

# **SCOTTISH FERRY SERVICES**

## **ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

**SCOTTISH FERRY SERVICES**

**ANALYSIS OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

**Shona Mulholland, Jo Fawcett and Sue Granville**  
**Why Research**

Transport Scotland  
2012

## Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
Background overview	1
Overview of respondents	1
Overview of analysis	1
Overview of responses	2
Summary of key themes	6
1 INTRODUCTION	8
Background	8
The consultation	9
Overview of responses	9
Respondent profile	10
Analysis and reporting	13
2 ARRAN	15
Key themes	15
3 BUTE	20
Key themes	20
4 CUMBRAE	23
Key themes	23
5 COWAL PENINSULA AND DUNOON	24
Key themes	24
6 MULL (AND ARDNAMURCHAN/MORVERN)	26
Key themes	26
7 IONA	31
Key themes	31
8 ARDNAMURCHAN/MORVERN (CORRAN FERRY)	33
Key themes	33
9 LISMORE	35
Key themes	35
10 COLL AND TIREE	38
Key themes	38
11 KERRERA, LUING AND EASDALE ISLAND	40
Key themes	40
12 NORTHERN ISLES	42
Key themes	42
13 SKYE	45
Key themes	45
14 RAASAY	48
Key themes	48

15	SMALL ISLES	49
	Key themes	49
16	KNOYDART	51
	Key themes	51
17	ISLAY AND JURA	52
	Key themes	52
18	COLONSAY	56
	Key themes	56
19	GIGHA	58
	Key themes	58
20	KINTYRE	59
	Key themes	59
21	WESTERN ISLES	61
	Key themes	62
22	OTHER COMMENTS	66
	Key themes	66
23	SUMMARY	73
	APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS	2
	APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONS	7

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Thanks to the individuals and organisations who responded to the consultation and to all at Transport Scotland who provided input and offered advice as required.

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **Background overview**

The Draft Ferries Plan was published for consultation in December 2011 setting out proposals for the provision and support of Scotland's ferry services until 2022.

The consultation ran from 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011 until 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012; respondents were invited to submit their opinions and views about the level and type of services each community should receive. Responses to the consultation will inform the development of the Final Ferries Plan.

## **Overview of respondents**

The consultation attracted 2,051 responses. This included 1,415 separate consultation responses (1,213 from individuals and 202 from organisations) and 636 submissions of a campaign proforma calling for a Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service.

In addition, an organisation from South Islay submitted a petition opposing fewer sailings from Port Ellen; the hard copy petition contained 497 names while an associated online petition showed 522 signatories.

Consultation responses were assigned to a variety of respondent groups for analysis purposes; residents of the communities involved (860) made up the majority of responses from individuals. However, while some areas saw large numbers of residents submitting comments, in others very small numbers of residents, or none at all, responded.

The proposals that received the largest response, in number, were those for Mull, Islay/Jura and the Western Isles. However, in terms of the proportion of the community responding, the largest responses came from Kerrera, Lismore and Jura.

While the consultation gave all those who wished to comment an opportunity to do so, given the self-selecting nature of this type of exercise, it should be noted that any figures quoted here cannot be extrapolated to a wider population outwith the respondent sample.

## **Overview of analysis**

The consultation posed a series of questions including a set list of choices mainly relating to the travel habits of respondents and open questions inviting respondents to comment on the proposals for each ferry service.

Responses were examined and key themes, similar issues raised in a number of responses, were identified for each question. Sub-themes; including reasons for opinions, supporting arguments, alternative suggestions or other related comments; were also noted. The key themes were then examined to identify whether any particular theme was specific to any particular respondent group or groups; for example was the theme more prominent in responses from organisations, from residents or from non-residents, or from any other sub-group.

Wherever possible, comments indicating support or disagreement with specific proposals were quantified.

## **Overview of responses**

In general, individual respondents and local organisations tended to comment on proposals of relevance to their own community.

The following paragraphs highlight the main themes that emerged in relation to each of the ferry communities discussed in the Draft Plan.

### ***Arran***

The proposals for Arran are for the Ardrossan to Brodick service to be upgraded to a two-vessel service operating a more frequent shuttle service through to the late evening; following these changes, services between Claonaig to Lochranza will be reviewed. The main theme to emerge in relation to these proposals was concern over any potential reduction in the Claonaig-Lochranza service; the main reason given for this view was the importance of the service to tourists. There was, however, also support for the Ardrossan to Brodick service proposal. Respondents who provided reasons for their support mentioned the benefits a more frequent service would bring for residents, visitors and tourists. The other main theme in this section related to infrastructure, with many respondents commenting especially on the need for improvements to Ardrossan harbour.

### ***Bute***

Opinion was divided over the proposal to extend the operating day for the Colintrave to Rhubodach service. While overall more respondents voiced support than opposition for the proposal, responses from residents of Bute were fairly evenly split. Comments in support of the proposal included expected benefits in allowing residents to visit, and receive visits, more frequently from friends and family. It was also seen as useful for commuters. Respondents who felt that the proposal was not useful commented that it would only be useful to those with cars; a recurrent theme related to the length of drive on reaching the mainland and on problems with the roads themselves. A number of respondents put forward another proposal which, they felt, should be added to the Plan. They proposed that the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay service should be extended; better links with public transport from this service were cited in support of their view.

### ***Cumbræ***

Most of those who commented voiced support for the proposal to include a later evening service for one or two evenings per week. The main reason given related to the benefits this would bring for residents in being able to attend evening events on the mainland. There were some calls for this service to run every night.

### ***Cowal peninsula and Dunoon***

There were no specific proposals for these communities. The Draft Plan outlined the recent change from a vehicle to a passenger service on the Dunoon-Gourock town centres route and included an undertaking to continue to look at options to improve the service and facilities. Respondents were asked for their views and the main theme to emerge in responses was that respondents did not feel that the current

services meet the needs of the community. Comments focussed on two main issues. One related to the passenger-ferry vessels; respondents described these as inadequate, not fit for purpose, and said that they are too small and unable to deal with bad weather. The other was that respondents felt the removal of the vehicle-ferry on the Dunoon-Gourock town centres route has harmed tourism and other businesses in the area and wanted to see this service re-instated.

### ***Mull (and Ardnamurchan/Morvern)***

Proposals for Mull are to upgrade the Craignure to Oban service to a two-vessel service, operating as a shuttle-service through an extended operating day. Following this upgrade, operations on the Fishnish to Lochaline service will be reviewed. The current passenger and vehicle service from Tobermory to Kilchoan will be replaced with a passenger-only service. Three key themes emerged in relation to these proposals. Respondents wanted to see the Tobermory-Kilchoan vehicle service retained and described it as essential for the economic well-being of the area. Respondents were concerned that a review might lead to a reduction in the Fishnish-Lochaline service, which was described as a vital or key link for both business and social reasons. The proposal for the Craignure to Oban service was welcomed; respondents felt these improvements would provide a more reliable service than at present.

### ***Iona***

There was support for the proposed additional 90 minutes of services in the evening, so the last service is around 8pm. Respondents commented on benefits this change would bring to the economy by encouraging more tourists and on the usefulness of a later sailing for residents travelling to and from Mull. The other main theme in relation to Iona was the need for timings to be co-ordinated with other ferries and with public transport.

### ***Ardnamurchan/Morvern (Corran Ferry)***

The main theme noted in responses was support for the proposal for services to remain as at present. Respondents praised the current operation of the service and commented that there is no need for responsibility to transfer from Highland Council to the Scottish Government. There were some calls for extended operating hours.

### ***Lismore***

The proposal for Lismore is that the two existing services are replaced with one passenger and vehicle service between Port Appin and Point. Responses highlighted a difference of opinion. While overall similar numbers agreed as disagreed with the proposal, looking only at the Lismore residents who commented, the split was two to one against the proposal (but the small numbers involved should be borne in mind). Those disagreeing with the proposal stressed the importance of a direct route to Oban, commented on issues relating to the infrastructure on Lismore, or mentioned the potential negative impact they felt the proposals would have on the island and residents. Comments in support of the proposal included that this route has higher numbers of passengers and that the crossing is much shorter, efficient and cheap to run. There were also comments that a vehicle-ferry on the shorter crossing would give a more reliable and cheaper service which would be beneficial to those running businesses from the island as well as residents.

### ***Coll and Tiree***

The main theme noted in relation to Coll and Tiree was agreement with the proposal to improve the current service so that it operates for at least six days per week during the winter period; the current winter service was described as inadequate. There were also calls for the re-introduction of a service which used to call in at Tobermory as well as comments on the need for cheaper fares, especially for freight.

### ***Kerrera, Luing and Easdale Island***

There were no specific proposals for these communities as initial findings by the Scottish Government indicate that services are fit for purpose, meeting most of the communities' needs. Respondents did not agree with these findings, especially in relation to Kerrera. There were calls for the Kerrera service to be recognised as a lifeline service; comments included that it is not fit for purpose, does not meet the needs of residents and that the Scottish Government should take over responsibility for service provision to the island. In relation to Luing and Easdale Island, the main comments to emerge related to the need to consider fixed links.

### ***Northern Isles***

The proposal for Orkney and Shetland is to retain a broadly similar level of service and more respondents agreed than disagreed with this view. Comments from those agreeing were fairly short with little detail. Those disagreeing in relation to Shetland commented mainly on the reduction in service during overhaul periods; respondents wanted to see measures to address this. In relation to Orkney, respondents wanted to see Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) introduced on the Pentland Firth. Another main theme related to requests for the start of the next contract date in 2018 to be amended to avoid the peak season.

### ***Skye***

The proposal for the Skye service is that the current operating schedule will continue as is. The winter service will continue to receive a subsidy; the summer service will receive a minimum subsidy only. Respondents stressed the need to retain the summer subsidy commenting that although it is tourists who mainly benefit from reduced fares, these tourists are vital to the local economy. Another main theme to emerge in relation to Skye was the need for an increased Mallaig-Armadale service which, respondents felt, would help promote social inclusion; respondents also commented on the need for a dedicated vessel for this route.

### ***Raasay***

There were no proposals put forward for the Raasay service, although a new hybrid ferry is to be earmarked for the Sconser to Raasay route and this route will be looked at again in 2013 with the intention of finding ways to extend the operating day. Both of these facts attracted general welcome from respondents.

### ***Small Isles***

The proposals for the Small Isles are for a new Sunday service to each island, a Friday/Saturday level of service on more days and at least one day per week where it will be possible to make a meaningful return trip to the mainland. In the longer term it is hoped that the current single vessel will be replaced with a two vessel service – a passenger and loose freight service on a daily basis to each of the islands, and a roll-on/roll-off service calling at each of the islands one day a week.

Responses indicated a generally positive reaction to these proposals, which were seen as necessary for residents and especially school-children. Respondents did not want to see any reduction to the current roll-on/roll-off service.

### ***Knoydart***

The consultation asked whether additional sailing days would be beneficial and well used. Respondents said that they would. They cited the expense of overnight stays on the mainland necessitated by the current service and felt the proposal would produce various benefits from improved mail delivery to more opportunities for tourism.

### ***Islay and Jura***

The proposal for Islay and Jura is for more services running from Port Askaig and fewer from Port Ellen. A petition was submitted opposing this proposal and responses also indicated broad disagreement. A number of reasons were given for this view, primarily that the south of the island has been identified as fragile with a high number of retired residents and the proposal would have a negative impact on this area. Comments in support of the proposals were seen especially in responses from Jura residents; the main reason for support was that the service from Port Askaig is a shorter crossing.

The proposal for Jura is that residents will be offered no cost fares to Islay if their journey is part of an onward journey to the mainland and this proposal was supported, especially by Jura residents. There were, however, also comments that Jura residents cannot afford to access services on Islay because of ferry costs and that the no cost fares should apply on all journeys to and from Islay. There were comments that the Plan should not include Islay and Jura together but that they should be treated separately.

### ***Colonsay***

Respondents voiced support for the proposal for an additional sailing day in the summer; at least one day per week where there is a return sailing between Colonsay and the mainland; and a commitment in the longer-term to work towards more sailing days during the winter. Respondents felt that this package would be beneficial to the residents and economy of the island.

### ***Gigha***

There was near universal support for the proposal to extend the operating day by constructing a berthing facility on Gigha at Ardminish.

### ***Kintyre***

The proposals for Kintyre are to retain the Kintyre to Portavadie service as is and to consider introducing a vehicle service between Campbeltown and the Scottish mainland (for example Ardrossan or Troon). The main theme noted in relation to Kintyre was support for these proposals which, respondents felt, would have a number of benefits including reducing heavy vehicles on the A83 and boosting visitor numbers. Another main theme related to the importance of the Claonaig-Lochranza service for business and tourism.

## **Western Isles**

There were no proposals put forward for Lewis and Harris.

The Draft Ferries Plan does not contain proposals for the Uists or Benbecula, however the main theme to emerge from responses related to the need for a Mallaig-Lochboisdale service. A large number of campaign responses (636) were received calling for this service and this view was also apparent in comments from respondents. Reasons for this view included that it is a shorter trip and a better service regardless of weather conditions. There were also comments on the benefits this service would provide in terms of tourism and the economy.

The proposal for Barra is to work towards an improved winter service. This proposal attracted support from respondents who commented that the current service does not meet the needs of the community.

## **Other Comments**

A variety of other issues were raised and discussed by respondents.

- **General comments.** Mainly reiteration of comments made in relation to routes and services.
- **Funding, procurement and tendering.** A wide range of comments were noted; one main theme was that the absence of details in relation to funding makes it difficult to respond to the consultation. There was also concern over the absence of final Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) appraisals at this stage.
- **Fares.** The main theme in relation to fares was a belief that fairness is important, with comments that fare structures should be the same for all islands. Another main theme was that simple fares/tariffs are needed.
- **Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).** There was concern over the delay in introducing RET and comments on the need to retain RET for commercial vehicles.
- **Responsibility.** There was support for the Scottish Government to be responsible for 'lifeline services'; there were concerns over the definition of 'lifeline'.
- **Accessibility.** Respondents called for attention to be paid to the needs of specific disability groups, including Deaf, Deafblind, Learning Disabled or Mobility Disabled ferry users. There were also comments in route-specific responses on the needs of older and disabled ferry users.
- **Environmental issues.** There were some concerns over environmental impacts either locally or generally; respondents wanted to see more thorough and detailed environmental impact assessments. There was support for elements of the plans which mitigate against environmental impacts.

## **Summary of key themes**

The consultation attracted a large number of responses as well as a substantial campaign and petition. However, the community sections of the consultation attracted varying responses in terms of numbers and depth. The numbers responding were more related to the strength of feeling on, and perceived impact of, proposals rather than to the size of the respective community.

There were a number of recurring themes, noted across respondent types and in relation to many or all of the routes. These included:

- The need to consider accessibility; especially for ill, older or disabled ferry users.
- The importance of ferries to economic growth, including tourism.
- The importance of ferries for social inclusion.
- The importance of 'lifeline' services.
- The need for co-ordinated services; that ferry timetables should be co-ordinated with bus, train, air and other ferry timetables.
- Concern over the fitness of vessels on some routes and the need for the most appropriate type of vessel for each route.
- The need to consider the fitness of the current infrastructure and the future impact of proposals on infrastructure, especially roads.
- A need for infrastructure development or maintenance; especially ports and harbours.
- The need for more consideration to be given to fixed links.
- The need for more details or data in relation to aspects of the Ferries Plan, including funding and timescales.
- Concern over the introduction of RET or the way in which RET will be introduced.
- Concern over freight costs and fares.
- Comments that the methodology used to determine route classifications and other details is inconsistent and that some services or locations have been treated differently from others.
- The need for more or better consultation with residents and other stakeholders.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Background

- 1.1 The ferry routes to Scotland's remote and island communities are a vital part of our transport network. These links provide residents with access to services, to employment, to education and to leisure, and they help promote a range of opportunities from business growth to social inclusion. They also play a key role in providing access for the many tourists who visit these communities and contribute to the local economies.
- 1.2 There are a number of key issues facing ferry services in Scotland at present, including an ageing infrastructure that will need significant investment in the next decade to remain fit for purpose. There is also a need to continue to invest in new technology to meet environmental objectives.
- 1.3 The majority of Scotland's internal ferry services are funded through the Scottish Government and local authority subsidy, although some are provided on a purely commercial basis. In light of the economic pressures and competing priorities for funding facing the country, it is important that funding for ferry services is targeted effectively and efficiently. Any investment must result in improvements for those who live, work, visit or do business in the communities. The Scottish Government, therefore, needs to consider what services should be provided in the future and what funding will be needed to ensure continued delivery. This funding will be needed both for the ferry services themselves and for the supporting infrastructure.
- 1.4 Work has been underway on a review of ferry services following a commitment in the National Transport Strategy 2006. In 2008, there was a parliamentary inquiry into ferry services; in 2009, the Scottish Government began gathering data and opinions as part of a formal review of ferry services. In 2010, a consultation took place on the terms for a Draft Ferries Plan looking at funding and procurement, fares, the type of ferry services to be provided, responsibility for ferry services, accessibility and environmental issues. The key finding of that exercise was that change would be needed to improve consistency of provision and to secure funding for the future.
- 1.5 The Draft Ferries Plan was published for consultation in December 2011; the Plan sets out proposals for the provision and support of Scotland's ferry services until 2022. The Plan states that in some areas, such as fares and funding, the Scottish Government is clear about the way forward, but adds: *"We do however still need to gather opinions and views about the level and type of services each community should receive"*. The Plan sets out the current situation for each community, along with possible options for the future; respondents were invited to submit their opinions and views about these options.
- 1.6 Responses to this consultation are being used to inform the Final Ferries Plan, including a vessel renewal programme and investment plan. It is expected the Final Plan will be published in 2012.

## The consultation

- 1.7 The Draft Ferries Plan for consultation contained 29 questions beginning with a section for individual respondents about their travel habits. The consultation then presented one open question in relation to each community or island group, requesting their views on proposals that will impact on their specific ferry service.
- 1.8 The final section offered respondents the opportunity to comment on any other elements of the Draft Plan such as funding and procurement, the future of fares, who should be responsible for ferry services in the future, environmental issues and accessibility issues.

