

Improving every journey



**Delivery plan
Catering and retail services
plan**

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Executive summary

At Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac), we are committed to delivering a high-quality, Scottish-led catering and retail experience that enhances every journey across our network. This plan sets out our approach to providing consistent, customer-focused services both onboard and at ports, with a strong emphasis on locally sourced products and community engagement.

Our catering and retail strategy is designed to reflect the values of the communities we serve — prioritising quality, provenance, and accessibility. Across all routes, we aim to offer a diverse and relevant product range, supported by a robust supplier network that champions island and west coast producers. As of September 2026, 74% of our suppliers are island-based, and we are working towards a target of 80% by the end of 2026.

Retail services are tailored to each route, with plans detailing the product categories available, stock management procedures, and the integration of local goods. Catering services include self-service drinks and snacks, hot food options, café style hot and cold drinks, snacks and alcoholic beverages and full table service where appropriate — all underpinned by a commitment to food safety, operational efficiency, strong local supply chains and customer satisfaction.

This plan also outlines our delivery priorities, including facility readiness, crew development, and the use of customer feedback to drive continuous improvement. By aligning our catering and retail offer with operational capabilities and customer expectations, we create a consistent, recognisable and valued experience across all touchpoints — onboard, onshore and online.

Together, we are improving every journey — through quality, community, and a distinctly Scottish retail and catering experience.

1. Introduction

CalMac plays a vital role in connecting Scotland's island and coastal communities. Our catering and retail services are a key part of that journey — not only meeting the needs of our customers, but also showcasing the best of Scotland's produce, people and places.

This plan sets out our approach to delivering consistent, high-quality catering and retail services across all routes and locations. It reflects our commitment to improving every journey by offering a Scottish-led experience that is rooted in local sourcing, operational excellence and customer satisfaction.

We recognise that our customers are diverse — from daily commuters and freight drivers to leisure travellers and international visitors. Our catering and retail offer is designed to reflect this diversity, providing a range of options that are accessible, good value, and tailored to the needs of each route.

At the heart of our approach is a commitment to community. We actively support local island and west coast suppliers, with 74% of our current supplier base drawn from the islands. This not only strengthens local economies but ensures that our offer is authentic, sustainable and representative of the regions we serve.

This plan provides a route-by-route overview of catering and retail services, including product ranges, service formats, and the use of locally sourced goods. It also outlines the facilities, systems and partnerships that underpin delivery — both onboard and shoreside.



By aligning our catering and retail strategy with our operational capabilities and customer expectations, we aim to deliver a consistent, recognisable and valued experience across the network — one that reflects our brand, supports our communities, and enhances every journey.

2. Service delivery priorities

Our catering and retail services are shaped by a clear set of delivery priorities that reflect customer expectations, operational realities, and our commitment to community and quality. These priorities guide how we design, deliver and continuously improve the offer across all routes and locations.

We aim to provide a reliable and recognisable catering and retail experience on every route and location. This includes maintaining high standards in product presentation, service delivery, and customer interaction — both onboard and shoreside.

Supporting island and west coast suppliers is central to our approach. We prioritise locally sourced goods across all product lines, with a target of 80% island-based suppliers by the end of 2026. This ensures authenticity, sustainability and community benefit.

Our offer is tailored to meet the needs of different customer groups and journey types. This includes:

- Self-service drinks and snacks for convenience and speed.
- Galley style hot food for flexibility and value.
- Café style hot and cold drinks and snacks, and alcoholic beverages
- Table service hot food where appropriate, to enhance comfort and experience.

We maintain a strong focus on food safety, allergen management and accessibility. All services are delivered in line with regulatory requirements and best practice standards, ensuring a safe and inclusive experience for all customers.

Our onboard teams play a vital role in delivering the catering and retail experience. We invest in training and development to ensure staff are confident, knowledgeable and customer-focused — acting as ambassadors for our brand and values.

Where appropriate, we expand catering and retail services to port locations, enhancing the customer experience before and after travel. These opportunities are aligned with local capabilities and designed to reflect the same Scottish-led ethos as our onboard offer.

We actively seek and respond to customer feedback, using insights from surveys, forums and frontline teams to refine our offer. This ensures that our services remain relevant, responsive and aligned with customer expectations.

3. Catering and retail services overview

Catering and retail services are central to the customer experience across our network. Delivered both onboard and at ports, these services reflect our commitment to quality, community, and consistency — offering a distinctly Scottish experience that supports local suppliers and meets the diverse needs of our passengers.



