a more resilient, inclusive and transparent service, aligned with the Islands Connectivity Plan and national priorities.

Purpose of the annual plan

This plan sets out how we will deliver on year-specific commitments, allocate resources to priority areas and monitor progress and adapt where needed. It provides a framework for delivery that is practical, grounded and forward-looking, ensuring that each action contributes to a more reliable and responsive ferry service.

Scope and timeframe

This plan covers the period 1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027, the second year of the CHFS3 contract. It applies to all ferry services operated by Caledonian MacBrayne across the Clyde and Hebridean network.



Strategic Focus

Contract Period 2 (CP2) represents a shift from mobilisation to early delivery. While the full benefits of transformation will take time to realise, this year focuses on embedding change, strengthening operational resilience, and building trust with communities and stakeholders.

Key influences on our strategic focus include the:

- introduction of new vessels and associated infrastructure
- development of fleet interoperability and asset planning
- need for clearer governance and performance visibility
- importance of inclusive design and community-led service planning
- early implementation of environmental and digital initiatives

We are committed to supporting the Ministerial priority for Public Service Reform (PSR) by strengthening collaboration and transparency so we can deliver more efficient, high-quality services that better meet the needs of our customers.

Strategic priorities for the year

Our priorities reflect a pragmatic and measured approach to change:

- Begin implementing the fleet interoperability strategy and prepare for joint asset management systems
- Improve performance reporting, stakeholder engagement, and data management
- Trial new digital tools, deliver the Accessibility Strategy, and explore inclusive technologies
- Strengthen local roles, co-design services, and expand opportunities for local employment
- Begin delivery of the Low Carbon Plan and support the rollout of electric vessels

These priorities are supported by clear objectives and performance measures, ensuring that progress is visible, accountable and responsive to feedback.

This plan reflects our commitment to steady, meaningful progress. It is not about rapid transformation, but about building confidence, delivering value, and improving every journey — one step at a time.



Objectives and goals for 2026/27

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 :

- Work closely with CMAL through joint governance to:
 - › Prepare for procurement of the joint CMAL/CFL asset management system to improve planning, maintenance and cost control.
 - › Bring MV Loch Indaal, MV Glen Rosa and MV Lochmor into service, and contribute to designing replacements for MV Isle of Mull and MV Lord of the Isles.
 - › Finalise the fleet interoperability strategy and Strategic Asset Management Plan with CMAL to enhance fleet flexibility, resilience, lifecycle planning, cost control and timely vessel replacement.
- Explore and where possible secure charter options to provide additional relief cover during the winter overhaul programme.
- Fully crew all small vessels to ensure a spare vessel is available as relief to support planned maintenance activities, overhaul cover and vessel breakdowns in the small ferry fleet.
- Procure identified critical spares to ensure availability of essential parts for timely maintenance and enhanced service resilience.
- Continue to 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:

- Continue to publish and enhance transparency through Freedom of Information summaries, Board minutes, corporate and delivery plans, and key performance metrics — including progress reporting — to ensure openness, accountability, and stakeholder confidence
- Continue to embed the stakeholder engagement strategy including supporting of the newly created senior local authority forum, continued Ferry Community Board support, and standardised Terms of Reference for ferry committees
- Implement enhanced data, information and records management processes to ensure consistent and secure handling of data and information, strengthening governance and enabling more accurate and transparent reporting.
- Prepare for procurement of new finance system to enable and integrate with a modern Asset Management System while ensuring consistent and efficient reporting of information.
- Adopt Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) framework, European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model and further strengthen embedment of ISO 14001 and continuous improvement approaches with a 'right first time' mind-set.

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: – Expand digital innovation to make travel simpler and more connected — from concessionary ticketing and real-time fares to integrated journey planning, Rail & Sail trials, and API-enabled access to booking and service information. – Continue with the upgrading of telephony systems to improve customer service capacity, call handling efficiency, and overall user satisfaction. – Begin to scope a ‘Port of Excellence’ model to identify opportunities to harness innovation that will enhance the customer experience and deliver more efficient, optimised port operations, supporting smoother, more reliable journeys. – Advance inclusive travel by delivering our Accessibility Strategy, embedding advisory boards, and working with MACS and the Ferries Community Board to shape user testing, intermodal transfer times, and design improvements that make every stage of the journey easier for all. – Evaluate the pilot to improve wayfinding and accessibility for visually impaired passengers across key terminals. – Implement 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. – 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><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></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	
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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 work with communities to design timetables for new vessels to better reflect community needs. – Strengthen local engagement by equipping area managers with advanced training and embedding them in service planning, ensuring regional insight shapes decisions and continuous feedback drives improvement – Grow local talent and build an inclusive workforce by expanding apprenticeships and early careers, promoting diversity and equal opportunity, and developing a recruitment strategy that attracts and retains skilled people within the communities we serve. – Roll out 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:		
– Continue to monitor fuel consumption across the fleet to support emissions reduction, optimise consumption, and inform future sustainability measures. – Implement our 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 (%)		

Innovation and improvements

Innovation is central to how we improve services and deliver public value. This means creating space for new ideas, testing solutions, and learning together — while staying grounded in the basics that matter most to customers: reliability, accessibility and clear communication.

Alongside the improvements we are delivering through this Annual Plan and our various [delivery plans](#), We will continue to support the Ferries Community Board (FCB) as it progresses its 2026 workplan. Working with Transport Scotland and CMAL (where appropriate), we will help advance the issues that communities have identified as priorities and continue to involve them directly in shaping future innovation opportunities.

In line with Scotland's Public Service Reform commitments, we will also focus on simplifying processes, strengthening collaboration across the Tripartite and using data more effectively to support evidence-based decision-making. This includes reducing duplication and ensuring innovation directly contributes to more efficient and responsive public services.

To ensure innovation delivers real value, we will apply a clear evaluation approach across all initiatives. Each project will be assessed against the core KPIs and success measures set out in this plan, creating a clear line of sight from innovation activity through to operational and contractual performance. This will enable transparent reporting, continuous learning and informed decision-making.

By embedding innovations into our everyday practice, we aim to build a culture where ideas can be tested, partnerships strengthened and improvements delivered in ways that are transparent, inclusive and aligned with national priorities.

Innovation is not a one-off exercise. It is a continuous process of listening, adapting and improving — together.



Conclusion

This annual plan represents the next step in a long-term transformation journey. While the foundations laid in CP1 have positioned us for progress, we recognise that meaningful change takes time. The actions set out here focus on embedding new ways of working, strengthening resilience, and building trust with the communities we serve.

Our focus areas for this year — improving reliability, enhancing accessibility, deepening engagement, and advancing environmental responsibility — are designed to deliver steady, measurable improvements while preparing for the more significant benefits that will emerge in future years.

Looking ahead to Contract Period 3 (CP3), we will continue to build on the foundations established in CP1 and CP2 by progressing fleet modernisation, strengthening digital systems and further embedding community-centered ways of working. Contract Period 3 will focus on delivering more visible improvements for customers and communities as new vessels enter service and major transformation programs mature

Transformation is not a single moment but a series of deliberate steps. By introducing new vessels, investing in digital innovation, and working closely with partners and stakeholders, we are creating the conditions for success. This plan is a commitment to progress that is practical, transparent, and community-focused — a commitment to improving every journey, one step at a time.