## Overview of responses

- 1.9 Responses were submitted using an online questionnaire, by email or in paper copy. Consultation replies were received from 2,051 respondents. This included 1,415 separate consultation responses and 636 submissions of a campaign proforma calling for a Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service. Most of the campaign responses came from residents of the Uists or Benbecula (513), ten were from other islands, 99 from the Scottish mainland, 11 from outside Scotland and three unknown.
- 1.10 In addition, a development company from South Islay submitted a petition opposing fewer sailings from Port Ellen; the hard copy petition contained 497 names and their online petition showed 522 signatories.
- 1.11 There were also instances of small numbers of respondents all submitting the same text; these are mentioned alongside, and included in, the analysis of the relevant questions, as are the campaign and petition submissions.
- 1.12 While a large number responded to the consultation, respondents mainly commented only on the route relevant to their own community. As the Draft Plan discusses ferry provision for 20 separate communities this meant that some areas had a low or very low number of responses. However, it should be borne in mind that in addition to the invitation to respond to this consultation, residents and other interested parties have had the opportunity to participate in the Ferries Review through the previous consultation and associated meetings and events.
- 1.13 At each question the total number who responded is presented in table form; this shows responses from organisations and individuals and indicates whether these respondents came from within or outwith the community. **The number of residents responding at each question is not always the same as the number presented in the Community table (table 1.4); this is because not all residents addressed the question relevant to their own community; some commented on different routes while others only provided 'other comments'.**

1.14 In the small number of cases where respondents sent in more than one submission, these were merged to form one response. Where exact duplicate responses were received from the same respondent, only one was counted.

### Respondent profile

1.15 The consultation attracted 1,415 direct responses<sup>1</sup>. Of these, 202 responded on behalf of an organisation and 1,213 responded as individuals.

**Table 1.1 Consultation responses**

Responses	Online questionnaire	Other means	Total
Individuals	924	289	1,213
Organisations	63	139	202
<b>Total</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>1,415</b>

1.16 For analysis purposes, responses from organisations were assigned to sub-groups. This enabled analysis of whether differences, or commonalities, appeared across the various different types of organisations that responded. The following table shows the numbers of responses in each group.

**Table 1.2 Organisations (Base: 202)**

	Number
Tourism/Leisure	35
Business/Development	35
Community Council	34
Transport	16
Ferry/Transport group	15
Other community/Local group	10
Farming/crofting/fishing	8
Ferry Company	7
Local authority	6
Port/Harbour	6
Charity/Voluntary	5
NDPB/Other Government	5
Health	4
Education	3
Union	2
Other	4
Unknown	7

1.17 A list of all those organisations who submitted a response to the consultation is included in Appendix 1.

1.18 Individual respondents were invited to complete a series of questions on their place of residence, travel habits and ferry usage. The full list of questions is given in Appendix 2 and the following tables and paragraphs show the responses to these questions.

<sup>1</sup> There were also 636 campaign submissions and a large petition.

1.19 The first question asked whether respondents were resident in a community currently served by the ferry network.

**Table 1.3 Individuals (Base: 1,213)**

	<b>Number</b>
Resident in community	860
Non-resident	280
No reply	73

1.20 There were responses from 860 individuals resident in a community served by a ferry network. When asked to name the community in which they live, many respondents gave the name of their town or village, others gave the name of their island or peninsula; others gave the area of Scotland in which they live.

1.21 Answers have been assigned to the communities associated with the routes discussed in the consultation. In a small number of cases, respondents from the mainland side of an island ferry route identified themselves as members of the community served by the ferry and these respondents have also been included (for example the 33 individuals related to the Lismore route include three from Appin). As Oban and Mallaig are relevant to more than one route, these have been listed as separate communities.

1.22 Around a quarter of individual respondents did not use the consultation questionnaire to submit their response; instead these were submitted by email or in hard copy. In these cases, where a home address was provided this information was used to populate the residence questions in the consultation.

**1.23 It should, therefore, be noted that the number of responses reported as being from each community may not be the actual number received, as many individuals did not provide address information.**

1.24 Where organisations provided address details, these have also been used to assign responses to relevant communities.

1.25 As the table below shows, the two communities with the largest number of individual respondents were Mull (197) and Islay/Jura (181). However, in terms of the proportion of the community responding, the largest responses came from Kerrera, Lismore and Jura.

1.26 There were no responses containing addresses from the Cumbrae or Gigha communities.

**Table 1.4 Community**

<b>Community</b>	<b>Individuals (1,213)</b>	<b>Organisations (202)</b>	<b>Total (1,415)</b>
Arran	30	9	39
Bute	13	3	16
Cumbræ	-	-	-
Cowal Peninsula and Dunoon	36	5	41
Mull	197	8	205
Iona	11	3	14
Mull & Iona*	-	3	3
Ardnamurchan/Morvern	92	14	106
Lismore	33	2	35
Coll/Tiree	2	2	4
Kerrera/Luing/Easdale	22	4	26
Orkney	3	4	7
Shetland	4	6	10
Skye	41	6	47
Raasay	2	1	3
Small Isles	3	1	4
Knoydart	4	-	4
Islay/Jura	181	15	196
Colonsay	1	2	3
Gigha	-	-	-
Kintyre	43	12	55
Lewis/Harris	8	5	13
Uists/Benbecula	50	20	70
Barra	29	2	31
Western Isles (not specified)	-	3	3
Oban	6	5	11
Mallaig	32	7	39
Argyll/Argyll and Bute	2	3	5
West of Scotland	-	4	4
Highlands and/or Islands	-	8	8
Resident (no location given)	15	n/a	15
Non-resident	280	n/a	280
Organisation (national remit/coverage)	n/a	34	34
Unknown residency**	73	11	84

\* These 3 organisations cover both Mull and Iona

\*\* These responses did not include residence/location information

1.27 The 860 respondents resident in a community served by a ferry network were asked whether they had travelled off their island or peninsula within the last 18 months: 635 said that they had; two said no; and the others did not reply or had not used the consultation questionnaire (223).

1.28 Respondents who said they had travelled off their island or peninsula in the last 18 months were asked their most common mode of transport. As can be seen in the following table, ferry travel was the most common by far.

**Table 1.5 Most common mode of transport (Base: 635)**

	Number
Ferry	556
Road	71
Air	8

1.29 The 556 respondents who said that they travel most by ferry were asked how frequently they use the ferry services. Table 1.6, below, shows that those travelling between one and three times a month made up the largest group.

**Table 1.6 Frequency of travel by ferry (Base: 556)**

	Number
5 or more days per week	27
2-4 days per week	45
Once a week	73
1-3 times a month	214
At least four times per year	157
Less than four times per year	11
Don't know/varies	13
No reply	16

1.30 Finally in this section, respondents who said that they travel most commonly by ferry were asked the reasons for their journey(s) and responses are shown in the following table.

**Table 1.7 Most common reasons for travelling (Base: 556)**

	Number *
Visiting friends/relatives/other leisure	329
Shopping	257
Short-break/holiday	142
Health related	111
Employer's business	94
Commuting	59
Education	23
Other business reasons	23
Charity work	3
No reply	10

\* This does not add to 556 as respondents could give more than one reason for travel by ferry

## Analysis and reporting

1.31 Comments given at each open question were examined and key themes, similar issues raised or comments made in a number of responses, were identified. In addition, we looked for sub-themes such as reasons for opinions, specific examples or explanations, alternative suggestions or other related comments.

1.32 Where possible, we looked at whether respondents said they agreed or disagreed with the specific proposals; however as the questions did not specifically ask for this information, it was not possible to ascertain support or disagreement for all respondents; this should be borne in mind when reading any proportions mentioned in the reporting.

- 1.33 The key themes were looked at in relation to individuals and organisations and, where numbers permitted, by business type to ascertain whether any particular theme was specific to one particular group, or whether it appeared in responses across groups. Themes were also examined to see whether there were differences between residents and non-residents of a relevant community; or between ferry users and non-users. For many of the communities, however, numbers in some of the sub-groups such as type of business and ferry usage were too small to allow for any meaningful comment to be made.
- 1.34 When looking at sub-group differences, it must be also borne in mind that where a specific opinion has been identified in relation to a particular group or groups, this does not indicate that other groups do not share this opinion, but rather that they have simply not commented on that particular point.
- 1.35 **This exercise was a consultation and not a survey. While the consultation gave all those who wished to comment an opportunity to do so, given the self-selecting nature of this type of exercise, any figures quoted here cannot be extrapolated to a wider population.**
- 1.36 In the analysis of responses to a consultation, those in favour of a proposal generally give very short answers with little explanation and this was also found to be the case in this consultation. Those opposing a proposal tended to give fuller answers and this is reflected in the reporting.
- 1.37 The following chapters document the substance of the analysis and present the main issues and views expressed in responses. These chapters follow the ordering of Chapter 4 in the consultation document, followed by an analysis of other comments received.
- 1.38 Appropriate verbatim comments, from those who gave permission for their responses to be made public, are used throughout the report to illustrate themes or to provide extra detail for some specific points.

## 2 ARRAN

2.1 Situated in the Firth of Clyde, Arran has a population<sup>2</sup> of 5,058 and is served by two ferry routes. The Plan identifies the principal route from Arran as that from Brodick to Ardrossan, North Ayrshire; this service runs every day, with early morning to early evening sailings on most days. The secondary route is between Lochranza on Arran and Claonaig on the Kintyre peninsula.

2.2 The proposals contained in the consultation included:

- the Ardrossan to Brodick service to be upgraded to a two-vessel service operating a more frequent shuttle service through to the late evening;
- services between Claonaig to Lochranza to be reviewed following changes to the Ardrossan to Brodick service.

2.3 Respondents were asked for their views on the proposals and 140 respondents commented; this included 28 individuals and nine organisations from the Arran community.

**Table 2.1: Arran Proposals - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Arran	37	28	9
Kintyre	29	24	5
Other community	23	14	9
Non-resident	32	32	n/a
National remit	8	n/a	8
Unknown	11	9	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>33</b>

### Key themes

The main themes to emerge in relation to the proposals for the Arran routes were:

- Over half of those who commented expressed concern over any potential reduction in the Claonaig-Lochranza service.
- Almost half expressed support for the Ardrossan-Brodick proposal.

There were a number of comments relating to infrastructure; many of these mentioned the need for improvements to Ardrossan harbour.

### ***Concern over potential reduction on the Claonaig-Lochranza service***

2.4 It was apparent from responses that many of those who commented were concerned that the proposal to review services between Claonaig and Lochranza equated to a proposal to reduce services. More than half of the 140 respondents who commented expressed concern over any potential reduction in the Claonaig-Lochranza service. The following is a typical example, in this case from a Kintyre resident:

<sup>2</sup> All population statistics quoted are from the 2001 Census

*“The Claonaig to Lochranza route must continue as a stand-alone route - it is serving a different demographic to the Ardrossan to Brodick service and is essential to bring tourists to North Kintyre, Islay, Gigha, Mid Argyll and the Lorn area with its numerous ferry links. In other words it is a vital link in the chain and not a competing route for Ardrossan to Brodick!”*

- 2.5 This theme was most apparent in responses from Kintyre residents; almost all of their responses included comments on the need to retain or improve this service; around half of responses from Arran residents contained this theme.
- 2.6 Many organisations, across all types and especially those from the Arran and Kintyre areas, also mentioned the need to retain or increase this service. A national business/development organisation said they: *“would be concerned with any move to end this route, as it not only fulfils the needs for the movement of dangerous goods, but is an increasingly popular link for those wishing to travel through Arran from Ardrossan to Kintyre”*.
- 2.7 The main reason given for this view was the importance of the service to tourists, for those with Arran as their main destination as well as those travelling through as a stage in an ‘island hopping’ tour; and therefore to the local economy. Many of the organisations commenting on the Arran proposals raised the importance of the route for tourism and there were mentions that the route now also forms part of the Whisky Trail.
- 2.8 One national transport organisation felt that: *“Bidders could also be asked to include serving Claonaig to Lochranza in their bids (for an ‘Arran bundle’), offering integrated through ticketing for those travelling to/from Kintyre”*.
- 2.9 The Claonaig-Lochranza ferry is used to transport dangerous or hazardous cargo to and from Arran; several organisations stressed the need for this factor to be considered in any review of the service. Local organisations in particular also pointed out that the route is used for transporting stock to market; the alternative road journey would involve travelling over 100 miles.
- 2.10 Respondents, especially Arran residents, commented that Claonaig-Lochranza is necessary as it provides a backup for the Ardrossan service in bad weather; there were a number of comments, again mainly from Arran residents, regarding the frequency of cancellations on the Ardrossan service and the need for a more reliable service.
- 2.11 Carrying figures were mentioned by, mainly local, organisations; they pointed out that figures for the two routes cannot be compared due to the reduced winter service (when the ferry sails to the more sheltered Tarbert instead of Lochranza) and other restrictions on the Lochranza service.
- 2.12 A number of respondents, again mainly local organisations, specifically mentioned the need to make sure the usual winter route of Tarbert-Lochranza is continued and, preferably, increased. This would allow more passengers to spend more time on Arran and so boost off-season tourism.

2.13 Other comments, from small numbers of respondents, in relation to the Claonaig-Lochranza route included:

- the need to ensure the service continues in the summer months;
- a preference for no change to the Ardrossan-Brodick service if these changes would result in a reduction in the Claonaig-Lochranza service;
- that there is no need for the Claonaig or Tarbert-Lochranza service.

***Support for the Ardrossan-Brodick proposal***

2.14 The other main theme emerging was that of support for the Ardrossan-Brodick proposal. Many who commented voiced support specifically for this proposal while others made more general comments such as ‘good idea’ or ‘I approve’. In total, almost half of the 140 who commented mentioned their approval for the upgrading and increase in service.

2.15 Support for the Ardrossan-Brodick proposal was seen more in responses from organisations and from Arran residents than from others; almost two-thirds of Arran residents voiced support for the proposal.

2.16 Also included in comments from those supporting the proposal was a general welcome for the introduction of two vessels on this route. Respondents felt this would enhance the service and also provide resilience as one vessel would be available if the other was unable to sail. One Arran resident said: *“I support the two vessel concept. Hopefully this will provide a more comprehensive and user-friendly service”*.

2.17 Respondents who provided reasons for their support mentioned the benefits a more frequent service would bring for residents, visitors and tourists. Residents in particular cited the usefulness of an increased service for ease of commuting, doing business, shopping and visiting.

2.18 One main factor mentioned by a number of those supporting the proposal, from across respondent groups, related to the need for the vessels to be fit for purpose in terms of size, capacity and design for the sea conditions. The need for emergency planning was also mentioned.

2.19 There were sometimes suggestions, from individuals and organisations, that the replacement vessels should be of a similar size to the MV Finlaggan used on the Islay route; that the vessel should be the same size and quality as the current vessel, the Caledonian Isles; or that the vessel should be large enough to carry larger vehicles.

2.20 Arguments in favour of larger capacity vessels included that findings from Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) pilot routes indicate that Ardrossan-Brodick could see an increase in carrying figures when RET is rolled out. The need for fuel economy, for a custom build and for an environmentally friendly design were also mentioned.

2.21 In addition, a national business/development organisation commented: *“it is vital that whatever vessels are chosen for the route ultimately, they must be of an appropriate size to accommodate the growing needs of the distilling industry on the island”*.

2.22 There were, however, concerns from a small number of individuals that the proposal would lead to an increase in fares.

### ***The need for improvements to infrastructure***

2.23 There was a recurrent concern amongst respondents, including many of the Arran residents, over the suitability or fitness for purpose of Ardrossan as a port; and especially as a winter port. A national ferry company commented: *“In poor weather it is difficult to operate even one vessel here, for a two boat service to be viable, a significant upgrade of Ardrossan Harbour is required”*.

2.24 A number of these respondents felt that any investment would be better spent on improvements to the port than to the ferry service while others, including a local ferry/transport group, commented that those receiving pier dues should be responsible for improvements. Specific areas for improvement included the need to upgrade the second berth and the need for an assessment of the breakwater and harbour entrance. There was a request, from a local authority, that *“a multi-agency group is established to allow all local agencies to contribute to the re-development programme”*.

2.25 There was a degree of concern, amongst individuals and organisations, about Arran’s infrastructure; specifically the roads and the island’s capacity to deal with increased visitor numbers. The effects of increased traffic on cyclists and pedestrians was also raised.

2.26 The need for a designated port of refuge; with emergency provisions set out to ensure a level of service can be maintained at all time; was expressed by a number of organisations.

2.27 Other comments on infrastructure, seen in smaller numbers of responses, included:

- the need to improve the waiting rooms and other facilities;
- the need for improvements to the pier at Brodick;
- that Hunterston could be used as an alternative destination.

### ***Other comments on Arran proposals***

2.28 There were a variety of suggestions, from across respondent groups, in relation to timetabling and these included earlier sailings that would allow residents to reach Glasgow or other employment areas before 9am and an earlier sailing on a Sunday to allow for day trips to the mainland.

2.29 The need to ensure that any revised timetable is co-ordinated with public transport services, bus and rail, on the mainland was also raised. This included responses from local and national organisations as well as individuals, including one Arran resident who said: *“Any extension to the ferry schedules should be integrated with the rail and bus connections to ensure maximum benefit for all travellers. I note SPT have reservations about providing links to an extended service and this should not be allowed to go unchallenged”*.

2.30 Several of the Arran organisations commented on accessibility, pointing out that Arran has many senior residents and requesting that accessibility for mobility-

impaired passengers, both at ports and on-board, be taken into account. The need for better medical facilities on-board was also mentioned.

2.31 A small number of respondents simply expressed support for the proposals overall, without further comment. Other comments from small numbers of respondents included:

- calls for reduced fares for Kintyre residents;
- the need for Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) to be rolled out;
- calls for the present service to be left as is;
- queries over whether the expenditure is justified;
- that there is no need for the level of catering provided on such a short route;
- the need for a faster sailing time.

### 3 BUTE

- 3.1 Bute, in the Firth of Clyde, has a population of 7,228 and is served by two ferry routes. Rothesay to Wemyss Bay links the island's main settlement to Inverclyde and runs daily from early morning to around the middle of the evening. The route from Rhubodach links the northern part of the island to Argyll and Bute at Colintraive on the Cowal peninsula and runs daily; most days there are services from 5.30am to around 8pm in the evening.
- 3.2 The proposal for Bute is to extend the operating day for the Colintraive to Rhubodach service. The consultation document acknowledged that this is not the principal route, or the route most commonly used for commuting, and invited the community to submit their views. Of the 57 respondents who commented, 12 individuals and three organisations were from the Bute community.

**Table 3.1: Bute Proposals - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Bute	15	12	3
Cowal peninsula & Dunoon	6	5	1
Other community	16	10	6
Non-resident	14	14	n/a
National remit	4	n/a	4
Unknown	2	2	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>14</b>

#### Key themes

Opinion was divided over the proposal for the Colintraive to Rhubodach route:

- just under half of respondents who commented voiced support for the proposal to extend the operating day for the Colintraive to Rhubodach service;
- just over a third felt that the proposal has little value.

A number of respondents proposed that the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay service be extended.