A unified, customer-focused offer

Our approach to catering and retail is guided by a shared set of principles:

- Delivering good value and high-quality products
- Supporting island and west coast producers
- Providing service formats that suit different journey types
- Ensuring consistency and accessibility across all touchpoints
- Commitment to a safe and transparent offering to support allergen awareness

Whether purchasing a snack before boarding or enjoying a hot meal onboard, customers experience the same level of care, provenance and professionalism throughout.

Product and service range

Each route is supported by a tailored plan detailing the catering and retail services available at port and/or onboard. These may include:

- Retail Services
 - › Packaged food and drink
 - › Local crafts and gifts
 - › CalMac-branded merchandise
 - › Travel essentials and convenience items
- Catering Services
 - › Self-service drinks and snacks
 - › Self-service hot food
 - › Table service hot meals (where appropriate)
 - › Seasonal and locally inspired menu options

Product selection is informed by customer demand, operational feasibility and supplier availability, with a strong emphasis on provenance, quality and relevance.

Locally sourced products and produce

We actively prioritise locally sourced goods across both catering and retail lines. In 2025 72% of our 66 suppliers were from Island communities, in September 2026 we now have more than 70 suppliers and 74% of them are based in our Island and peninsula communities. Our target is to increase this to 80% by the end of 2026 and we are constantly meeting new suppliers working in our communities to understand how we can support them and build supplier relationships across our network. Products from 15 different islands are currently featured across our fleet — from Island Bakery biscuits (Mull) to Deer Island Rum (Jura) and many in between.

This commitment not only strengthens local economies by supporting small and evolving businesses and giving them a platform for marketing and awareness as well as increased sales



year-round, but it also ensures our offer is authentic, sustainable and representative of the communities we serve.

Facilities and environments

Services are delivered through a mix of onboard and shoreside environments, including:

- Self-serve coffee and snack vending with contactless payment technology
- Coffee cabins and kiosks
- Dedicated catering and retail areas on major vessels
- Port-based retail spaces where feasible and community appropriate
- All environments are designed to be accessible, well-presented and operationally efficient, with clear signage, product and allergen information and staff support available.

Crew engagement and customer experience

Our onboard teams play a vital role in delivering catering and retail services. We invest in training and development to ensure staff are confident, knowledgeable and customer-focused — acting as ambassadors for our brand and values.

In 2026 we have enhanced the training given to our retail crew onboard including additional allergen awareness refresh training, customer service and communications training and a bespoke seasonal induction program to ensure all retail crew are ‘vessel ready’ from day 1 of their onboard experience. Our Centre of Excellence team works closely with our retail team and our onboard management teams to ensure the retail crew are fully supported and engaged in the training required to deliver high quality and consistent experiences in our onboard retail spaces.

In 2027, we are planning to further add to retail crew training by adding immersive coffee, kiosk, till and allergen awareness training through a newly built area within our Centre of Excellence, planned for spring 2027 in time to prepare our seasonal crew for the summer onboard.

Retail and catering services are promoted through onboard media, digital channels and customer communications. We use storytelling, supplier features and seasonal campaigns to highlight the provenance and value of our offer.

4. Service offerings

Each route within the CalMac network is supported by a tailored catering and retail service plan. These plans reflect the unique characteristics of each journey — including vessel type, passenger profile, journey duration, and port infrastructure — while maintaining consistency with our overall service standards and brand values. Further details can be found in Tables 1 and 2.



Table 1 – Vessel and route service offerings

Vessel	Primary Route	Self-service drinks and snacks	Self-service hot food (incl. restaurant service)
MV Argyle	Wemyss Bay - Rothesay	✓	Limited
MV Bute	Wemyss Bay - Rothesay	✓	Limited
MV Caledonian Isles	Ardrossan - Brodick	✓	✓
MV Clansman	Oban Coll Tiree Colonsay Barra	✓	✓
MV Coruisk	Mallaig - Armadale	✓	✗
MV Finlaggan	Kennacraig - Port Ellen / Port Askaig	✓	✓
MV Glen Sannox	Troon - Brodick	✓	✓
MV Hebrides	Uig - Lochmaddy Uig - Tarbert (Harris)	✓	✓
MV Isle of Arran	Relief	✓	✓
MV Isle of Lewis	Oban - Castlebay	✓	✓
MV Isle of Mull	Oban - Craignure	✓	✓
MV Loch Frisa	Oban - Craignure	✓	✗
MV Loch Portain	Berneray - Lerverburgh	✓	✗
MV Loch Seaforth	Ullapool - Stornoway	✓	✓
MV Lochnevis	Mallaig - Eigg / Muck/ Rum / Canna	✓	✓
MV Lord of the Isles	Mallaig / Lochboisdale	✓	✓



