

Improving every journey



Community Benefits Plan

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Executive summary

At Caledonian MacBrayne, we know our ferries are about more than transport — they help connect communities to opportunity, support local life and open up futures for the people who rely on them. This Community Benefits Plan sets out how we will create practical benefits for the communities we serve by reintroducing the community fund, supporting learning, training and employment opportunities, and by encouraging more local people to consider a future in the ferry service.

Through this plan, we will support pathways into the ferry workforce through apprenticeship, graduate and early-career opportunities; carry out at least four school visits each year within the communities we serve; provide annual opportunities for 10 officer cadets, 10 deck and engine ratings trainees, and 4 work placements; and maintain a record of the community benefit activity delivered through the plan.

At its heart, this plan is about helping more local people see Caledonian MacBrayne as a place where they can learn, gain experience and build a future. It also sets out how we will track progress, report on delivery and keep the plan under review over time.

1. Introduction

This Community Benefits Plan explains how Caledonian MacBrayne will deliver practical benefits for the communities it serves through learning, training and employment opportunities linked to our ferry service. It brings together a clear set of commitments focused on early careers, school engagement, structured training opportunities and transparent reporting.

The plan is designed to be customer-facing, clear and accountable. It sets out how we will support pathways into the ferry workforce, work with schools and young people, provide annual cadet, trainee and work placement opportunities, and record the community benefit activity delivered through the plan.

It also explains how progress will be monitored, reported and reviewed over time, providing a practical framework for delivery and continuous improvement across the network we serve.

2. Our commitments

Through this plan, we will:

- Support pathways into the ferry workforce with Caledonian MacBrayne through apprenticeship, graduate and early-career opportunities.
- Conduct at least four school visits each year within the communities we serve.
- Provide annual opportunities for 10 officer cadets, 10 deck and engine ratings trainees, and 4 work placements.
- Maintain a record of community benefit initiatives delivered under the plan.

These commitments are intended to support local people, particularly young people and those at an early stage of their career, while helping build a sustainable future workforce for the ferry service.



3. Creating pathways into ferry careers

We want more people from the communities we serve to see Caledonian MacBrayne and the ferry service as a place where they can build a rewarding and sustainable career. Our approach will focus on creating clearer pathways into the organisation through apprenticeships, graduate opportunities and early-career routes, helping local people understand what opportunities are available and how they can access them.

This will include opportunities both at sea and on shore, reflecting the wide range of roles needed to support a safe, reliable and customer-focused ferry service. By bringing these pathways together more clearly, we aim to make careers in the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry service more visible and accessible.

We will also work with local partners, including schools, education providers and employability organisations, to strengthen awareness of ferry careers and support access to opportunity. This will help ensure our approach reflects local need and supports stronger routes into the workforce.

4. Working with schools and young people

We want young people across the communities we serve to better understand the ferry service, the skills behind it and the careers it can offer. Early engagement can help raise awareness, build confidence and encourage more local young people to consider a future in the ferry service and in the wider maritime sector.

Each year, we will carry out at least four school visits within the communities we serve. These visits will form part of a planned programme of outreach activity designed to inform, inspire and engage pupils through practical and relevant themes.

School visits may cover subjects such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), recycling and sustainability, maritime careers and skills, and the range of roles involved in keeping ferry services running every day.

We will work with schools and, where appropriate, local partners to make this activity relevant, engaging and connected to the opportunities available across the ferry service.

5. Cadets, trainees and work experience

Structured training and work-based opportunities are an important part of our plan. They help people take practical first steps into the ferry service and the wider maritime sector, while supporting the long-term development of skills across our workforce.

Each year, we will provide openings for:

- 10 officer cadets
- 10 deck and engine ratings trainees
- 4 work placements

Caledonian MacBrayne sponsor Officer cadet opportunities to support the development of future maritime professionals through structured learning and practical experience. Deck and engine ratings trainee opportunities help build practical maritime skills and provide early entry routes into seagoing careers. Work placements offer valuable insight into the range of roles involved in delivering ferry services and help people better understand how a future career in the ferry service might develop.



Together, these opportunities provide a clear and measurable contribution to skills development, early careers and future workforce resilience.

6. How we will deliver, measure and report

We will deliver this plan through a coordinated approach that brings together workforce planning, outreach activity, training opportunities and partnership working. This will help ensure that our commitments are delivered consistently and in a way that supports local opportunity and future workforce development.

We will monitor progress against the commitments set out in this plan, including activity to support apprenticeship, graduate and early-career pathways, school visits, cadet opportunities, trainee opportunities and work placements.

We will also maintain a record of the community benefit initiatives delivered under the plan. This will help us track progress, report clearly on what has been delivered and support transparency and accountability over time.

The information gathered through delivery and reporting will help us review progress, identify opportunities to improve and ensure that the plan continues to provide meaningful value for the communities we serve.

7. Review and update

This Community Benefits Plan is intended to be a practical, living document. We will keep it under review to ensure that it remains relevant, deliverable and reflective of the activity being carried out across the network.

Reviewing the plan will allow us to assess progress against our commitments, consider the effectiveness of the activity delivered and identify where updates or refinements may be needed. Any changes will remain consistent with the purpose of the plan and the commitments it sets out.

By reviewing and updating the plan as needed, we can support continuous improvement and ensure that it continues to provide a clear and credible framework for community benefit over time.

8. Conclusion

At Caledonian MacBrayne, we want the communities we serve to benefit not only from the ferry services we provide, but also from the opportunities those services can help create. This plan sets out a clear and practical approach to doing that by supporting pathways into ferry careers, engaging with schools and young people, providing structured training and work-based opportunities, and recording the benefits delivered through this activity.

At its heart, this plan is about creating opportunity — helping more local people see the ferry service as a place where they can learn, develop skills and build a future, while strengthening the workforce that supports lifeline services across island and coastal communities.

Through this plan, we will continue to support local opportunity, encourage future talent and demonstrate how CalMac can contribute to stronger, more connected communities across the network we serve.