#### ***Support for the proposal***

- 3.3 The largest number of comments at this question simply offered support for the proposal; support was noted in just under half of the 57 responses. Half of the Bute residents and all but one of the Cowal/Dunoon residents who responded voiced support for the proposal.
- 3.4 The proposal was seen as beneficial to residents as it would allow them to visit, and receive visits from, friends and family more frequently. It was also seen as useful for commuters as well as for tourists.
- 3.5 Other potential benefits included improved opportunities for leisure; theatre, cinema or other evening events. Attending work or council evening events were also mentioned as was the fact that this proposal would mean residents do not have to stay overnight on the mainland following evening events. One

Bute resident commented: *“I think an extended service on this route would be well used as it offers a means of leaving or arriving on the island later than 8 or 9pm (depending on the season). It means that people who have events that run later at night would not have to book into hotels purely because there are no more ferries”.*

***That the proposal has little value***

3.6 Over a third of the 57 respondents said that they could see little value in the proposal; that there was no need for an extended service, that it was not useful or would not be widely used. Half of the Bute residents who responded did not see any benefit in the proposal.

3.7 Respondents, mainly residents, felt that this service would only be useful to those with cars as there is no public transport available to link with later sailings. There was a recurrent theme relating to the length of drive on reaching the mainland and on problems with the roads themselves, especially problems when the A83 is closed at the Rest and be Thankful.

*“Concern was expressed that the service would be very poorly used, with no public transport connections on the Argyll mainland beyond 6pm. With additional car traffic being the only possibility there were concerns about the environmental consequences. Public safety concerns about increasing the vehicular traffic over these roads late at night, particularly in poor winter weather conditions, were also raised”.*

(community council)

3.8 While around half of the organisations who commented welcomed the proposals, around half saw no benefit in extending the service; most of the organisations who commented also put forward alternative suggestions.

*“Although the extended hours on the Colintrave route are welcomed, extended operating hours on the Rothesay/Wemyss Bay route would potentially have a far greater economic impact on the island”.*

(regional transport organisation)

***Extend the Wemyss Bay-Rothesay service***

3.9 The proposal for Bute is to extend the operating day for the Colintrave to Rhudodach service, however a number of respondents, including some who supported and some who did not support this proposal, called for the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay service to be extended instead. This theme was noted particularly in responses from organisations from outwith the area. One Bute resident explained: *“I am a frequent traveller on the Rothesay - Wemyss Bay Route..... What we need is an extended service on this route and not at Rhudodach. I do not believe this would be used enough and I am sure would eventually be withdrawn. The road infrastructure from Colintrave is poor at best and liable to closures over the winter period at the infamous Rest + Be Thankful which is enough to ensure that as a frequent traveller you only use that route if absolutely essential”.*

3.10 The links with public transport at Wemyss Bay were given, especially by local respondents, as a reason for preferring an extension to this service.

- 3.11 Respondents mentioned that the Wemyss Bay route is the one most used by commuters and for accessing medical services and there were comments that extending this service would be of more benefit to those employed or doing business on the mainland.
- 3.12 There was acknowledgement that costs and working hours regulations are barriers to a later running of the Wemyss Bay service. Respondents, both individuals and organisations, suggested alternatives that included withdrawing a service in the early afternoon and replacing it with a late service, or running a later service on a Friday and Saturday.
- 3.13 There was sometimes a view that the Colintrave to Rhubodach was more reliable than the Wemyss Bay to Rothesay route in bad weather; these respondents suggested that investment could be made in improving the reliability of the Wemyss Bay service.

**Other comments**

- 3.14 Other themes that emerged in relation to Bute included the cost of travel. Respondents, mainly organisations, expressed concern that Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) would be rolled out on other Clyde ferries before Bute and that the island could, therefore, be disadvantaged with tourists choosing to travel on cheaper routes. A recently publicised fare increase was cited as a reason to introduce RET as soon as possible, as was the high level of unemployment in the area:

*“We recognise that financial constraints limits the speed of the roll-out of RET, but would ask that serious consideration is given to including Bute as a short-term priority, at least for the Wemyss Bay-Rothesay route. Bute has suffered more than other parts of Argyll/Clyde from the recession, and along with Dunoon has the highest level of unemployment in the Highlands and Islands, currently at 5.4%”.*

(NDPB/other Government body)

- 3.15 The need to link with public transport, to ensure that timetables are co-ordinated, was also mentioned by a number of respondents, mainly individuals.

## 4 CUMBRAE

- 4.1 The 1,434 residents of Cumbrae, in the Firth of Clyde, are served by a vehicle-ferry service to Largs in North Ayrshire. This is a two-vessel service running from early morning to the middle of the evening.
- 4.2 The proposal for this service is to include a later evening service for one or two evenings per week; 36 respondents commented on this proposal. No responses were noted from Cumbrae residents or organisations.

**Table 4.1: Cumbrae Proposals - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Cumbrae	0	0	0
Other community	16	12	4
Non-resident	17	17	n/a
National remit	3	n/a	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>

### Key themes

Most of those who commented voiced support for the proposal to include a later evening service for one or two evenings per week.

### Support for the proposal

- 4.3 There were very few themes relating to this service, most of the 36 who commented simply voiced support for the proposal to offer a later evening service. The main reason given related to the benefits this would bring for residents in being able to attend evening events on the mainland.
- 4.4 Respondents also mentioned benefits to day visitors in being able to stay on the island for longer, thus adding to the economy.

### Other comments

- 4.5 While the proposal for Cumbrae is to include a later evening service for one or two evenings per week, another theme to emerge from comments related to requests for the later evening service to be run every night.

*“Later sailings each day (Monday to Saturday inclusive) will provide greatest benefit to the island’s community”.*

(local authority)

- 4.6 A regional transport organisation suggested that, in order to overcome working time restrictions, services could be reduced in the afternoon in order to allow later services to be scheduled. This organisation added that *“interchange with bus services at Cumbrae Slip would require to be maintained”.*

## 5 COWAL PENINSULA AND DUNOON

5.1 The Cowal peninsula is separated from the Kintyre peninsula by Loch Fyne, and from the mainland by the Firth of Clyde; the main town is Dunoon. The area has 8,251 residents and is served by two routes.

- The Scottish Government is responsible for the service between the town centres of Dunoon and Gourock, Inverclyde. Until June 2011, Cowal Ferries Ltd provided the vehicle-ferry service on this route; since then Argyll Ferries Ltd have provided a passenger-ferry.
- Western Ferries are the private operators of a vehicle and passenger ferry from Hunter's Quay (Dunoon) to McInroy's Point (Gourock).

5.2 The consultation document outlined recent changes to the Dunoon-Gourock town centres service and said *"Whilst the outcome of the recent tendering process was the best that could be achieved under the circumstances (particularly the restrictions imposed by the European Commission), Scottish Ministers were disappointed not to be able to continue the vehicle and passenger service. We are absolutely committed to providing a ferry service that meets the needs of users and will continue to look at more options to improve the overall service and facilities"*.

5.3 Respondents were asked to submit their views on these points and 87 did so; 36 Cowal/Dunoon residents and five organisations from the area submitted comments.

**Table 5.1: Cowal peninsula/Dunoon - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Cowal peninsula & Dunoon	41	36	5
Other community	20	14	6
Non-resident	17	17	n/a
National remit	5	n/a	5
Unknown	4	4	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>16</b>

### Key themes

The main theme to emerge from comments on the Cowal peninsula and Dunoon services was that respondents do not feel the current services meet the needs of the community.

### ***Current services do not meet the needs of the community***

5.4 Around half of the 87 who commented, including most of the Cowal/Dunoon residents and organisations, said that the present passenger-ferry vessels are inadequate, not fit for purpose, or especially that they are too small and unable to deal with bad weather. There were comments that catamarans are not appropriate for this route and a recurring theme, particularly amongst residents, that the passenger-ferry journey is uncomfortable and frightening. There was a view that the MV Saturn was a more suitable vessel, both for the conditions and to serve the needs of the community.

- 5.5 There were comments that the passenger-ferry vessels are difficult to get on and off or that they are not suitable for people with mobility problems, especially for those in wheelchairs.
- 5.6 A Cowal resident commented on both the passenger-ferry and vehicle-ferry services: *“Our situation in Cowal is currently dire. We desperately need our second vehicle service re-instated. The passenger boats are awful and cannot deal with the weather - the journeys are pretty scary at times! The sole operator cannot cope with demand. Last week it took 1 hour and 15 mins to get across the Clyde with my car due to the overwhelming volume of traffic waiting to get a ferry across! As a commuter I observe this happening regularly”*.
- 5.7 Around half of the 87 who commented called for the re-instatement of the vehicle-ferry on the Dunoon-Gourock town centres route. These comments were seen across groups but especially from the Cowal/Dunoon organisations who responded.
- 5.8 While there was praise for the service provided by Western Ferries on the Hunter’s Quay route, many of these respondents felt that the removal of the vehicle-ferry on the Dunoon-Gourock town centres route has harmed tourism and other businesses in the area.
- 5.9 Residents in particular felt that the current vehicle-ferry service cannot cope with demand and there were comments that there can be lengthy waits for a ferry; allied to this there were concerns over additional costs, in terms of fuel, time and the environment, involved in driving to and from the peninsula.

### **Other comments**

5.10 Other comments on the Cowal peninsula and Dunoon services included:

- That the current arrangements have caused increased congestion and pollution at Hunter’s Quay.
- That the current arrangements make it more difficult for residents to access hospitals, other services and further education, or to commute to jobs on the mainland.
- That residents would prefer the service to be run by CalMac.
- That the length of walk to the relocated Gourock ticket office leaves passengers no time to buy a ticket.
- The need for an early introduction of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) and/or requests for a ferry regulator to control fares, profit margins and ticketing.
- A lack of conviction that the current situation has been brought about by European regulations.
- Concern that figures published by the ferry company are misleading as they exclude weather related cancellations and that there has not therefore been, as stated in the consultation document, a substantial increase in provision.
- Suggestions that the ferry service between Kilcreggan, Gourock and Helensburgh should also be included in the Final Ferries Plan and operated by the Scottish Government.
- Calls for more detail to be included in the Final Ferries Plan in relation to the Gourock-Dunoon route.

## 6 MULL (AND ARDNAMURCHAN/MORVERN)

6.1 The second largest island of the Inner Hebrides, Mull has a population of 2,696 and is served by four ferry routes. One of these, to Iona, is covered in the subsequent chapter. The proposals for Mull which are discussed here relate to:

- Craignure to Oban on mainland Argyll and Bute; this is a daily service with sailings starting fairly early in the morning and running until mid-evening on most days.
- A daily service from Fishnish to Lochaline on the Morvern peninsula.
- Tobermory to Kilchoan on the Ardnamurchan peninsula; running Monday to Saturday all year with a Sunday service in summer.

6.2 Proposals for the routes are:

- to upgrade the Craignure to Oban service to a two-vessel service, operating as a shuttle-service through an extended operating day;
- following the upgrade to Craignure to Oban, to review operations on the Fishnish to Lochaline service.
- to replace the current passenger and vehicle service on Tobermory to Kilchoan with a passenger-only service.

6.3 Respondents were asked to submit their views and 417 did so; 162 Mull residents and 11 organisations from the area submitted comments.

**Table 6.1: Mull - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Mull	173	162	11
Ardnamurchan/Morvern	93	79	14
Oban	2	1	1
Other community	38	27	11
Non-resident	92	92	n/a
National remit	9	n/a	9
Unknown	10	10	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>46</b>

### Key themes

The main themes noted in comments on the Mull ferry routes related to:

- The Tobermory-Kilchoan vehicle service; almost two-thirds of those who commented said that a vehicle service should be retained.
- The Fishnish-Lochaline service; almost two-thirds commented that there should be no reduction on this service.
- The Craignure to Oban service; around a third specifically welcomed the proposed improvements to this service.

### ***Retain a vehicle-ferry on the Tobermory-Kilchoan service***

6.4 Almost two-thirds of the 417 who commented on the Mull routes stressed the need to retain a vehicle service on the Tobermory-Kilchoan service. These comments came from across all respondent sub-groups although they

appeared in slightly higher proportions of responses from Ardnamurchan/Morvern and other areas outside Mull.

- 6.5 This service was seen as essential for the economic well-being of the area and indeed a large proportion of organisations from Ardnamurchan/Morvern commented on the need to retain the vehicle service. One NDPB/other Government body commented that the route serves a fragile area that is likely *“to be sensitive to any reduction in ferry services, and [the organisation] would expect Transport Scotland to consult fully and assess the social and economic impacts of such changes before deciding whether it is right to proceed”*.
- 6.6 Many respondents commented on the problems the loss of a vehicle service would cause those holidaying with cars who like to travel from Tobermory on to Ardnamurchan and then continue their holiday by car from Ardnamurchan.
- 6.7 Others commented that the loss of this service would lead to residents being unable to access services that are unavailable on the peninsula and which can only be accessed on Mull or the mainland at Oban; these comments were seen across respondents groups but in a higher proportion of responses from Ardnamurchan/Morvern residents.

*“The Kilchoan to Tobermory route is essential for access to services in Tobermory and also for serving round trips for tourists through west Ardnamurchan and Mull. Kilchoan is part of a remote community poorly served by road who depend on their vehicular/passenger ferry for many of the facilities that exist in Tobermory including shops, dental, medical etc”*.

(regional ferry/transport group)

- 6.8 A combination of the loss of the vehicle service and any reduction to the Fishnish-Lochaline service was seen as particularly troubling for the negative impact this would have on residents, tourists and businesses as travellers would have to go via Oban leading to a far lengthier journey. This could also impact on the number of day-trippers to Mull and Iona.
- 6.9 The issue of transporting livestock was raised, mainly by local organisations; this route provides access to the Mull abattoir for crofters; the round trip by road would be 200 miles.
- 6.10 A small number of, mainly local, organisations said that there is no alternative vessel available to provide a passenger service and queried how savings could, therefore, be made. There was a suggestion that a small vehicle-ferry could be a suitable, cost effective, option.
- 6.11 Comments, mainly from Mull and Ardnamurchan/Morvern residents, suggested that this service would be better used if it were more widely publicised, while there were also suggestions that fare prices are a barrier to use and should be reviewed.
- 6.12 A new distillery at Ardnamurchan will form part of the Highland Whisky Trail and this route will be important in providing access from Tobermory. A national business/development organisation stated: *“We would be very concerned if the*

*current vehicle-service to Ardnamurchan were to cease at a time when a new visitor attraction is being created on the peninsula, which, like other similar Scotch Whisky visitor centres, would bring visitors to the area all year round”.*

6.13 Both routes, Tobermory-Kilchoan and Fishnish-Lochaline, were described as important to the residents and economy of the area. Both were seen as important parts of the Gaelic Rings; round trips of the islands. They were also seen as important as part of a circular route from Fort William to Mull.

6.14 There were occasionally comments on the cost implications of changing to a passenger-only vehicle, including from a community council who also said: *“Thousands of pounds have recently been spent on improving the slipway at Kilchoan and it is not remotely suitable for a passenger-only ferry”.*

#### **No reduction in Fishnish-Lochaline service**

6.15 Almost two-thirds of the 417 respondents voiced concern over any potential reduction in service on the Fishnish-Lochaline service following any review. The service is seen as necessary for a shorter and easier access to and from Mull and Oban. A Mull resident commented: *“We feel strongly that losing this option would be detrimental to those of us living on Mull and would severely impact tourist and local trade between Mull and the Morvern peninsula”.*

6.16 Very high proportions of Mull organisations and residents commented on the need to retain this service although similar comments were seen across respondent groups.

6.17 The service was described as a vital or key link for both business and social reasons. The importance of the route for those from the Morvern peninsula who work or access education on Mull was also highlighted.

6.18 Respondents felt that the figures and statements in the consultation document in relation to ferry usage do not reflect the true picture and that this route is not principally a timber route.

6.19 This service is valued for the benefits it provides to residents and also for the tourists that use it. Respondents, mainly individuals, commented on the need for the service for children going to school, or for those without cars in Morvern who wish to shop in Oban.

6.20 The route is also seen as an important island hopping route towards Mallaig and Skye. A national charity/voluntary organisation commented: *“Tourism forms a key part of the local economy and any reduction in this service would have a direct impact on visitor numbers to Mull and Iona”.*

6.21 The service was described by many as a back-up to the Oban-Craignure service, especially in times of bad weather. Several other respondents commented on the unreliability of the Oban-Craignure service. The route is also used as a back-up when the Oban ferry is full; there is no booking requirement on the Fishnish-Lochaline service.

- 6.22 There were sometimes comments that it is a much cheaper fare than the Oban-Craignure service, which respondents felt to be prohibitively expensive for passengers and which also results in the high costs of goods being delivered.
- 6.23 There were a number of comments relating to freight on this route, mainly from organisations, including that this route is the only access to Mull without height restrictions for commercial vehicles, that the open deck service is needed for transporting dangerous loads and that the service carries a number of vans and service vehicles to and from the area.
- 6.24 Respondents commented on the need to consider the impact of increased freight traffic on the roads that may occur as a result of a reduction in this service. A national transport organisation also commented on the environmental impacts: *“this provides a convenient route for forestry operations, which would otherwise have to make a long detour (which would have implications in terms of increasing GHG emissions, amongst other things)”*.

**Support for improvements to the Oban-Craignure service**

- 6.25 Around a third of the 417 respondents said they welcome improvements to the Oban-Craignure service, although there were recurrent comments that this should not be at the expense of other Mull ferry services. One Mull resident said: *“Although the plan to upgrade the Craignure to Oban service is attractive, it would be a retrograde step to change the facilities on the Fishnish to Lochaline services (essential if the ferry is unable to leave Oban or Craignure because of adverse weather) and Tobermory to Kilchoan (again access)”*.
- 6.26 A high proportion of Mull organisations welcomed the proposals for this service.
- “We welcome your intention to enhance the Craignure-Oban service by lengthening the timetabled service and providing two smaller ships to operate a shuttle service. We see this as a benefit to our community as it would enhance the existing seven days a week integrated transport network allowing residents of Morvern to travel to Oban for business, pleasure or onward travel”*.
- (local business/development organisation)
- 6.27 Reasons given for support included that having two vessels would provide a more reliable service, especially if one vessel should be unavailable. The additional capacity was also welcomed in advance of any increase in demand that may result from the introduction of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).
- 6.28 There were some queries as to whether the extended timetable will operate year round and whether the extended timetable will be sustainable.
- 6.29 There were calls for clarification over the funding for the new vessels and requests for more information on the timescales involved in the proposals for this route.

*“Will boats run all year round? Will the extended timetable be sustainable? As there are, at present, no boats even on the drawing board let alone the finance with which to pay for them, what is the*

*timescale for introduction? As this can only be regarded as a very long-term proposal no detailed comment can be made regarding them”.*

(community council)

**Other comments**

- 6.30 The need for season tickets to be available on services or for cheaper tickets for residents was mentioned, as was the need for cheaper fares for school-children. Respondents also commented on difficulties current timetables pose for those wishing to spend a day in Oban.
- 6.31 A number of organisations, local and national, commented on problems with the Passenger Access System at Craignure, on-going discussions over the responsibility for the system, and the need for a fit for purpose system to be put in place as soon as possible. This system will need to be suitable for any changes to vessels in the future.
- 6.32 A small number of respondents, mainly Mull residents, simply commented that the services are fine as they are or that no change is required; reasons included that the present Oban-Craignure service is sufficient and that a shuttle service is not needed.
- 6.33 There was occasionally a view, mainly from residents from Mull and Ardnamurchan/Morvern, that there should be an early introduction of RET and/or that RET fares should be available on all the islands.
- 6.34 Both individuals and organisations commented on the need for integration with other transport; both other ferry routes, especially to Iona, and public transport.