Table 2 – Port facilities

Location	Catering facility	Self-service drinks and snacks	Self-service hot food (incl. restaurant service)
Ardrossan terminal	Coffee cabin	✓	✗
Brodick terminal	Cold drinks and snack vending machines	✓	✗
Fishnish slipway	*Café	✓	✓
Gourock terminal	Hot drinks and snack vending machines	✓	✗
Kennacraig terminal	Hot drinks and snack vending machine	✓	✗
Oban terminal	Hot drinks and snack vending machines	✓	✗
Tobermory terminal	*Café Fish	✓	✓
Troon terminal	Coffee cabin	✓	✓
Ullapool terminal	*Hot drinks vending machine	✓	✗

5. Supplier partnerships and local sourcing

Supporting local suppliers is a cornerstone of our catering and retail strategy. Our commitment to sourcing from island and west coast producers not only strengthens community economies but ensures our offer is authentic, sustainable and representative of the regions we serve.

Building a network of local suppliers

As of September 2026, we work with more than 70 food, beverage and retail suppliers — 53 of whom are based on the islands and peninsulas, representing 74% of our supplier base. Our target is to increase this to 80% by the end of 2026. This supplier network spans 15 different islands and includes a diverse range of products, from artisan foods and beverages to handmade crafts and branded merchandise.

Some suppliers, such as Island Bakery (Mull), feature across the entire fleet, while others are route-specific — reflecting the unique character of each community. Examples include Islay Tablet (Islay), Deer Island Rum (Jura), and Hebridean Soap Company (Lewis).

Our larger, national suppliers such as Bidfood, Cress Co and Select Drams are also working with us on extending their own engagement with local, Scottish suppliers too. This further enhances the reach of our smaller island suppliers and gives them access to distribution not only in the wider



CalMac network but allows them to be bought and distributed by businesses in the extensive national supplier's network too.

Two notable recent developments in 2026 include Nerabus Farm on Islay who now supply their amazing fresh eggs to our Oban based vessels and we are in talks about further distribution to other locations. The other is Islay Ales who are in talks with Bidfood over widening their distribution to our other locations, coupled with potential to supply other Bidfood customers. This would significantly extend their reach and increase their product sales and distribution, all supported and instigated by their successful relationship with CalMac.

Strategic sourcing principles

Our approach to supplier partnerships is guided by the following principles:

- Local First: Prioritising island and west coast producers wherever operationally feasible
- Quality and Provenance: Ensuring all products meet high standards of quality, traceability and presentation
- Fair and Transparent Procurement: Engaging suppliers through open, compliant and commercially sound processes
- Community Benefit: Supporting small businesses, promoting regional identity, and contributing to local economic resilience

We also seek opportunities to co-develop products with suppliers, promote their stories through our marketing channels, and feature them in onboard and port-based retail environments.

Integration across routes

Each route's catering and retail plan includes a list of locally sourced products and suppliers relevant to that journey. This ensures that customers experience a genuine connection to the places they travel through — whether enjoying a locally made snack onboard or purchasing a gift crafted on the island they've just visited.

Where possible, we align supplier selection with seasonal availability and route-specific demand, ensuring that our offer remains fresh, relevant and operationally viable.

Looking ahead we have a steady pipeline of island-based suppliers who we are contacted by, via our 'become a supplier' link on our website, as well as via word-of-mouth introductions. Meetings and visits to discuss product, price and relevance form part of our listing process

Supporting supplier visibility

We actively promote our suppliers through:

- Onboard signage and product labelling
- Digital and social media campaigns
- Retail ambassador storytelling
- Podcast features and influencer collaborations



6. Customer Experience and Feedback

Delivering a high-quality catering and retail experience is central to our commitment to improving every journey. At CalMac, we recognise that customer expectations are evolving — and that feedback is essential to shaping services that are relevant, inclusive and consistently excellent.

Customers are offered the opportunity to complete surveys before, during and after travelling with us and there are specific questions around their retail and catering experience. We often receive high praise onboard, in feedback and on social media for the quality of our food offering and the retail products we sell onboard, and retail is a key feature of our marketing and storytelling and engagement on social media.

A service built around the customer

Our catering and retail offer is designed to meet the needs of a diverse customer base, including island residents, commuters, leisure travellers and international visitors. We tailor service formats, product ranges and presentation styles to reflect journey types, vessel capabilities and passenger profiles — ensuring that every customer feels considered and valued.