## 7 IONA

- 7.1 Iona is situated in the Inner Hebrides around a mile from Mull and has a population of 125. The island is served by a short ferry route to Fionnphort on Mull. This is a daily service running from fairly early in the morning until around 6.30pm.
- 7.2 The proposal for the Iona route is for an additional 90 minutes of services in the evening, so the last service is around 8pm from Iona; 114 respondents commented on this proposal including ten residents and six organisations from the area.

**Table 7.1: Iona - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Iona	13	10	3
Mull & Iona	3	-	3
Mull	56	53	3
Other community	16	11	5
Non-resident	20	20	n/a
National remit	4	n/a	4
Unknown	2	2	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>18</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to the Iona ferry route was support for the proposal; almost three-quarters of those who commented voiced support for the proposal for an additional 90 minutes of services in the evening.

There were also a number of comments on the need for co-ordination with other ferries and with public transport.

### **Support for the proposal**

- 7.3 Almost three-quarters of the 114 who commented supported the proposal for an additional 90 minutes of services in the evening.
- 7.4 The benefits this change would bring to the economy by encouraging more tourists were outlined and there were also comments on the usefulness of a later sailing for residents travelling to and from Mull.

### **Co-ordination with other services**

- 7.5 The main theme to emerge, in around one in five responses, was a need for the service to be co-ordinated with public transport on Mull and at Oban. One Iona resident said: *"I don't see that this would help as there would be no connecting buses. Iona folk make their own arrangements if they want to go to late meetings on Mull and 8pm wouldn't make much difference"*.

### **Other comments**

- 7.6 The need for improvements to the harbour or pier was a recurring theme. Organisations in particular mentioned the need for early investment to provide

overnight berthing facilities at the slip; there were also requests for clarification over the funding for this improvement.

*“We would also support the urgent need to provide a new overnight berthing facility for the MV Lochbuie. It is appreciated that this will involve a significant capital investment but tied in with an improved harbour facility at Fionnphort would have substantial long term economic and social benefits”*

(national charity/voluntary)

*“At long last. Overnight berthing facilities and a decent breakwater is essential if our children who attend school in Oban are to not miss any more Monday mornings or to get home on Friday evenings”.*

(Iona resident)

- 7.7 A number of respondents, while welcoming the proposal to extend the service, said that this should not be a priority; especially if the investment results in any reduction to other routes. Respondents mentioned the need to retain the services on the Fishnish-Lochaline and Tobermory-Kilchoan routes.
- 7.8 Just over one in ten of the 114 respondents who commented said they were not in favour of the proposal. Reasons given included that they did not see the need for an extension: that investment in a more frequent and reliable service would be preferred; that the current service ending at 6.30 provides a peaceful evening for residents; or that the extension should only be provided on Fridays and Saturday. Other respondents simply said that the extension to the service is not necessary.
- 7.9 Residents on Jura will be given free passage to Islay if their trip is part of an onward journey to the mainland; there were calls from several organisations for this proposal to be extended to residents of Iona travelling through Mull to the mainland. *“For the sake of consistency though we wish to highlight that Iona does not have a direct ferry service to the mainland. As such the concession proposed for Jura residents when travelling to the mainland should also be offered to Iona residents”* (regional ferry/transport group).

## 8 ARDNAMURCHAN/MORVERN (CORRAN FERRY)

- 8.1 The Corran Ferry route connects the 2,021 residents of the Ardnamurchan and Morvern peninsulas to the mainland, crossing Loch Linnhe from Ardgour to Nether Lochaber, nine miles south of Fort William.
- 8.2 The consultation document states that an assessment of the frequent, daily service suggests it is a model service and appropriate for the importance of the route. The service is currently operated by Highland Council and the consultation document states that the Scottish Government is willing, as with all services operated by local authorities, to discuss the transfer of responsibility for services to the Scottish Government.
- 8.3 Respondents were asked for their views and 154 commented on the Corran Ferry route; this included 38 individuals and six organisations from the area. A large number of Mull residents (54) also commented on this route.

**Table 8.1: Corran Ferry - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Ardnamurchan/Morvern	44	38	6
Other community	67	62	5
Non-resident	37	37	n/a
National remit	3	n/a	3
Unknown	3	3	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>14</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to the Corran Ferry route was support for the ferry to remain as at present; this included praise for the current operation of the service.

### Support for the current service

- 8.4 Two-thirds of the 154 who commented expressed satisfaction that there would be no changes to the route. Many of these respondents commented that the current service is well run or excellent and that they see no need to change the service provider.

*“It has a modern ferry the MV Corran capable of carrying HGVs and assists in reducing the impact of large vehicles on a fragile road network”.*

(local authority and regional transport organisations)

- 8.5 There were comments that if the Tobermory - Kilchoan changes to passenger only and/or if there is any reduction in the Lochaline-Fishnish service then this would cause a reduction in passenger numbers for the Corran Ferry. The Corran Ferry was described as an essential link to the Lochaline-Fishnish service.

### Other comments

- 8.6 Around one in ten of the 154 respondents felt that the service is in need of some improvement, in particular the operating hours were described as limited.

Respondents, mainly Ardnamurchan/Morvern residents and organisations, would like to see extended hours in the morning and evening; this would be especially useful in the summer months. There were also calls for more frequent crossings.

- 8.7 Respondents, again mainly Ardnamurchan/Morvern residents and organisations, saw a need for larger vessels to be used on the route.

*“The ferry is often full with long queues in the mornings and evenings all year and all day in summer. The Corran can only just cope but the relief ferry is now totally inadequate. Perhaps the Corran should become relief ferry and a new larger ferry obtained as the main vessel”.*

(Ardnamurchan resident)

- 8.8 A local tourism/leisure organisation commented that they *“wholeheartedly support the acknowledgment that this is a model service. There is no support for the transfer of the service away from Highland Council management. There is an immediate need for a replacement back-up boat as the current is very old and no longer fit for purpose with the number and size of vehicles using the service”.*

- 8.9 Timetabling was an issue for a very small number of mainly Mull residents; these individuals would like to see better co-ordination with the Mull ferry timetables.

- 8.10 While there were a number of calls for cheaper fares, a similar number commented that the book of tickets represents good value.

*“This is already an excellent service, though very expensive”.*

(Mull resident)

*“The Highland Council provide an excellent level of service on this route at an affordable price (through the purchase of books of tickets)”.*

(Ardnamurchan/Morvern resident)

- 8.11 There were some suggestions that a bridge should be built; this would be useful to residents and could increase the number of tourists visiting the area.

## 9 LISMORE

- 9.1 Situated in Loch Linnhe, Lismore (population 146) is served by two ferry routes. A vehicle-ferry runs from Achnacroish in the south of the island to Oban; the Scottish Government has responsibility for this route which is operated by Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac). A passenger-ferry, operated by Argyll and Bute Council, runs from Point at the north of the island to Port Appin.
- 9.2 The proposal for Lismore is that the two existing services are replaced with one passenger and vehicle service between Port Appin and Point. Comments on the Lismore proposal were noted in 67 responses including a high proportion of residents; 32 residents and two organisations from Lismore responded.

**Table 9.1: Lismore - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Lismore	34	32	2
Oban	3	2	1
Other community	11	5	6
Non-resident	13	13	n/a
National remit	5	n/a	5
Unknown	1	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>14</b>

### Key themes

Comments in relation to the Lismore proposal indicated a difference of opinion; around a third disagreed while a slightly smaller number agreed with the proposal to replace the two existing services with one passenger and vehicle service between Port Appin and Point. The main themes noted related to:

- the need for a direct route to Oban;
- issues relating to the infrastructure on Lismore;
- other concerns over the proposal to run a single ferry to Port Appin;
- reasons for agreement with the proposal.

### ***Difference of opinion***

- 9.3 Opinion on this proposal was mixed; with around a third of the 67 respondents stating that they disagreed and very slightly fewer stating that they agreed with the proposal. Looking only at the Lismore residents who commented, the split was two to one against the proposal but the small numbers involved should be borne in mind.
- 9.4 A difference of opinion on the island itself was acknowledged in responses from the local community council and residents. One local business highlighted conflicting issues: *“We currently deliver to Lismore a minimum of twice a week, travelling from Oban to Achnacroish. If the vehicle route were to change to Port Appin to Point we would have to review our operations. There would be advantages in shorter crossing and more frequent, but disadvantage of greater driving time and fuel to access service and greater costs”*.

### ***The need for a direct route to Oban***

- 9.5 The need for a direct route to Oban was a recurrent theme; a national transport organisation said *“We disagree with the proposal to replace the existing services with one running from Port Appin for two reasons. Firstly, much traffic will be going to Oban for shopping or to use the trains to Glasgow. Secondly, the island’s children travel to Oban for school”*.
- 9.6 Reasons for this requirement, especially from residents, included the large proportion of elderly residents in Achnacroish who do not drive and so rely on the current service to Oban for shopping and medical appointments. A shopping delivery service from Oban would also be affected by the proposal.
- 9.7 The need to link with public transport services at the transport hub in Oban was mentioned; there was also a suggestion that the journey time with a dedicated bus travelling through Lismore to Port Appin would make commuting impossible without a car. However there were also comments that the timings of the current Oban ferry pose difficulties for commuters.

### ***Issues relating to infrastructure***

- 9.8 A number of issues were identified in relation to the infrastructure of the island. Respondents, individuals and organisations, felt that there would need to be a great deal of investment and work undertaken in order for the proposal to go ahead. A national business/development organisation commented that they *“welcome the proposed replacement of the two existing Lismore services with a single passenger and vehicle service between Port Appin and Point, however understand that significant infrastructure improvements would be required to Port Appin in order to deliver this change”*. Other issues included:
- the standard of the road from Stronacroibh to Point;
  - the pier at Point;
  - a lack of space at Point for the facilities that would be required;
  - concern over the effect of developments on property values in the area.

### ***Other concerns relating to the proposal***

- 9.9 There were comments, mainly from residents, that the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) was conducted before improvements to the timetables and therefore needs to be updated; the STAG should consider the value of the routes together rather than separately.
- 9.10 There were a number of concerns raised by respondents, especially residents:
- concerns about an increase in vehicles coming to the island, this included touring caravans, and a suggestion that vehicle permits may be required;
  - comments that a vehicle-ferry would experience problems with the reef, currents and tides around Point;
  - the need to ensure that there is no negative effect on the island environment, scenery, or on the security, safety and quality of life of residents;
  - concerns for the future of the island school and post office which could be affected by the relocation of the vehicle-ferry.

9.11 Other points respondents, especially residents, felt were in need of clarification or confirmation included:

- that the cost of travelling to Oban would not increase, either for foot passengers using the bus services or for those who would need to take their cars for commuting or other reasons;
- that residents would be priority passengers for the bus services provided;
- that timings would allow for young people who do not board at school to access their classes and return home as at present;
- that there would be priority for residents on the vehicle-ferry, especially for livestock transportation;
- which vessel would be used for the service;
- who will provide funding for the infrastructure improvements and development.

### ***Reasons for agreement with proposal***

9.12 The main reasons given for agreement with the proposal was that the crossing is much shorter, efficient and cheap to run. There were sometimes comments that passenger numbers travelling to Port Appin are higher than to Oban.

9.13 Residents and others said that a vehicle-ferry on the shorter crossing would give a more reliable and cheaper service. This is of particular importance to those running businesses from the island as well as for residents, especially in relation to the cost of mail order deliveries to and from the island which are seen as prohibitive. Other reasons for agreement included:

- that the proposal would provide a more reliable service than at present, commuters and businesses would benefit along with residents and visitors;
- that there would no longer be a need for islanders to keep two cars, one on the island and one on the mainland;
- that a vehicle-ferry from Port Appin would provide a better service for medical emergencies;
- that a vehicle-ferry would encourage more young people to live on Lismore.

### ***Other comments***

9.14 The need for better, more up to date, vessels was mentioned as were the number of breakdowns or weather-related cancellations on the current services. A regional transport organisation commented: *“to accommodate demand on the route a ‘Loch’ class vessel will be required and the feasibility of cascading such a vessel from within the CMAL owned fleet should be considered a priority”*.

9.15 Other comments, from smaller numbers, included:

- the need for better access and on-board facilities, especially for those in wheelchairs and for medical emergencies;
- the need for integration with public transport services;
- Stronacroibh might be an alternative location for a vehicle port in the north of the island;
- the need for cheaper fares, especially on the Oban route.

## 10 COLL AND TIREE

10.1 The islands of Coll (population 164) and Tiree (population 770) lie to the west of Mull. The ferry service to Oban serves both islands and runs once every day in the summer and four days a week in winter. There has been a Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) pilot in place since 2008 and this will be retained for foot and car passengers; for larger commercial vehicles, this will be replaced by a transitional scheme.

10.2 The proposal for Coll and Tiree is to improve the current service so that it operates for at least six days per week during the winter period. Comments on this proposal were received from 63 respondents; only two were residents of Coll and two were organisations from the Coll and Tiree area.

**Table 10.1: Coll and Tiree - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Coll and Tiree	4	2	2
Other community	39	33	6
Non-resident	16	16	n/a
National remit	4	n/a	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>12</b>

### Key themes

Over half of those who commented voiced support for the proposal to improve the current service for Coll and Tiree.

There were also calls for the re-introduction of a Tobermory service<sup>3</sup> and comments on the need for cheaper fares, especially for freight.

### **Agreement with proposal**

10.3 Over half of the 63 respondents who commented voiced their agreement with the proposal; support was highest from organisations and individuals who are not resident in a ferry community. A local farming/crofting/fishing organisation commented: *“This is very welcome as the winter service is woefully inadequate in terms of both frequency of service and capacity”*. Most of the respondents made very short comments such as ‘good’ or ‘I agree’.

### **Re-introduce the Tobermory service**

10.4 Many of the individuals who commented at this question were residents of Mull and many of these residents, as well as others, wanted to see the service to Tobermory re-instated, or for the ferry to stop at Craignure. Respondents commented this would allow residents to travel between the islands without first having to travel to the mainland. A national transport organisation felt: *“The introduction of a two vessel service from Craignure to Oban may make a standalone service linking Coll and Tiree with Tobermory a proposition worthy of further consideration that would allow a daily service to be achieved”*.

<sup>3</sup> The service used to call in at Tobermory but the introduction of a larger vessel on the route around 15 years ago meant that this was no longer possible; although smaller vessels are now used this has not been reintroduced.

10.5 There were recurring comments that a service to Oban running once a week or more frequently, would be useful for residents, visitors and for visiting services.

### ***The need for cheaper fares***

10.6 There was consistent disappointment with the proposal to replace RET on larger commercial vehicles with a discounted fare<sup>4</sup>. Responses, mainly from organisations and including one from the area, indicated that the commercial RET had provided most benefit to the island through cheaper freight. One health organisation, however, suggested that commercial RET had not been of benefit to consumers.

10.7 The benefits of RET on commercial vehicles was also stressed; increased fares could have serious implications for crofters on the islands, for example: *“RET must be re-introduced on HGVs otherwise crofting will cease to exist (to a large extent) on Tiree, as feeding costs will be so high that it will no longer be profitable rearing stock”* (national farming/crofting/fishing organisation). The importance of retaining the headage payment option and the facility to drop trailers were also stressed.

10.8 If RET cannot be retained then the alternative of a discounted scheme for residents and frequent commercial users was suggested in order to keep down costs of supplies including fuel and food. There were comments on the need for the Plan to include more detail on the discount that would be available and whether this would be guaranteed.

### ***Other comments***

10.9 Comments from the two Coll/Tiree residents included: that cost is more important than frequency; satisfaction with the current service. Comments from the two Coll/Tiree organisations included:

- favourable comments on additional sailings and the need for these to be implemented as soon as possible;
- comments on the high number of cancellations on the service and consequent problems in rebooking, especially when the smaller MV Lord of the Isles replaces MV Clansman in the winter months;
- a need for more capacity and vessels that can operate/dock in bad weather;
- concern that the proposals would not lead to increased sailings because there would still be cancellations due to bad weather;
- the importance of ferry timings; especially for children returning from secondary school for the weekend; a sailing to Coll late on a Friday afternoon and one to Oban on Sunday evening was requested.

10.10 Other comments from respondents included:

- the need for the ferry timetable to be co-ordinated with other ferry timings as well as with public transport;
- that the proposed Argyll Array wind farm may have implications for the service.

---

<sup>4</sup> The proposal for a discounted fare has been replaced with a transitional scheme.

## 11 KERRERA, LUING AND EASDALE ISLAND

11.1 Luing (population 220) and Easdale Island (population 58) in the Inner Hebrides are served by ferry services to Seil, which is connected by a bridge to the mainland. These services are operated by Argyll and Bute Council. Kerrera (population 42) has a private ferry service covering the short distance to Oban and a water-taxi.

11.2 There are no specific proposals for these routes as initial findings by the Scottish Government indicate that these are fit for purpose, meeting most of the communities' needs. Respondents were asked for their views on these findings and 41 respondents commented. This included 19 residents and four organisations from the islands; most of the residents were from Kerrera.

**Table 11.1: Kerrera, Luing and Easdale Island - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Kerrera, Luing and Easdale Island	23	19	4
Oban	3	-	3
Other community	7	3	4
Non-resident	6	6	n/a
National remit	2	n/a	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to Kerrera, Luing and Easdale Island was that the present service does not meet the needs of the Kerrera community.

There were also comments relating to Luing and Easdale Island; many of these mentioned the need to consider fixed links.

### **Kerrera**

11.3 The majority of responses related to the Kerrera service and most of these requested that Kerrera should be recognised as a lifeline service. Residents highlighted the fact that everything they need for their daily lives has to be transported to the island including food, fuel, mail and services. A local business/development organisation commented:

*“The ferry provision to the Island of Kerrera constitutes a ‘lifeline’ ferry service, the residents of Kerrera rely on ferries for employment, education, health and social needs. There are little or no services on the island, no shops, no petrol stations, no banks, no post offices, no health services, no social services and very little employment. Islanders rely on access to the mainland for all their needs, whether they be economic, social, domestic or educational. Without a ferry service the community will cease to exist”.*

11.4 Individuals and organisations said that the current service is not fit for purpose, does not meet the needs of residents and that the Scottish Government should take over responsibility for service provision to the island. There were a number of comments on the problems in accessing the boat especially at low

tide; this is particularly difficult in cases of medical evacuations. One resident said: *“The Kerrera ferry is not fit for purpose as it is a tidal ferry so at low tides we have to scramble over rocks and seaweed to board the ferry”*. Residents especially mentioned the crumbling slipways and the problems this poses especially when landing bulk goods such as animal foodstuffs or building materials. Other comments, mainly from residents, included:

- that ferry times are not suitable for those working on the mainland or for accessing evening events and after school activities; there is no access to the mainland after 6pm;
- that many residents rely on their own boats for access to the mainland;
- no lighting or shelter at either side of the route;
- problems in access to the island for medical and veterinary personnel;
- no access for emergency or utility vehicles in all states of tides;
- livestock cannot be loaded in all states of tides;
- that the ferry is expensive, fares are not set, there are no concessionary fares;
- the need for investment in Kerrera’s infrastructure.