We also recognise that the customer experience extends beyond the transaction. From the moment a passenger enters a port to the time they disembark, our catering and retail services contribute to the overall impression of the journey. That's why we focus on:

- Friendly, knowledgeable crew engagement
- Clear and accessible product information
- Clean, well-presented service environments
- Efficient and responsive service delivery

Crew as brand ambassadors

Our onboard teams play a vital role in shaping the customer experience. We invest in training and development to ensure crew are confident in product knowledge, food safety, allergen awareness and customer service. Retail and catering staff are encouraged to share supplier stories, promote local products and engage with passengers in a way that reflects our brand values.

This people-first approach helps build trust, enhance satisfaction and create memorable moments for our customers.

Listening and Learning

We actively seek feedback from passengers through multiple channels, including:

- Onboard comment cards
- Digital surveys and QR-linked feedback forms
- Social media engagement
- Customer forums and stakeholder groups



Feedback is reviewed regularly and used to inform service improvements, product selection, and operational adjustments. We also share insights with suppliers and crew to ensure a joined-up approach to continuous improvement.

Where feedback highlights areas for improvement, we act promptly and transparently. This may include:

- Adjusting product ranges based on demand or dietary needs
- Enhancing signage or accessibility features
- Revising service formats to better suit journey types
- Providing additional crew training or support

We also celebrate positive feedback — using customer testimonials, social media posts and onboard stories to promote what's working well and recognise the efforts of our teams.

Measuring Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is tracked through structured performance indicators, including:

- Net Promoter Score (NPS)
- Retail and catering satisfaction ratings
- Engagement with feedback channels
- Repeat purchase and product uptake metrics

These indicators help us understand what matters most to our customers and ensure that our catering and retail services continue to evolve in line with expectations.

This not only enhances the customer experience but helps raise the profile of island businesses and encourages repeat engagement beyond the journey itself.

7. Performance Measurement and KPIs

Effective performance measurement is essential to ensuring that our catering and retail services deliver value for customers, communities and the business. We apply a structured approach to monitoring service quality, commercial impact and customer satisfaction — using data-driven insights to inform decision-making and drive continuous improvement.

Measuring what matters

Our performance framework is designed to assess both operational effectiveness and customer experience. It includes a mix of quantitative and qualitative indicators, covering:

- Customer satisfaction
 - › Net Promoter Score (NPS)
 - › Catering and retail satisfaction ratings
 - › Feedback volume and sentiment analysis
- Commercial performance



- › Retail sales by route and product category
- › Catering revenue and uptake by service format
- › Product margin and supplier contribution
- Operational delivery
 - › Service availability and consistency across routes
 - › Compliance with food safety and allergen regulations
 - › Staff training completion and competency levels
- Local sourcing impact
 - › Percentage of island-based suppliers
 - › Volume and value of locally sourced products sold
 - › Supplier engagement and retention metrics

Data collection and reporting

Performance data is collected through a combination of systems and channels, including:

- EPOS and ecommerce platforms
- Customer surveys and onboard feedback tools
- Supplier reports and procurement dashboards
- Crew observations and operational audits

This data is reviewed regularly by catering, retail, commercial and customer experience teams, with findings shared across departments to support joined-up planning and service refinement.

Continuous improvement

We operate a “test and learn” model across all catering and retail activity. This includes:

- Trialling new products and service formats
- A/B testing promotional content and layouts
- Reviewing seasonal performance trends
- Responding to customer and crew feedback in real time

Insights from these activities are used to adjust route-level plans, update supplier partnerships, and inform future investment in facilities, systems and training.

Accountability and transparency

All KPIs are aligned with our wider business planning and reporting processes. Performance is tracked against agreed targets and reviewed through monthly dashboards, quarterly service reviews and annual reporting cycles.



We are committed to transparency in how we measure success — ensuring that our catering and retail services remain accountable, cost-effective and responsive to the needs of our customers and communities.

8. Conclusion

This plan sets out our approach to delivering a consistent, high-quality and community-focused offer across all routes and locations. Through a combination of locally sourced products, tailored service formats and customer-centred delivery, we aim to enhance every journey — both onboard and shoreside.

Our commitment to supporting island and west coast suppliers ensures that our catering and retail services reflect the character and culture of the communities we serve. By integrating feedback, investing in crew development and maintaining high operational standards, we continue to evolve our offer in line with customer expectations and strategic priorities.

Each route is supported by a detailed service plan, enabling transparency, responsiveness and continuous improvement. Performance is measured through clear KPIs, and insights are used to refine delivery, strengthen partnerships and ensure value for money.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on delivering a retail and catering experience that is authentic, inclusive and distinctly Scottish — one that supports local economies, reflects our brand values, and contributes meaningfully to the overall customer journey.

Together, we are improving every journey — through quality, community and a shared commitment to excellence.