### ***Luing and Easdale Island***

11.5 The main theme in relation to these communities, in responses from individuals and local and national organisations, was that fixed links should be considered for both islands. A local ferry transport group, commenting on a possible fixed link for Luing, said: *“if the unavoidable high cost of a replacement ferry (the new ferry needs to be larger with more crew) and the new slipways is deducted from the cost of a fixed link it becomes a much more attractive proposition with no high annual running costs”*.

11.6 There were various comments on the lack of fitness for purpose of the current vessels, especially in bad weather. The ferry was described as unsafe and there was concern over the safety of school-children using the ferry. In addition, respondents said that farm vehicles are too large for the ferry, that the existing slips need upgraded and that the uncovered evening ferry is not suitable. Other comments in relation to the Luing service included:

- that the timetable is restricted and does not meet the needs of commuters or tourists; conversely that timings do connect well with public transport;
- that the ferry is expensive which discourages tourists, and concern that RET may lead to fare increases on this service;
- the need to continue multi-journey tickets;
- the need for consultation before any change in responsibility;
- that responsibility should remain with the local authority.

11.7 Other comments in relation to the Easdale Island service included:

- that the Easdale Island ferry is not seen as fit for use by the Scottish Ambulance Service or that the service is fit for purpose except in emergencies;
- that the service should be recognised as a lifeline service;
- that the ferry sheds on both side of the route lack facilities and do not help to encourage tourism.

## 12 NORTHERN ISLES

12.1 The Northern Isles encompass the mainlands of Orkney and Shetland; each area also has a number of smaller islands. Orkney has a population of 15,339 on the mainland with 3,906 residents on the outlying islands. Shetland's mainland has 17,575 residents with a further 4,413 on the outlying islands. The Scottish Government has responsibility for the main ferry routes from the Scottish mainland to Orkney and Shetland, while Orkney Islands Council and Shetland Islands Council are responsible for the services from their mainlands to their outlying islands.

12.2 Shetland has one daily service from Lerwick to Aberdeen provided by Serco NorthLink Ferries<sup>5</sup>.

12.3 Orkney has a principal route across the Pentland Firth from Stromness to Scrabster in Caithness provided by Serco NorthLink Ferries. The service between Lerwick and Aberdeen also calls into Kirkwall on every other sailing. There are also a number of privately operated services; Pentland Ferries Ltd operate from St Margaret's Hope to Gills Bay in Caithness and John O'Groats Ferries Ltd operate a summer service from Burwick to John O'Groats

12.4 The proposal for the Northern Isles is to retain a broadly similar level of service (as reflected in the tender process for the Northern Isles contract from 2012 to 2018). Comments were received from 50 respondents, including six residents and nine organisations from the Northern Isles.

**Table 12.1: Northern Isles - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Orkney	6	2	4
Shetland	9	4	5
Other community	21	18	3
Non-resident	7	7	n/a
National remit	6	n/a	6
Unknown	1	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18</b>

### Key themes

Around half of those who commented voiced support for the proposal to retain a broadly similar level of service for the Northern Isles; around a quarter disagreed.

- In relation to Shetland, the main points raised related to the reduction in service during overhaul periods.
- In relation to Orkney, comments focussed on the need to introduce Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).

There were also a number of comments on the ferry contract.

<sup>5</sup> The tender for Scottish Government Northern Isles services has recently been issued and is not due for renewal again until 2018. Serco NorthLink Ferries Ltd assumed control of the Northern Isles ferry services from 5 July 2012.

### ***Support for the proposal***

12.5 Half of the 50 respondents who commented voiced support for the proposal to retain a broadly similar level of service; this included four Orkney organisations but no Orkney or Shetland residents. Responses tended to be very short, for example 'yes please', 'good' or general welcome for the proposal.

### ***Disagreement with the proposal***

12.6 Around a quarter of the 50 who commented disagreed with the proposal to retain a broadly similar level of service. Respondents felt that improvements were needed and various requests were made; these differed between Orkney and Shetland as discussed in the following sections.

12.7 **In relation to Shetland**, the main points raised focussed on the reduction in service during overhaul periods. Respondents felt the Plan should specify that the service should be provided at all times to ensure capacity, especially for freight, during overhaul periods. Other comments, from smaller numbers, included:

- requests for faster sailings;
- a perceived inequality between Shetland and other islands' services and fares;
- that the key dependency table should include livestock, passengers who may need to take a car when air travel is not possible, and tourism;
- a query over why there were no key dependencies listed for the smaller islands in Orkney and Shetland;
- that capacity constraints on passengers and freight affect the social and economic well-being of Shetland; additional capacity for tourists would allow local businesses to invest more;
- a request that cargo vessels be updated and more dependable;
- the need for additional capacity in light of expanding businesses in the area was mentioned by local and national organisations;
- comments on the cost of transporting freight;
- the need for service timings to be more in tune with the needs of businesses, especially for transporting perishable goods and specifically seafood exports;
- that the transfer of ports to Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) would not be welcome and could result in high fare increases and a loss of local accountability;
- that weekly sailings to Bergen could be considered;
- the need to investigate fixed links to the smaller islands.

12.8 **The main comment in relation to Orkney** was the need to introduce Road Equivalent Tariff (RET); while respondents acknowledged that RET on Shetland services could lead to fare increases it was felt that RET should be introduced for the Pentland Firth; the current situation gives the Western Isles advantages over the Northern Isles.

12.9 There was a degree of concern that no output from an assessment of internal island services had been included in the Plan. The Plan states that each island or remote community will have at least one direct ferry route to the Scottish mainland; respondents felt this should apply to the islands in Orkney having a route to the Orkney mainland.

12.10 A national transport organisation commented on unfair competition within the current arrangements, poor value for money in respect of the NorthLink fleet and environmental issues: *“Orkney would arguably be better served by using the shortest possible ferry route, offering highest frequency, and least cost, both financially and environmentally; that is Burwick-Gill's Bay as advocated by Pentland Ferries. [The organisation] has found the Scrabster-Stromness 'lifeline' service to have three times the CO2 emissions per car compared with the short unsubsidised crossing. The Aberdeen-Orkney ferry service has up to 20 times greater CO2 emission per vehicle. Supporting these subsidised services calls into question the Government's carbon reduction strategy”*.

12.11 Individuals mentioned the need for fares to be affordable, others stressed the need for vessels to be accessible for prams and wheelchairs.

***Comments on the contract***

12.12 There were requests from organisations that the start of the next contract date in 2018 be amended to avoid the peak season. Several respondents felt the new contract would provide an opportunity to improve the service and there were suggestions that the operator be encouraged to propose options that add value; there were comments that the proposal for less prescription for the next tender should allow operators to be more innovative.

## 13 SKYE

13.1 The largest island in the Inner Hebrides, the Isle of Skye has a population of 9,232 and is served by a ferry running from Armadale in the south of the island to Mallaig in Lochaber. Skye is also linked to the mainland by a bridge running from Kyleakin on the east coast of the island to Kyle of Lochalsh.

13.2 The proposal for the Skye service is that the current services will remain as they are at present. The winter service will continue to receive a subsidy, while the summer service will receive a minimum subsidy. Comments on this proposal were received from 127 respondents, including 38 residents and six organisations from the Isle of Skye.

**Table 13.1: Skye - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Skye	44	38	6
Mallaig	32	27	5
Highlands and/or islands	3	-	3
Other community	21	15	6
Non-resident	15	15	n/a
National remit	5	n/a	5
Unknown	7	7	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>25</b>

### Key themes

There were a number of identical submissions; these responses called for an improved Mallaig-Armadale service.

The main themes noted in relation to the Isle of Skye were:

- The need to retain the summer subsidy.
- The need for an increased Mallaig-Armadale service.

### ***Mallaig-Armadale service***

13.3 Thirty-four of the 38 Skye residents all submitted the same response. This letter, from residents of Sleat, expressed dismay that there were no proposals for developing and enhancing the Mallaig-Armadale service, a dedicated vessel was requested.

### ***No reduction in the summer subsidy***

13.4 The Sleat respondents, along with others, did not support the proposal to give a minimum subsidy to the summer service. The arguments submitted included the fact that, although it is tourists who mainly benefit from reduced fares, these tourists are vital to the local economy. Any proposal which could affect numbers visiting Skye will have a direct effect on the economy and therefore the residents.

13.5 The main theme to emerge in the Sleat responses, and also in other responses, especially those from Mallaig residents, was the need to retain the current level and prices of service, which respondents described as essential or important for

the community, businesses and individual residents. There was a feeling that the Plan diminishes the importance of this route.

- 13.6 The Mallaig-Armadale route is seen as vital to the local economy and there was occasionally a view, expressed mainly by organisations, that this route is not secondary. It was described as an important stepping stone for the Road to the Isles and comments suggested that an increase in local connectivity could help revitalise other communities such as Eigg and Rum.

*“It is very short-sighted to reduce the subsidy on this route, as this would lead to an increase in fares, a reduction in passenger numbers and then a reduction in the service. Tourism in this area and all Scotland is a huge part of the economy, and to imply that “only tourists” use the Skye Ferry is to dismiss the enormous economic benefit they bring to Scotland. Without the ferry to Skye, Mallaig would suffer severe economic downturn, as 90% of people have tourism as part of their income directly or indirectly. Breaking the connectivity link of the ferries up the west coast would reduce visitor numbers greatly”.*

(Mallaig resident)

- 13.7 The route is also described as being *“of key strategic importance to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture, based in Sleat... As well as its primary academic role, Sabhal Mòr has become a popular year-round venue for conferences and cultural events which contribute significantly to its annual income. The attraction and convenience of the Mallaig-Armadale service is a major factor in facilitating such business”* (other community/local group).

- 13.8 There were also comments that the Skye Bridge is not an alternative for some parts of Skye and that the Mallaig-Armadale route is vital especially for the transportation of goods and freight.

*“The investment in the Road to the Isles – both in the actual road itself and as a marketing concept – has been so great precisely because connectedness is so important for this part of Lochaber. For us the Skye bridge is hardly an alternative from where we are. For us Mallaig/Armadale is more than a secondary route because without it there would be no through traffic at all and through traffic, particularly in the summer, is for many our economic lifeblood”.*

(community council)

- 13.9 Other comments, mainly from organisations, included:

- the need for a detailed consideration of the impact of the subsidy on the Skye economy;
- clarification on the impact of this proposal on fares and frequency;
- concern that the methodology used to determine that the subsidy should be reduced has not been applied consistently across the Plan and a suggestion that this contrasts with the proposal for the Cowal peninsula;

- that most routes have higher revenues and therefore lose subsidies in the summer and so there is little significance for this change on the Mallaig-Armadale route;
- concern that the proposal implies de-bundling of the route.

***The need for an increased service***

13.10 The Sleat respondents, along with others, asked for an increased service. This is important to promote social inclusion for islanders. The removing of the summer subsidy was seen as a barrier to growth of the Mallaig-Armadale route when, respondents argued, its growth should be being encouraged.

13.11 Many of the respondents outwith Sleat commented on the need for an increased, reliable service.

13.12 There were comments, mainly from organisations, pointing out the investment that has been made in the infrastructure, especially the roads from Fort William to Mallaig, and that an increased service would capitalise on this investment.

***Other comments***

13.13 There was welcome for the news that Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) would be introduced but also requests for timescales; there was concern over the removal of commercial vehicles from RET.

13.14 Several organisations pointed out that there is no mention of tourism as a key dependency for Skye in the table of Key Dependencies.

13.15 Respondents, both individual and organisations, stressed that there should be no reduction in service.

*“This service is a popular tourist route which has been a real success and has seen major road infrastructure improvements at either end. We would be concerned by any reduction in the frequency or capacity of this service”.*

(national business/development organisation)

13.16 Around one in ten of the 93 non-Sleat respondents made general positive comments on the proposal that the current operating schedule will continue.

## 14 RAASAY

14.1 Situated between the Isle of Skye and the mainland, Raasay has a population of 194 and is served by a daily service to Sconser on Skye.

14.2 The consultation document highlighted the fact that one of the two new hybrid ferries currently being built for Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) is to be earmarked for the Sconser to Raasay route. There were no proposals put forward for the Raasay service, although the consultation document said that this route would be looked at again in 2013; respondents were asked for their views on these points.

14.3 Comments were received from 15 respondents, including one organisation from Raasay.

**Table 13.1: Raasay - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Raasay	1	-	1
Other community	5	2	3
Non-resident	6	6	n/a
National remit	3	n/a	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>

### Key themes

The main themes noted in relation to Raasay were:

- Welcome for the intention to look again at extending the operating day.
- Welcome for the new vessel.

#### ***Welcome for the intention to look again at extending the operating day***

14.4 There was general welcome for the intention to look again at ways to extend the operating day; this theme was noted in most responses.

#### ***Welcome for the new vessel***

14.5 There was also welcome for the new vessel, from both individuals and organisations. A local authority, a ferry/transport group and a community council all commented that it would be beneficial for sustainable living on Raasay if the timetable can be adjusted to accommodate those working on Skye.

14.6 The community council felt that: *“Such provision may entice working families to become domiciled on Raasay, safeguarding in the longer term the school and local amenities”*.

#### ***Other comments***

14.7 The community council suggested a restructured timetable and submitted a sample timetable; they asked that any additional crew be recruited from the island. Co-ordination with public transport was also seen as important.

## 15 SMALL ISLES

- 15.1 The Small Isles; Eigg (population 67), Rum (population 22), Muck (population 30) and Canna (population 6); are currently served by one vessel. The islands have four or five sailing days in summer and three or four in winter; there are one or two sailings on each of these days.
- 15.2 The proposals for the Small Isles are for a new Sunday service to each island, a Friday/Saturday level of service on more days and at least one day per week where it will be possible to make a meaningful return trip to the mainland. In the longer term, it is hoped that the current single vessel will be replaced with a two vessel service – a passenger and loose freight service on a daily basis to each of the islands, and a roll-on/roll-off service calling at each of the islands one day a week.
- 15.3 Comments on the Small Isles proposals were received from 53 respondents; only three residents and one organisation from the Small Isles commented.

**Table 15.1: Small Isles - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Small Isles	4	3	1
Mallaig	14	11	3
Other community	14	8	6
Non-resident	13	13	n/a
National remit	6	n/a	6
Unknown	2	2	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to the Small Isles, from around half of those who commented, was a positive reaction to the proposals.

There was concern over any reduction to the roll-on/roll-off service.

### **General positive comments**

- 15.4 The main types of comments, from around half of the 53 who commented, were general positive comments on the proposals which were seen as necessary for residents and especially school-children. A regional transport organisation commented: *“This will benefit school-children and better able them to have a return trip home at the weekend and encourage community cohesion and sustainability in the Small Isles. The enhanced timetable will be of benefit to tourists and visitors and encourage the tourist industry on the Small Isles”.*
- 15.5 The proposal was also welcomed for the benefits it would bring to businesses and the economy in encouraging tourists to the islands.

### **Concern over any reduction to the roll-on/roll-off service**

- 15.6 The longer term proposal for a once-per-week roll-on/roll-off service attracted a degree of concern; respondents did not want to see this reduced to a once a week service. Respondents, both individuals and organisations and including

the Small Isles residents who replied, felt this would lead to difficulties. Some responses indicated that this proposal may have been misunderstood as an intention for the ferry to travel to each island on the same day; in fact each island would receive this service on a separate day.

15.7 A Small Isles resident commented on one of the potential issues raised in responses: *“I have concerns about reducing the roll-on/roll-off service to once a week. This would make it even more difficult and expensive to get contractors out to do work on the island if they could only get on/off with their vehicles one day a week”*. Other issues mentioned in responses included:

- particular problems during livestock sales periods;
- that the new slipway was designed for a roll-on/roll-off service and queries over whether it is suitable for a passenger/loose freight vessel;
- query as to which vessel is available for the passenger/loose freight service;
- that a once a week roll-on/roll-off service is not sufficient to meet the freight and service demands of the islands;
- that this proposal will be restrictive and will hamper the economy;
- that consideration needs to be given to the transport of large loads and fuel;
- the need for consultation on this proposal;
- the need for more innovative vessel design or a catamaran to be used;
- that a passenger-ferry would not be suitable for Muck, and especially for ferrying school-children from Muck, due to access difficulties in bad weather.

*“We support the introduction of a daily passenger service but not at the expense of a regular roll-on/roll-off service. Considerable amounts of loose freight are conveyed on the route all in vehicles. Contractors using vehicles need the flexibility of several ro-ro sailings per week”*.

(national ferry company)

### **Other comments**

15.8 Several respondents stressed the need for the passenger vessel to be reliable during bad weather. This included a local ferry/transport group that said: *“In regard to the two ferry proposal there will be a need to ensure that the passenger vessel will be seaworthy in the winter months and that the island residents are able to connect with the mainland during inclement weather”*.

15.9 Other comments included:

- calls for better integration with other ferry services and with public transport;
- that three vessels for a small population does not seem economical;
- that there is already a Sunday service for children;
- a disparity in fares between the islands with Muck being at a disadvantage;
- a query as to how the proposal to allow a day on the mainland can be implemented with the current vessel;
- the need for improvements to food storage at Mallaig for instances when sailings are cancelled because of bad weather;
- concerns over cancellations; these may mean that there are not, in fact, any additional sailings.

## 16 KNOYDART

16.1 The Knoydart peninsula in Lochaber (population 100) has a ferry service to Mallaig five days a week in summer and three in winter. The service is currently provided by a private operator with some public funding from Highland Council. A needs based assessment suggests Knoydart would benefit from additional sailing days; the community was invited to say whether these would be beneficial and well used. Comments were received from 33 respondents, including four Knoydart residents.

**Table 16.1: Knoydart - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Knoydart	4	4	-
Other community	20	14	6
Non-resident	6	6	n/a
National remit	3	n/a	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to Knoydart was that additional sailing days would be beneficial.

#### ***Additional sailing days would be beneficial***

16.2 The main theme emerging from over a third of responses was that, yes, additional sailings would be beneficial; comments were generally very short.

16.3 One submission comprised a collation of 27 responses from Knoydart households; most of which were supportive of additional sailing days.

16.4 Reasons included the expense of overnight stays on the mainland, better mail delivery and/or more opportunities for tourism. Comments also included that a Saturday sailing would be useful to residents as would earlier and later sailings. Some residents asked for a five or six day a week service and/or for a larger ferry. There were also calls for cheaper transportation of goods, for services to more remote parts of the peninsula and for better integration with public transport timings.

16.5 Those who felt the additions would not be beneficial or well used said that they already have a good service. While a small number commented specifically that a roll-on/roll-off service would be beneficial, a similar number saw no need for this.

#### ***Other comments***

16.6 There was a suggestion, from several organisations, that: *“There may be value in exploring the opportunity of developing a Mallaig hub for ferry services that would integrate the Small Isles, Knoydart and Armadale all focussed on Mallaig. This may integrate with the proposed improvement of service for the Small Isles, improve the service to Armadale and provide a better timetable to Knoydart and at the same time improve freight management to both the Small Isles and Knoydart”* (regional transport organisation and others).

## 17 ISLAY AND JURA

- 17.1 Islay, in the Inner Hebrides, has two ferry ports at Port Ellen and Port Askaig; ferry services provide the residents (population 3,457) with a daily service to Kennacraig, near Tarbert on the Kintyre peninsula. In the summer there is also a weekly sailing linking Islay, Colonsay and Oban.
- 17.2 Port Ellen on Islay has recently undergone essential maintenance work. The proposal for Islay and Jura is that following completion of this work, there will be more services from Port Askaig and fewer services from Port Ellen.
- 17.3 Jura (population 188) is served by a shuttle service from Feolin Ferry to Port Askaig provided by Argyll and Bute Council. The proposal for Jura is that residents will be offered no cost fares to Islay if their journey is part of an onward journey to the mainland.
- 17.4 Comments on the proposals for Islay and Jura were noted in 236 responses, including 22 residents from Jura and 126 residents from Islay. In addition, a South Islay organisation submitted a petition opposing fewer sailings from Port Ellen; the hard copy petition contained 497 names while an associated online petition showed 522 signatories.

**Table 17.1: Islay and Jura - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Islay and Jura	2	-	2
Islay	133	126	7
Jura	28	22	6
Kintyre	11	10	1
Other community	9	4	5
Non-resident	41	41	n/a
National remit	6	n/a	6
Unknown	6	6	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>27</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to Islay was disagreement that fewer services should be run from Port Ellen; over half of the responses to this question included comments disagreeing with the proposal.

The main theme noted in relation to Jura was support for running more services from Port Askaig.

### *Islay*

- 17.5 Over half of the 236 respondents disagreed that fewer services should run from Port Ellen; this included three-quarters of the Islay residents.

*“The review acknowledges that Port Ellen is important as a port for malting barley and grain storage. It fails completely to note the importance of the massive use of Port Ellen by tourists from all over the world and many from Scandinavia and North America. Tourism is*

*second only to distilling but in fact employs more people and has attracted much investment and is growing annually. Even the provision of a number of buses to meet the evening ferry at Port Askaig merely consigns travel weary tourists and others to an uncomfortable bus journey, half the year in the dark, that is totally unnecessary”.*

(local tourism/leisure organisation)

*“Port Ellen services should not be reduced as this is a main centre of population, and the closest port for large proportion of the island. Many businesses in the south of the island, (hotels, shops, holiday accommodation, distilleries), would suffer as a result of a reduction. Port Ellen is also a better destination for people arriving via public transport, as there are services close to port”.*

(Islay resident)

17.6 As mentioned above, a South Islay organisation submitted a petition opposing fewer sailings from Port Ellen; the hard copy petition contained 497 names while an associated online petition showed 522 signatories. This organisation, along with other organisations and individuals, highlighted the fact that the south of the island has been identified as fragile with a high number of retired residents. The submission accompanying the petition mentions that the proposal will disadvantage over 1,000 Islay residents.

17.7 Other reasons given by respondents for not supporting this proposal, included:

- that the road and infrastructure at Port Askaig is inadequate;
- the extra cost of travel that will result; more expensive fuel costs;
- that the Islay bus service will not connect with early sailings;
- that the Port Ellen area has more residents than the Port Askaig area;
- that the service at Port Ellen is more convenient, especially for elderly residents;
- that the service at Port Ellen is important to residents and to the economy;
- that the proposal will be bad for the local economy;
- that businesses have already suffered during the work at Port Ellen;
- the need for a social and economic impact study in relation to this proposal;
- the recent, grant aided, development of the Islay Hotel in Port Ellen;
- that the key dependencies outlined for Islay do not include ‘personal’; this does not match the view of residents and local organisations.

17.8 Many respondents queried the reasons for upgrading the pier if it is not to be used, or commented that this will have been a waste of money.

17.9 There was welcome for the recognition of Port Ellen as an important facility for grain delivery and storage as well as comments on its importance for the distilleries on Islay and Jura. Individual responses also commented on the importance of the service to the distilleries and commented on the additional road traffic that would be generated if these businesses have to use Port Askaig.

- 17.10 There were comments, mainly from Islay residents, on the importance of the first and last ferry each day departing from and returning to the same port so that cars can be left and then collected after the return journey.
- 17.11 There were also comments that the service at present meets the needs of the community; some felt that the retention of two ports is essential and that they should be used equally. A national business development organisation said: *“The ferry service now meets the needs of the community with the two ferry services being essential for the Islay-Kennacraig route to accommodate peak season tourist demand and haulage capacity to service the expanding Islay whisky industry”*. Regional transport organisations made similar comments.

### **Jura**

- 17.12 Around one in seven of the 236 who replied voiced support for the proposal to run more services from Port Askaig. This included some residents of Islay but was noted more in responses relating to Jura.

*“I strongly support shift in number of sailings to Port Askaig from Port Ellen for environmental and cost reasons - less use of diesel and shorter, quicker crossing and to protect the very fragile community of Jura. Port Askaig is the most central for all users as well as more economically sustainable. The suggestion that needs of Jura residents do not matter because they are so few is not valid. The community desperately needs to regrow in size and this will not happen without improvement in ferry services”*.

(Jura resident)

- 17.13 A number of Jura residents submitted answers to an alternative questionnaire which asked for their views on the Jura proposal; the themes noted in these have been analysed alongside other responses in this section.
- 17.14 Respondents, especially those from Jura said they support the proposal to offer no cost fares on the current service between Islay and Jura, when this journey is part of an onward journey to the mainland. Many of these respondents, however, said that Jura residents cannot afford to access services on Islay because of ferry costs and felt the no cost fares should always apply.
- 17.15 There were, however, a number of comments that the Plan should not include Islay and Jura together but that they should be treated separately.

*“In Chapter 4, Paragraph 12 it is stated that [The Scottish Government] will ensure that each island or remote peninsula community has at least one direct ferry route to the Scottish mainland’. This commitment has been avoided for Jura by claiming that Jura and Islay are a single island group. This is clearly not true. Jura and Islay are separate islands which are in geographical proximity, but separated by a difficult and dangerous channel where sea conditions regularly prevent travel between the islands while travel to the mainland remains possible. ”*

(local business/development organisation)

17.16 There were also comments, from several Jura residents as well as organisations, that current services are not suitable for the needs of the community. Comments included:

- that it takes Jura residents travelling with a car three hours to reach the mainland;
- that an evaluation of the Feolin Ferry service is required;
- the suggestion that a triangular route with upgrades at Craighouse would allow Jura residents to travel to the mainland without going to Islay;
- that the service to Jura needs to be better publicised in order to attract more tourists to the island;
- that sailing via Port Ellen is very difficult and lengthy, especially for older residents, including a very early start and return, three bus changes and the possible need to take a taxi when returning;
- the high cost of transporting goods to Jura;
- the need for a better vessel to withstand bad weather.

### **Other comments**

17.17 A small number, mainly Islay residents, disagreed with the proposal to offer no cost fares on the current service between Islay and Jura.

17.18 There were a number of queries, from individuals and organisations, as to why the no cost fare should only be offered to Jura and not to other islands. In addition, a national farming/crofting/fishing organisation commented: *“The proposal to allow free travel from Jura to Islay as part of a through mainland journey is welcomed as far as it goes. However, the Scottish Government has removed all bridge tolls, and short crossings such as that to Jura are equivalent to a bridge. Fairness and consistency would require all short ferry crossings to be free of charge”*.

17.19 Other themes included:

- support for the Craighouse-Tayvallich service which respondents wanted to see protected or extended;
- the need to protect residents and frequent travellers from any increase in peak-time fares;
- the need for RET based fares, especially on the leg to Islay, and that the Jura route should be included in the next CHFS tender.

## 18 COLONSAY

- 18.1 Colonsay, situated to the north of Islay, has a population of 113. The ferry to Oban operates six days a week in summer and three in winter. On one day a week in the summer the service operates from Kennacraig on the Kintyre peninsula sailing via Port Askaig, Islay.
- 18.2 The proposals for Colonsay are for: an additional sailing day in the summer; at least one day per week where there is a return sailing between Colonsay and the mainland; and a commitment in the longer-term to work towards more sailing days during the winter.
- 18.3 There were comments on the Colonsay proposals in 46 responses; only one resident and two organisations from Colonsay responded.

**Table 18.1: Colonsay - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Colonsay	3	1	2
Other community	21	15	6
Non-resident	17	17	n/a
National remit	4	n/a	4
Unknown	1	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>12</b>

### Key themes

The main theme in relation to Colonsay, noted in half of the responses to this question, was support for the proposals listed above.

### Support for proposals

- 18.4 Half of the 46 who commented simply voiced support for the proposals overall and there was also support for each of the individual proposals; it was felt that this package will be beneficial to the residents and economy of the island.

*“More sailings in the winter, and in particular the procurement of a more suitable vessel (the MV Isle of Mull being considered wholly unsuitable), would enable sailings to be less effected by adverse weather and therefore increase the flexibility of travel and freight to and from the island”.*

(local business/development organisation)

### Other comments

- 18.5 One organisation, from Colonsay, suggested that the provision of an additional service in the event of cancellation, in order that Colonsay does not have to wait until the next scheduled sailing, would be of more benefit than an increase in winter sailings.
- 18.6 The need to integrate the Colonsay service with other ferry timetables and with public transport was noted in responses from individuals and organisations. Some also mentioned the need to integrate with the air schedules.

18.7 There was sometimes a view that linking services between Kennacraig, Islay, Colonsay and Oban would be beneficial to businesses and tourism.

18.8 A local ferry company commented: *“If the Oban-Craignure service is “unbundled” and operated by two vessels it should be possible to add what is proposed for Colonsay in a cost-effective way i.e. the new bundle would cover Oban-Craignure and Oban-Colonsay”*.

18.9 There were some queries as to which vessel would be used.

18.10 There was some concern over the cost of freight; Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) will not help with this and a reduction in fares for coal, building materials and other bulk freight would be beneficial. The need for a pier to pier service for parcels was also mentioned.

*“In general we feel that reductions in freight costs to the Island would be of far greater value to the Community than an increase in the frequency of sailings”*.

(local business/development organisation)

18.11 There were a number of other comments including various suggestions for other routes or increased frequency of services.

18.12 In addition, one response included the description and design of a new small, fast ferry being planned which could bring employment to the island and to Luig where it would be built.

## 19 GIGHA

19.1 Gigha (population 110) is situated off the west coast of Kintyre; the ferry service to Tayinloan on the Kintyre peninsula runs seven days per week. On most days the ferry runs from fairly early in the morning to mid-evening. The proposal for Gigha is to extend the operating day by constructing a berthing facility on Gigha at Ardmish. Comments were received from 33 respondents; no responses were noted from Gigha residents or organisations.

**Table 19.1: Gigha - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Gigha	0	0	0
Kintyre	10	7	3
Other community	6	3	3
Non-resident	12	12	n/a
National remit	4	n/a	4
Unknown	1	1	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>

### Key themes

The main theme, noted in almost all responses in relation Gigha, was support for the proposal to extend the operating day.

### **Support for the proposal**

19.2 Almost all of the 33 responses included comments supporting an extension to the operating day. A local tourism/leisure organisation noted: *“It is very important that later crossings are added to the service, this would allow tourists and visitors to use the facilities on Gigha i.e. to have a meal and still return the same evening. It is also important for foot passengers as children from the island have difficulty taking part in local events i.e. Junior School quiz and Music Festival in Campbeltown. They cannot at present return home in the evening, thus incurring quite considerable expense”.*

### **Other comments**

19.3 Other comments included:

- the need to improve berthing facilities at Tayinloan;
- the need for co-ordination with air and bus services;  
the need for alternative arrangements when the service stops to accommodate crew lunch-breaks;
- that the requirement to give advance notification to hold the ferry to connect with local air services to Glasgow for hospital patients is not always feasible;
- queries over the need for the proposed changes or whether the level of investment is justified;
- acknowledgement that funding is required medium to long term and requests for more detail on funding and timescales;
- could ticket books be changed to allow multiple passengers or vehicles, there could be a nominated vehicle/passenger system to prevent misuse;
- a need for clarification on the impact of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET).

## 20 KINTYRE

20.1 The Kintyre peninsula has a population of around 10,000 including 5,100 in the largest town, Campbeltown, and 1,338 in Tarbert. A daily ferry service, from 8am to around 8pm, links Tarbert with Portavadie on the Cowal peninsula.

20.2 The proposal for Kintyre is to retain the Tarbert to Portavadie service as is and to consider introducing a vehicle service between Campbeltown and the Scottish mainland (for example Ardrossan or Troon). Respondents were asked for their views on whether such a service would be well used. Comments were received from 136 respondents, including 37 residents and nine organisations from Kintyre.

**Table 20.1: Kintyre - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Kintyre	46	37	9
Islay and Jura	10	9	1
Other community	26	16	10
Non-resident	34	34	n/a
National remit	6	n/a	6
Unknown	14	12	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>28</b>

### Key themes

The main theme noted in relation to Kintyre was support for the proposals; over half of respondents commenting on the Kintyre services voiced support for the proposals.

There were also comments on the importance of the Claonaig-Lochranza service.

### **Support for the proposals**

20.3 Over half of the 136 respondents who commented on the Kintyre proposals voiced support for retaining the Kintyre to Portavadie service as is and for a vehicle service between Campbeltown and the Scottish mainland (for example Troon) one or two days per week; there was little disagreement.

*“The operation between Troon and Campbeltown is an exciting thought, it will open up the area here for tourism and enable people here to get to the mainland, a much better trek than four hours up the road on a bus”*

(Campbeltown resident)

20.4 Respondents felt that this service would have a number of benefits including reducing heavy vehicles on the A83. As well as benefitting local residents, the proposal would also boost visitor numbers which, respondents commented, have dropped because of high fuel costs and poor roads. Again, in relation to high fuel costs, the service would be beneficial to local businesses and to residents as it would reduce transportation costs.

20.5 Fourteen of the responses regarding Kintyre contained the same text; 11 individuals and three organisations submitted text supporting a frequent

Campbeltown-Troon service. These submissions also voiced support for the Claonaig-Lochranza service and the Tarbert-Portavadie proposal.

20.6 A number of other respondents, especially Kintyre residents and organisations, requested that the Campbeltown-Troon service be a daily service.

20.7 Organisations and individuals described the Tarbert-Portavadie service as vital, especially when the A83 is closed at the Rest and be Thankful.

*“The route provides an alternative to the local road network and offers resilience in the event of trunk road closures such as those witnessed on the A83 in recent years due to landslides”.*

(regional transport organisation)

### ***The importance of the Claonaig-Lochranza service***

20.8 As mentioned in the chapter relating to Arran services, the Plan proposes that services between Claonaig to Lochranza would be reviewed following changes to the Ardrossan to Brodick service.

20.9 The Claonaig to Lochranza service links Kintyre and Arran and a number of individuals and organisations once again stressed the importance of this route to Kintyre for business and tourism; comments on this subject were noted in around a quarter of responses. A local tourist organisation commented on the importance for visitors: *“Many walkers arrive [for the Kintyre Way] via the Lochranza to Claonaig ferry link and one of the frequently asked questions is ‘do the ferries run all year round from Lochranza to Claonaig?’ Unfortunately the answer is no”.*

20.10 There were also comments that any Campbeltown-Troon service should not be at the expense of the Claonaig to Lochranza service.

### ***Other comments***

20.11 Other comments, from smaller numbers, included:

- requests for the early introduction of RET;
- that consideration should be given to extending the service to include Ballycastle, Northern Ireland;
- the need to co-ordinate with other ferry sailings;
- that Ardrossan would be more suitable than Troon;
- that whether Ardrossan or Troon is chosen, investment will be required to ensure resilience and reliable service;
- that the winter sailing from Tarbert to Arran should continue to provide for the school run and for commuters; a larger vessel on this route is required;
- that there is little value in a Brodick-Campbeltown route;
- that a Brodick-Campbeltown route could be tried on a limited basis using the additional Arran vessel during quieter periods;
- the need for more consultation and detail on the Campbeltown-Troon proposal;
- that the possibility of including a freight service should be considered.

## 21 WESTERN ISLES

- 21.1 The Draft Plan contains no specific proposals for Lewis and Harris, which has ferry services to Berneray, to Skye and to Ullapool. Few responses were received from residents or organisations of this, Scotland's largest, island.
- 21.2 There are no specific proposals in the Draft Plan for the Uists or Benbecula. However, more responses in relation to Western Isles services were received from residents and organisations of these islands than from other areas.
- 21.3 North Uist has a population of 1,320. A ferry service runs from Lochmaddy to Uig on Skye and causeways link North Uist to Benbecula, Berneray and Baleshare. Benbecula lies between North Uist and South Uist and has a population of 1,249; residents use the North and South Uist ferry services.
- 21.4 South Uist, with a population of 1,818, has a triangular service from Lochboisdale to Oban, which is shared with Barra. It is linked to Eriskay and Benbecula by causeways. The focus of many responses in this section related to South Uist ferry services.
- 21.5 Barra (population 1,078) has a mainland service from Castlebay to Oban (shared in the main with Lochboisdale on South Uist) and a service linking Barra and South Uist through the Sound of Barra.
- 21.6 The proposal for Barra is to work towards an improved winter service for the Castlebay to Oban route if and when new vessels on other routes are available to free up existing vessels; these could then be used to increase Barra's service to at least five days a week in winter.
- 21.7 In addition to the 210 consultation responses commenting on Western Isles services, a campaign proforma calling for a Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service was submitted by 636 individuals. This included 513 from the Uists or Benbecula; ten from other islands; 99 from the Scottish mainland; 11 from outside Scotland and three unknown.

**Table 21.1: Western Isles - Respondents**

Location	Total	Individuals	Organisations
Lewis and Harris	9	4	5
Uists and Benbecula	65	45	20
Barra	29	27	2
Western Isles	3	-	3
Mallaig	15	11	4
Other community	30	18	12
Non-resident	26	26	n/a
National remit	6	n/a	6
Unknown	27	27	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>52</b>

## Key themes

The main themes noted in relation to the Western Isles were:

- The need for a Mallaig-Lochboisdale service; this theme was noted in around half of the responses to this question as well as the campaign responses.
- Support for the proposal to work towards an improved winter service for Barra.

### ***Mallaig-Lochboisdale service***

- 21.8 Around half of the 210 respondents who commented on the Western Isles wanted to see a Mallaig to Lochboisdale ferry; support for this service was highest among residents and organisations from the Uists and Benbecula.
- 21.9 Comments supporting this view included that it is a shorter trip and that it is a better service regardless of weather conditions. There were also comments on the benefits this service would provide in terms of tourism and the economy. There was support for the undertaking in the consultation document to ‘further consider the economic viability’ of this route, and calls for this to be done as a matter of urgency.
- 21.10 Concern over the way the Scottish Ferries Review Household Survey addressed this route was expressed by one community council: *“It appears that you only asked if people were dissatisfied with Oban as their mainland port. This doesn’t really explain the possibilities of a further choice to Mallaig and further to Fort William”*.
- 21.11 Another community council said: *“Communities in both Mallaig and Lochboisdale were under the impression that this convincing argument had been accepted and are both surprised and deeply disappointed that it has suddenly been side-lined. The Mallaig/Lochboisdale option surely holds up in an argument as the shorter crossing would result in a quicker more economical service with fewer emissions - better all round. With the £23 million pound upgrade from single carriageway with passing places to two lane trunk road that the A830 - Road to the Isles - has undergone in recent years travelling this route has become quicker and safer and it would be a waste not to encourage extra business to this area”*.
- 21.12 The benefits for other areas were also outlined by some, especially local, organisations; this could include a joint tourism strategy with other island groups. A community council commented on the benefits of a *“collaborative, connected, integrated system”* of services, including a Lochboisdale-Mallaig route, which would benefit many island communities.
- 21.13 As mentioned above, a campaign proforma calling for a Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service was submitted by 636 individuals. While 593 simply submitted the proforma or the text from the document, 43 added to the standard text; these mainly detailed their own circumstances and experiences of ferry travel.
- 21.14 The campaign text states that a Lochboisdale-Mallaig service is necessary to economic development for South Uist and for the Southern Isles. It also

mentions that this is a shorter crossing and adds that adding this service would ease pressure on the Lochmaddy-Uig route, especially in the summer.

21.15 A smaller campaign response came from 13 organisations from the Uists and Benbecula; these responses also supported a Lochboisdale-Mallaig service. The core text outlined the shorter distance and mentioned: benefits for exporting and importing; increased travel options; better social inclusion; easier access for students to the Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and other educational establishments; benefits for tourism; and that this service would provide a more sheltered, reliable crossing.

21.16 A number of other organisations who submitted their own consultation responses also expressed support for this service; these included suggestions that a detailed assessment of the needs of the Uists and Benbecula and the economic benefits of different options should be carried out or that a summer season could be piloted on this route.

21.17 A small number of respondents said this route is not required.

### **Support for an improved service for Barra**

21.18 Over one in five of those who commented said that they agree with the proposal to work towards an improved winter service for Barra. Many of these respondents commented that up-grading the Barra service would be beneficial, others said that Barra should be the primary route.

*“An increase in sailings winter and summer to the Sound of Barra ferry would do much to improve inter-island relations and business”.*

(community council)

21.19 Reasons given for support for a more frequent Barra-Oban service included that the winter service does not meet the needs of the community. For example:

*“The Barra service especially during the winter months does not meet the needs of the community. As the Islanders are dependent on this service for the supply of fresh food it is unfathomable that when boats are disrupted due to weather or other reasons, that additional sailings are not provided at the earliest opportunity to ensure that essential supplies are maintained. For three months of the winter the service is provided using a smaller slower and less stable vessel resulting in a longer and often uncomfortable journey, even for the most seasoned travellers, at a time of year when the weather is at its worst”.*

(Barra resident)

21.20 There were various requests as to the level of service that should be provided on this route: some respondents wanted to see additional sailings in the winter; others wanted daily sailings in the summer.

21.21 There were also calls for the Clansman ferry to be dedicated to the Barra route (and based in Barra). A local ferry/transport group said: *“This is the only route in the Western Isles where the ferry serving the community is not based in*

*the community*". Others suggested a dedicated boat for the summer service as it does not currently have enough vehicular capacity.

21.22 There were expressions of concern over the length of the journey when Coll and Tiree are added to the route in the summer months and there were other comments that the current timetabling does not fit the needs of residents.

### **Other comments**

21.23 Other comments on the Western Isles services came mainly from organisations and these included support for the designation of the Uig-Lochmaddy service as the principal route; a community council mentioned the benefits of this link to residents and businesses on Skye. Another community council explained: *"The reasoned logic to this is the distance, journey times and costs being the most important factors to travellers, both locals and tourists. This together with the fact that the majority of haulage firms have a base in Inverness and the main haulier to the Uists has recently built a new depot in Lochmaddy"*. There were calls for a dedicated ferry on this route.

21.24 The importance of the Uig-Lochmaddy-Tarbert triangle was stressed by several organisations; one national ferry company also commented that this should not be designated as a secondary route. A local authority felt this route should be monitored to ensure adequate capacity and that investment was needed in facilities at the Uig terminal. A community council felt that there should be separate Uig-Tarbert and Uig-Lochmaddy services.

21.25 However, there was also a small degree of concern that any designations could lead to one service being seen as more valuable than another in times of financial pressure.

21.26 The lack of early morning sailings on the Lochmaddy route was seen as a barrier to development of the seafood processing sector; a lack of carrying capacity, especially at short notice, was also an issue.

21.27 There was support for extending the hours of operation on the Sound of Harris service, which was described by some as reliable and less prone to cancellations than other routes. However, a Lewis resident commented: *"There seems to be no mention of the level of service for the Sound of Harris and Sound of Barra. The Sound of Harris is very inadequate, especially in winter and with it being adversely affected by low tides. The route and the operation of this service needs to be reviewed, not ignored"*.

21.28 In relation to the Stornoway-Ullapool route, the current service, especially for freight, is not seen as 'fit for purpose'; reduced crossing times are required. There was some concern that, as yet, no announcement has been made on the contract to procure a larger replacement for the MV Isle of Lewis<sup>6</sup>. A number of organisations commented that the MV Muirneag will soon be unviable and in need of replacement but that two separate vessels will still be required and not simply one larger replacement to cover both.

---

<sup>6</sup> An announcement was made after the consultation closed; the new vessel is scheduled to be delivered in June 2014.

21.29 Removing RET from commercial vehicles was viewed as a potentially negative proposal for the Western Isles. A community council, also commenting on this issue, said their concerns: *“are primarily the removal of RET for commercial vehicles on the Western Isles routes and the detrimental impact this will have on all resident and trading in the Western Isles. The [organisation] is also concerned about the lack of information regarding the provision of a new vessel on the Ullapool-Stornoway route, following the decommissioning of the MV Muirneag in 2013”*.

21.30 There was also support for the proposed Highlands and Islands Enterprise study to identify the potential economic impacts of a new vessel to serve routes in the Western Isles, Colonsay, Coll and Tiree.

## 22 OTHER COMMENTS

22.1 The final question in the consultation invited respondents to provide any other comments they had on the content of the Draft Plan and 259 respondents did so, this included 181 individuals and 78 organisations.

22.2 A number of responses did not address any of the route-specific sections and only included comments under this section. In addition, many organisations, especially larger or national organisations, included lengthy and/or detailed comments in relation to the issues discussed below.

### Key themes

The main themes noted within this section were general comments, including reiteration of comments made in relation to routes and services, and comments on:

- funding, procurement and tendering;
- fares;
- Road Equivalent Tariff (RET);
- responsibility;
- accessibility;
- environmental issues.

### General comments

22.3 Around one in five of those who commented took the opportunity to reiterate comments they had made earlier at specific questions relating to individual proposals. There were additional comments about local proposals that typically reinforced the views expressed at earlier questions. A vast majority of comments reiterating and reinforcing views on specific proposals came from individuals.

22.4 There were general comments in support of the Draft Plan as presented, as well as positive comments on the consultation process itself. Conversely, other respondents included criticism of either the Draft Plan or the consultation process.

22.5 The main themes emerging in terms of broad-brush criticism of the plans related to a perceived lack of data or detailed information, queries relating to the accuracy of statements made within the plans and dissatisfaction over the timing of the consultation or overall length of time taken to reach final plans. There were comments that the Plan is equivocal or evasive given preceding work and the time already committed.

22.6 The main themes in terms of broad-brush praise related to the commitment “*to changing and improving ferry services so that they can continue to contribute to the economic development of our fragile island and remote rural communities*”. There were also comments acknowledging the funding challenges going forward, although some criticisms were made of the Draft Plan for over-emphasis on cost-cutting and keeping investment to a minimum.

- 22.7 Offers of help, advice and joined up working were included with other comments from organisations, particularly transport operators and local authorities.
- 22.8 Another recurring theme in other comments related to the importance of ferries as enablers of growth and economic development. This was reflected in suggestions that “ferry services” or “all ferry services” must be supported.

*“It is important that these economic challenges and opportunities for island and peninsular communities are recognised in planning of ferry services, and that overall ferries policy supports the goal of sustainable economic growth in every part of the region”.*

(NDPB/other Government body)

- 22.9 There were comments that the importance of ferry services to tourism means there should be unified marketing of ferry services, regardless of any restructuring or unbundling of routes.
- 22.10 There was a recurrent mention of the need for quick, quicker or urgent action to implement changes and bring benefits as soon as possible.
- 22.11 One of the main points reiterated, by individuals and organisations alike, highlighted the need for integration and co-ordination of ferry services with rail and road public transport services. Some of these comments related to specific local challenges; most were more broadly based and reflected a wish to meet the needs of wide-ranging audiences from commuters to visitors, island-hoppers to business travellers.
- 22.12 A number of respondents acknowledged and welcomed the fact that Transport Scotland is *“looking to ensure that our ferry operators work with other transport providers to encourage integrated ticketing and better timetabling”*.
- 22.13 Key themes relating specifically to funding, procurement and tendering, fares, Road Equivalent Tariff (RET), responsibility for ferry services, accessibility and environmental issues are detailed in the following sections of this chapter.

### ***Funding, Procurement and Tendering***

- 22.14 Around one in seven respondents offering other comments referred to funding. These respondents were more likely to be responding on behalf of organisations with very few individuals offering comment on this issue.
- 22.15 There were recurrent comments that the absence of a defined level of funding needed over the period of the Ferries Plan makes it difficult to respond to the consultation. While a number of respondents recognised that the outcome of the consultation and determination of services will enable the investment level to be defined; others would like a full range of costed options from which they can form opinions.
- 22.16 There were questions over the role and timing of STAG type appraisals; the absence of final STAG appraisals at this stage was viewed by some respondents as an omission.

*“The affordability and feasibility of new operating times and routes proposed have not been properly addressed in the Draft Plan and we would have liked to have seen STAG appraisals included. Along with proposals as to how new vessels will be procured and the timescales for their procurement we hope that full STAG appraisals will be part of the final Ferries Plan”.*

(national business/development organisation)

22.17 There were recurrent comments that the kind of ferry service to be funded is best influenced and determined by the individual communities affected.

22.18 Opinions were varied and wide-ranging and contradictory themes emerged in relation to funding options. The most consistent theme was the importance of making investment to encourage economic expansion and protect communities. There were also comments reinforcing the need for additional funding and additional sources of funding:

- support for opening the market to greater competition, either on all routes or viable routes;
- the need to find ways for Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL) to be allowed to borrow from sources other than the Scottish Government;
- suggestions that the borrowing powers of local authorities or regional transport partnerships might provide a pragmatic solution to raising loans for new ferries and infrastructure;
- welcome for the concept of future procurement looking to social enterprises and a perception of this as a high potential sector with a great deal to offer;
- a view, expressed strongly, that no user groups should subsidise others.

22.19 Occasionally, concerns were expressed that changes to harbour dues could mitigate opening up competition at the tender stage.

22.20 A number of comments supported the concept of exploring with local authorities the possibility of a transfer of responsibility regarding ports and harbours; the need for further on-going consultation was noted, as was the need for exceptions to any transfer. Possible benefits included cost efficiency and opportunities for new revenue streams.

22.21 There were comments strongly supporting the idea of less prescriptive specification at the tender stage; equally there were comments expressing concerns that operators will “cherry pick” to an overall detrimental effect. Related to this point, a number of respondents strongly advocated the ‘unbundling of routes’ whilst others were opposed to any unbundling and expressed the view that it is essential for routes to remain bundled.

22.22 There was a view that collective procurement would better facilitate operation of services in a flexible way, to take account of seasonal changes in demand and allocate resources accordingly.

22.23 A number of themes were evident in relation to conditions of tendering and procurement, as follows:

- conditions of tendering should include commitment to sail and/or alternative provisions when there are disruptions to ferry services due to, for example, weather conditions;
- operators should be required to provide and publish punctuality information;
- there should be a requirement to improve on-board experience through improvement of quality standards;
- there should be key performance indicators (KPIs); an obligation to publish outcomes and/or regular reviews should be a component;
- that bidders should be able to propose their own optimal ship solutions rather than having to use CMAL vessels.

22.24 There were comments supporting the suggestion of longer contracts than the European Commission's preferred maximum of six years.

*"We also note that extended ferry services contract lengths are being considered, and look forward to progress being made so that operators can have a longer window for investing in customer service improvements and developing their staff".*

(national ferry company)

### **Fares**

22.25 Around one in six respondents providing other comments made reference to fares. Comments came predominantly from organisations. A key theme in relation to fares was a belief that fairness is important, with comments that fare structures should be the same for all islands. A second key theme emerging from other comments regarding fares was that simple fares/tariffs are needed.

22.26 Inevitably, many comments relating to fares were linked to comments regarding RET, the timing of proposed changes and the management of interim arrangements.

22.27 Other key themes relating to fares included:

- A need for multi-journey tickets to continue to be available; comments included reference to both multi-route tourist-type tickets and, for example, single route commuter-type tickets. The latter was thought helpful to locals in the case of a demand management approach.

*"The value of multiple journey ticketing should not be lost in any moves towards RET. Tickets such as the Island Hopscotch and Island Rover are useful for marketing routes and services. We believe that an opportunity will still exist for the products that are already available and for new products to be introduced".*

(regional transport organisation)

- That future increases in fares should be no more than inflationary or that care should be taken in establishing criteria for annual fare reviews.

- That structures comparable to other mainland pricing should be considered, for example in relation to concessions.

*“Consideration should be given to extending this (current) entitlement to cover all ferry services in Scotland, in recognition that ferry services provide an equivalent function to local buses and long distance coach services. Such a change would provide the opportunity to unify the concessions that apply across ferry services, with the outcome that residents in all areas of Scotland with ferry services are afforded the same concessions, as is the case with bus/coach services”.*

(regional transport organisation)

- For those respondents fundamentally opposed to RET, single fare journeys should not be based on the RET principle.

22.28 Comments relating to a demand management approach specifically included the following themes:

- broader travel constraints may limit passengers’ ability to choose their time of journey;
- care should be taken to avoid overly complex fare structures;
- the overall effect should result in neutral costs to island economies e.g. increased peak fares should be matched by decreased off-peak fares.

### **Road Equivalent Tariff (RET)**

22.29 Around one in four respondents making other comments mentioned RET. Comments came from both individuals and organisations.

22.30 There were comments provided both in support of RET and its consistent application and in total opposition of the RET principles.

22.31 Respondents expressed concerns at the delay in introducing RET on some routes and would encourage earlier introduction; there were comments that this is effectively discrimination against areas not benefitting from RET whilst others already do so.

22.32 A common theme on the specific details related to the need to retain RET for commercial vehicles; respondents generally linked this to sometimes poor and expensive freight services increasing the cost of living for islanders:

- there were comments both in support of, and disagreement with, the increase in commercial vehicle definition;
- there was also the suggestion that RET should differentiate by vehicle size in all cases.

22.33 There was some comment that RET is not, in reality, a road equivalent tariff and is therefore a misnomer.

## **Responsibility**

22.34 Around one in fifteen respondents making other comments specifically mentioned responsibility. These comments came predominantly from organisations.

22.35 Key themes in relation to responsibility included:

- support for the Scottish Government being responsible for all 'lifeline services'; there were, however, concerns over the definition of 'lifeline';
- that CMAL should manage 'lifeline' ports;
- that all responsibility should be within the public sector;
- a degree of support for the idea of a regulator and also some comment that this is unnecessary; others saw this as necessary if there is any move towards privatisation of Caledonian MacBrayne (CalMac) services. The need for consultation on the role and influence of a Ferries Regulator was noted;
- while there was some interest in the idea of a local authority taking over responsibility for ferry services currently the responsibility of Scottish Government, there was also comment that more information would be needed on this proposal.

## **Accessibility**

22.36 Just under one in ten respondents making other comments included reference to accessibility. These comments came predominantly from organisations and in particular ferry and transport groups.

22.37 Many of the comments included support and approval of the proposals included in the Draft Plan.

22.38 Key themes emerging, in addition to overall support for proposals, included:

- a need for more attention to specific disability groups, for example, Deaf, Deafblind, Learning Disabled or Mobility Disabled;
- a suggestion of free travel for the disabled;
- comment on poor reliability of timetabling information placing particular unnecessary burden on the disabled.

## **Environmental Issues**

22.39 Just under one in ten respondents making other comments included reference to environmental issues. These comments came predominantly from organisations and particularly ferry and transport groups as well as local authorities.

22.40 General broad-brush themes related to concerns at environmental impacts either locally or generally and suggestions of the need for more thorough and detailed environmental impact assessments. There was support for elements of the plans which mitigate against environmental impacts.

22.41 A number of respondents rejected the implementation of lower vessel speeds or commented positively on the Scottish Government's decision not to propose imposing emission reductions through reducing vessel speed. Others

highlighted this as an area of significant impact in meeting climate change targets and consider it an omission.

22.42 More specific key themes relating to environmental issues included:

- a need to consider the environmental impacts of vehicles using the ferries; linked to this a suggestion for encouraging introduction of car clubs and other mobility clubs to reduce the number of vehicles using ferries;
- concerns about the negative environmental impacts of increasing numbers of visitors to the islands;
- support for improvements to vessel efficiency;
- support for commitment to innovative vessel types;
- support for alternative fuel development.

22.43 Comments were provided on the separate Environmental Report by a small number of organisations. Key themes not noted elsewhere related to:

- sea-level rise and storm-surge projections being relevant yet climate change adaptation being screened-out in the SEA report;
- support for specified mitigation strategies;
- no mitigation in the case of possible impact on cetaceans;
- limited reference to interaction of changed ferry services with other activities and developments in proximity to the same parts of Scotland's marine environment.

### ***Other themes***

22.44 The following list is not exhaustive but summarises key themes not covered in other sections of this chapter:

- that tourists are being prioritised over locals in these plans and, conversely, that not enough attention is being given to tourism within the Draft Plan;
- that some tourist/visitor services should be considered 'lifeline';
- that the Draft Plan does not address the role of ferry operators as employers;
- comments on lack of information regarding emergency or "out of hours" services;
- that the Final Ferries Plan should address the issues of vessel reliability and network resilience.

## 23 SUMMARY

### **Responses**

- 23.1 There were 2,051 responses to the consultation; this included 1,415 separate consultation responses (1,213 from individuals and 202 from organisations) and 636 submissions of a campaign proforma calling for a Lochboisdale-Mallaig ferry service. There was also a large petition opposing fewer sailings from Port Ellen.
- 23.2 The community sections of the consultation attracted varying responses in terms of numbers and depth. The numbers responding were more related to the strength of feeling on, and perceived impact of, proposals than to the size of the respective community.
- 23.3 The proposals which received the largest numbers of responses were Mull, Islay/Jura and the Western Isles. In terms of proportion of the community responding, the largest responses came from Kerrera, Lismore and Jura.

### **Submissions**

- 23.4 The numbers responding to each of the questions were, on the whole, fairly small and that should be borne in mind when looking at the findings from this consultation exercise.
- 23.5 Generally speaking, where respondents were supportive of proposals responses were fairly short. Where respondents had concerns, responses tended to be much lengthier with more detail.
- 23.6 There was little difference across respondent sub-groups; rather than differences between organisations and individuals, types of organisation, or frequency of ferry use; the main differences noted related to location.

### **Proposals**

- 23.7 Proposals which, on the whole, attracted supportive comments related to the following routes:
- Ardrossan-Brodick (Arran)
  - Cumbrae
  - Craignure to Oban (Mull)
  - Iona
  - Corran Ferry (Ardnamurchan/Morvern)
  - Coll and Tiree
  - Raasay
  - Knoydart
  - Colonsay
  - No cost fares for Jura residents to Islay as part of onward journey (Islay/Jura)
  - Gigha
  - Kintyre
  - Barra (Western Isles)

23.8 Proposals which caused concern to respondents included:

- Claonaig-Lochranza (Arran and Kintyre)
- Dunoon-Gourock (Cowal peninsula/Dunoon)
- Tobermory-Kilchoan (Mull)
- Fishnish-Lochaline (Mull)
- Kerrera, Luing and Easdale Island (especially Kerrera)
- Mallaig-Armadale (Skye)

23.9 Proposals where there was a mixed response included:

- Colintrave-Rhubodach (Bute)
- Port Appin-Point (Lismore)
- Northern Isles
- Small Isles
- Fewer services from Port Ellen/More services from Port Askaig (Islay/Jura)

23.10 Proposals which, respondents felt, were omitted from the Draft Plan were:

- Extending the Wemyss Bay-Rothesay service (Bute)
- Reinstating a service to Tobermory (Coll and Tiree)
- The needs of inter-island services (Northern Isles)
- A Mallaig-Lochboisdale service (Western Isles)

### ***Recurring themes***

23.11 There were a number of themes running through responses; these were noted across respondent types and in relation to many or all of the routes. These included:

- The importance of ferries to economic growth, including tourism.
- The importance of ferries for social inclusion.
- Problems for ill, older or disabled people accessing and travelling on ferries.
- The importance of 'lifeline' services.
- The need to co-ordinate timings with bus, train, air and other ferry services.
- Concern over the fitness of vessels on some routes and the need for the most appropriate type of vessel for each route.
- The need to consider the fitness of the current infrastructure and the future impact of proposals on infrastructure, especially roads.
- A need for infrastructure development or maintenance; especially ports and harbours.
- The need for more consideration to be given to fixed links.
- Concern over the introduction of RET, or how and when RET will be introduced.
- Concern over freight costs and fares.
- Comments that the methodology used to determine route classifications and other details is inconsistent and that some services or locations have been treated differently from others.
- The need for more details or data in relation to aspects of the Ferries Plan, including funding and timescales.
- The need for more or better consultation with residents and other stakeholders.

## **APPENDIX**

## APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ORGANISATIONS

### Company name

Adelphi Distillery  
Age Scotland  
Appin Community Council  
Aquasky Ltd  
ARC Services  
Ardmamurchan Tourism Association  
Ardnamurchan Campsite  
Argyll and Bute Council  
Argyll Ferry User Group  
Arisaig and District Community Council  
Arran Branch NFU  
Arran Community and Voluntary Service  
Arran Community Council  
Arran Medical Group  
ASCC  
Askernish Golf Club  
ATCO Scotland  
Auchrannie Leisure Limited  
Benbecula Community Council  
Borve Guest House  
British Marine Federation Scotland  
Broadford and Strath Community Council  
Bute & Cowal Vets  
Bute Community Council  
Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL)  
Capability Scotland  
Carplus  
Carradale Golf Club  
Castlebay and Vatersay Community Council  
CBI Scotland  
Ceann Na Pairc Guest House  
Ceolas Uibhist Ltd  
Clan Darroch Ltd  
Clyde Ferry User Group  
Coll Community Council  
Colonsay Community Development Company  
Colonsay Local Development Officers  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
Community Land Scotland  
Community response for the Island of Kerrera  
David MacBrayne Limited  
Destination Skye and Lochalsh  
Dune Cottage self-catering  
Dunoon Community Council

Dunoon Gourock Ferry Action Group  
Easdale Island Residents' & Property Owners' Association (EIRPOA)  
Eilean Eisdal  
Far View Campsite  
Federation of Small Businesses Scotland  
Fixed Link Action Group  
Freight Transport Association  
Glasgow Jura Association  
Grand View Self Catering  
Hebrides Ferry User Group  
Hebrides Holiday Cottage  
Highland Council  
Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)  
Historic Scotland  
HITRANS  
Holiday Mull & Iona  
Hotel  
Iona Community  
Iona Community Council  
Islay & Jura Branch NFUS  
Islay and Jura Ferry Company  
Islay and Jura Transport Forum  
Islay Crab Exports Ltd  
Islay Ferry Company Limited  
Islay Ferry Users Group  
Islay Hotel  
Isle of Arran Ferry Committee  
Isle of Barra Transportation Committee  
Isle of Bute Community  
Isle of Jura Development Trust  
Isle of Kerrera Development Trust  
Isle of Mull Ferry Company Ltd  
Jura Care Centre Group  
Jura Community Council  
Jura fine Foods Ltd  
Kildalton and OA Promotions  
Kintyre Development Company Limited  
Laing Motors Limited  
Lerwick Port Authority  
Lews Castle College  
Linnhe View B & B  
Lismore Community Council  
Live on the Edge  
Loch Fyne Gallery  
Lochaber Skye Small Isles and Raasay Ferry User Group  
Lochaber Transport Forum  
Lochboisdale Community Council

Lochboisdale Hotel  
Long and Winding Way Co Ltd  
Luing Community Council  
Machrie Golf Links  
Mallaig Community Council  
Mallaig Harbour Authority  
Marine Harvest Scotland  
Mid Argyll Chamber of Commerce  
Milligan Transport Ltd Mallaig  
Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)  
Morar Community Council  
Morvern Community Council  
Morvern Community Development Company  
Morvern Gallery  
Mull and Iona Community Trust  
Mull and Iona Ferry Committee  
Mull Building Supplies  
Mull Community Council  
Nestrans  
Network Carradale  
NHS Highland  
North Ayrshire Council  
North Uist Agricultural Society  
North Uist Community Council  
Oban Community Council  
Office of Fair Trading  
Orasay Inn  
Orkney Islands Council  
Passengers View Scotland  
Peacock Freeserve  
Penninver Sands Holiday Park  
Point Sands Holiday Park  
Portavadie Marina  
Portree and Braes Community Council  
R A Clement Associates  
Raasay Community Council  
Rail and Maritime Transport (RMT)  
Road Haulage Association (RHA)  
Roadfreight  
Sabhal Mor Ostaig / Gaelic College  
Sanday Community Council  
Sandbank Community Council  
Sandwick Community Council  
Scotch Whisky Association  
ScotRail  
Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance  
Scottish Ambulance Service

Scottish Association for Public Transport  
Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI)  
Scottish Council on Deafness  
Scottish Crofting Federation  
Scottish Crofting Federation Ardnamurchan & Sunart Branch  
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)  
Scottish Islands Federation  
Scottish Natural Heritage  
Scottish Women's Convention  
Scrabster Harbour Trust  
Seafood Shetland  
SERCO  
Shetland Islands Council  
Skerries Community Council  
Skye and Lochalsh Hospitality Association  
Sleat Community  
Small Isles Community Council  
Sound of Iona Harbours Committee  
South Harris Community Council  
South Islay Development  
SPT/Concessionary Travel Scheme (SCTS)  
St Andrews and Deerness Community Council  
Storas Uibhist  
Stornoway Port Authority  
Strathclyde Passenger Transport  
Stromness Community Council  
STUC  
Sunart Community Council  
Taigh Chearsabhag  
Tarbert & Skipness Community Council  
The Arran Lamb Company  
The Ferry Stores And Kilchoan Post Office  
The Isle of Arran Elderly Forum  
The Isles Hotel Group  
The Kintyre Way  
The National Trust for Scotland  
The Old Schoolhouse Self Catering  
The Rotary Club, Isle of Arran  
The Whitehouse Restaurant  
Tiree Branch of NFUS  
Tobermory Harbour Association  
Tobermory Pharmacy  
Torr Solais B&B  
Transform Scotland  
Transport Research Institute, Edinburgh Napier University  
TSSA  
VisitScotland

Voove Ltd  
West Ardnamurchan Community Council  
West Coast Energiee  
West Word, Community Newspaper  
Western Ferries (Clyde) Limited  
Western Isles Fishermen's Association  
Western Isles Hotel  
White Hart Hotel  
Wind Towers Limited  
ZetTrans  
7 Unknown

## **APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

### **Section A: About You**

Q1. Are you responding on behalf of yourself or an organisation?

- a. Yourself (Go to Question 2)
- b. Organisation (Go to Question 1b)

Q1b. What is the name of the organisation?

### **Now Go To Section C**

Q2. Are you resident of a community currently served by the ferry network?

- a. Yes (Go to Question 2b)
- b. No (Go to Section C)

Q2b. What is the name of the community where you live? (e.g. Arran)

### **Now Go To Section B**

-----

### **Section B: About Your Travel**

Q3. Have you travelled off your island/peninsula within the last 18 months?

- a. Yes (Go to Question 4)
- b. No (Go to Section C)

Q4. What is your most common mode of transport when you travel off your island/peninsula?

- a. Ferry (Go to Question 5)
- b. Air (Go to Section C)
- c. Road (Go to Section C)

Q5. How frequently do you travel by ferry?

- a. 5 or more days per week
- b. 2-4 days per week
- c. Once a week
- d. 1-3 times a month
- e. At least four times per year
- f. Less frequently than four times per year
- g. Don't know/varies

Q6. When travelling by ferry, which of the following are your most common reasons for travelling? (tick up to two boxes only)

- a. Commuting to your usual place of work
- b. Employer's business
- c. Short-break/holiday
- d. Visiting friends/relatives/other leisure
- e. Shopping
- f. Health related
- g. Education
- h. Other (please specify)
- i. Don't know

-----  
**Section C: Routes and Services – Proposals by Community**

**Firth of Clyde**

*Arran*

Our proposal is for (a) the Ardrossan to Brodick service to be upgraded to a two-vessel service operating a more frequent shuttle service through to the late evening and (b) services between Claonaig to Lochranza would be reviewed following these changes to the Ardrossan to Brodick service. We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019) or it may be that this change is only possible as part of the vessel renewal programme to be published as part of the Final Ferries Plan.

Q7. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

**Bute**

Our proposal is to enhance the Colintrave to Rhubodach service, running the service through to midnight, thereby extending the operating day. The intention would be to include this proposal as part of the next tender for Clyde and Hebridean Ferry services in 2013.

Q8. We recognise that this is not the principal route, or the route that may most often be used for commuting purposes. The community is therefore asked for their views on this proposal and whether an extended service on this route would be well used.

**Cumbræ**

Our proposal is to include a later evening service for one or two evenings per week. The intention would be to include this as part of the next tender for Clyde and Hebridean Ferry services in 2013.

Q9. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.

### **Cowal Peninsula and Dunoon**

Scottish Ministers were disappointed not to be able to continue the vehicle and passenger service. However, the current contract was the best that could be achieved under the circumstances (particularly the restrictions imposed by the European Commission).

We are absolutely committed to providing a ferry service that meets the need of users and will continue to look at more options to improve the overall service and facilities.

Q10. The community is asked for their views.

### **Mull (and Ardnamurchan/Morvern)**

Our package of proposals are as follows:

- To upgrade the Craignure to Oban service to a two-vessel service, operating as a shuttle-service through an extended operating day;
- Following the upgrade to Craignure to Oban, to review operations on the Fishnish to Lochaline service;
- To replace the current passenger and vehicle service on Tobermory to Kilchoan with a passenger-only service.

We may be able to achieve these changes during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019) or it may be that these changes are only possible as part of the vessel renewal programme to be published as part of the Final Ferries Plan.

Q11. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

### **Iona**

Our proposal is for an additional 90 minutes of services in the evening, so the last service is around 8pm.

This proposal would involve the provision of overnight berthing facilities. Given that significant funding is likely to be required this is a medium to longer term solution.

Q12. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.

### **Ardnamurchan/Morvern (Corran Ferry)**

We are not proposing any changes to the Corran Ferry service.

Q13. The community is asked for their views.

### **Lismore**

Our proposal is to replace the two existing services with a single passenger and vehicle service between Port Appin and Point.

We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019).

Q14. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.

### **Coll and Tiree**

Our proposal is, subject to other proposals going forward, to improve the current service so that it operates for at least six days per week during the winter period.

We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019).

Q15. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.

### **Kerrera, Luìng and Easdale Island**

Our initial findings suggest that these services are fit for purpose and meet most of the communities' needs.

The Kerrera ferry service is currently commercially run, whilst the Luìng and Easdale services are currently provided by the Local Authority. Our proposal (in Chapter 5) on the future responsibility of ferry services is that we will discuss with Local Authorities whether they wish to transfer responsibility for routes currently under their jurisdiction to Scottish Government. Also, for commercially run services we will consider intervening where there is market failure and the service is considered to be lifeline.

Q16. The community is asked for their views.

### **Northern Isles**

Our proposal is:

- That we retain a broadly similar level of service.

Q17. The community is asked for their views.

### **Skye**

Our proposal is to continue to have a summer and winter service. For the summer service, recognising the revenue potential, we will offer minimum subsidy only. The winter service will continue to receive a subsidy.

We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019).

Q18. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.

### **Raasay**

We have no specific proposals for Raasay at this stage but we intend to explore how we might extend the length of the operating day as part of the CHFS re-tender in 2013.

Q19. The community is asked for their views.

## **Small Isles**

Our proposals are:

- A new Sunday service to each of the Small Isles (for school children returning to school);
- A Friday/Saturday level of service on more days (i.e. two sailings as opposed to one sailing per day);
- At least one day per week where it will be possible for residents of each island to make a meaningful return trip to the mainland in the course of a normal working day.

We may be able to achieve these changes in the lead up to the next CHFS contract period.

In the longer-term:

- To replace the current single vessel with a two vessel service - a passenger and loose freight service on a daily basis to each of the islands, and a once-per-week roll-on/roll-off service.

We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019) or it may be that this change is only possible as part of the vessel renewal programme to be published as part of the Final Ferries Plan.

Q20. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

## **Knoydart**

Our assessment suggests that Knoydart would benefit from additional sailing days in both the summer and winter seasons.

The service is currently provided by a private operator with some public funding from Highland Council. Our proposal (in Chapter 5) on the future responsibility of ferry services is that we will discuss with Local Authorities whether they wish to transfer responsibility for routes currently under their jurisdiction to the Scottish Government. Also, for commercially run services we will consider intervening where there is market failure and the service is considered to be lifeline.

Q21. As a first step the community is asked whether or not additional sailing days would be beneficial and well used.

## **Southern Hebrides**

### *Islay & Jura*

Our proposals are:

- To offer no cost fares on the current service between Islay and Jura, when this journey is part of an onward journey to the mainland.
- To run more services from Port Askaig and fewer services from Port Ellen than was the case before the suspension of services from Port Ellen.

The service between Islay and Jura is currently provided by Argyll and Bute Council. Our proposal (in Chapter 5) on the future responsibility of ferry services is that we will discuss with Local Authorities whether they wish to transfer responsibility for routes currently under their jurisdiction to the Scottish Government.

Running more services out of Port Askaig will become effective when the works are complete at Port Ellen.

Q22. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

### *Colonsay*

Our proposals are:

- An additional sailing day in the summer;
- At least one day per week where there is a return sailing between Colonsay and the mainland;

We may be able to achieve this change during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019).

- A commitment in the longer-term to work towards more sailing days during the winter if (and when) other vessels are released across a reconfigured network or when CHFS is re-tendered in 2013.

Q23. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

### *Gigha*

Our proposal is to extend the operating day in the evening by construction of an appropriate overnight berthing facility.

Given that significant funding is likely to be required this is a medium-to longer-term solution.

Q24. The community is asked for their views on this proposal.

### *Kintyre*

Our proposals are:

- To retain the Kintyre to Portavadie service as is.
- To offer a vehicle service between Campbeltown and the Scottish mainland (for example Troon) one or two days per week.

This would be subject to two smaller vessels being introduced on the Arran route.

Q25. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

### **Western Isles**

Our proposals are:

- The principal route for Harris and Lewis is the Ullapool-Stornoway route. Tarbert-Uig is the secondary route. The principal route for the Uists and Benbecula is Lochmaddy-Uig. Lochboisdale-Oban is the secondary route. Barra has only one direct route to the mainland, Castlebay-Oban;
- There is a need for all principal and secondary routes to be retained because of the distance between the ports; the population around the secondary routes and the need to ensure adequate exit ports for resilience purposes;
- Barra is the only landmass in the Western Isles which does not currently receive a service that meets the community's needs in terms of service profile. (Their current winter service is three days per week and ideally we want to provide at least five days);
- We think the secondary route (Lochboisdale-Oban) for the Uists and Benbecula should also be retained for the reasons given above ;
- We think the secondary route (Tarbert-Uig) for Lewis and Harris should also be retained for the reasons given above;
- We have considered options for improving the service to Barra. However, there are no viable cost effective options available without affecting the other Western Isles services. Within the Western Isles the Barra service will be given priority for funding in the future.

Our hope would be that improvements to Barra's winter service to the mainland could be achieved during the next CHFS contract (2013-2019).

Q26. The community is asked for their views on these proposals.

-----  
**Section D: Other Comments**

Q27. Please use the section provided for any other comments you have on the content of the Draft Plan.