



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

transport.gov.scot

Public Consultation for the next Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services Contract (CHFS3)

Public Consultation for the next Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services Contract (CHFS3)

Ministerial Foreword



I am pleased to present this public consultation on the new Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services Contract (CHFS3).

Scottish Ministers' preferred route for procurement of the next CHFS contract is a direct award via a Teckal arrangement, (which allows in certain circumstances for a contract to be directly awarded to an in house operator, without having to go through a competitive bidding process). This would be subject to a satisfactory due diligence exercise, with a final decision expected next summer.

In terms of value and importance to our island communities, this is one of the most significant contracts this Government will enter into, and as such it is vital that communities have the opportunity to contribute and help us shape the future of these vital ferry services.

This public consultation will provide an opportunity for those who have asked for change, including improved resilience; greater transparency; better communications; responsiveness; flexibility in service; and more certainty for communities and service-users to directly contribute to the contract development process.

Throughout this process we will continue to engage with our communities and stakeholders to inform the development of the contract to help shape the future of these services.

The public consultation will be available for 12 weeks from 15 December 2023 to 08 March 2024.

For more information, please visit [Transport Scotland's website](#).

Fiona Hyslop, MSP

Minister for Transport

Consultation Statement

We are seeking your views on potential ferry service improvements through the CHFS3 contract.

Background

The Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services play a crucial role in our transport system, providing vital links for residents, businesses, and tourists across the west coast of Scotland. However, we recognise that there are areas where enhancements can be made. We are therefore planning to introduce a new, enhanced contract for these ferry services which is scheduled to commence on 01 October 2024.

To date our focus for CHFS3 has been to review and reflect on the existing feedback from our ferry-dependent communities, key stakeholders and reports conducted throughout the CHFS2 contract period, including the recent report by the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee [A Modern and Sustainable Ferry Service for Scotland | Scottish Parliament](#). The feedback provided by these sources and further focused discussions with key stakeholders has aided the development of the consultation themes and questions.

Consultation Process

This consultation will be open for a period of 12 weeks from 15 December 2023 to 08 March 2024 and we invite you to share your views during this time to actively shape the forward thinking of the Clyde & Hebrides Ferry Services Contract.

You can do this by completing the online consultation, providing [a response by email](#) or submitting a written response to:

CHFS3 Consultation
Transport Scotland
George House
2nd Floor
36 North Hanover Street
Glasgow G1 2AD

Assessing impact

We are committed to assessing the impact of CHFS3 on ferry-dependent communities and other stakeholder groups across Scotland.

This consultation will support development of the following impact assessments: Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA); Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA); Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA); and the Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA).

We will publish these impact assessments on the Transport Scotland website. We would like your views on these. Views can be provided to us by emailing [Transport Scotland](#).

For example, your views will inform us about the likely impact of our policy on advancing equality, eliminating discrimination, and fostering good relations for people who share certain protected characteristics such as:

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Race and religion or belief
- Pregnancy and maternity

We will take a robust evidence-based approach to the development of our impact assessments and will work in close consultation with key stakeholders and representatives of groups that are likely to be impacted.

Next Steps

In addition to the CHFS3 consultation, Transport Scotland's Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) will shortly consult on the draft ICP Strategic Paper which sets out a proposed vision and priorities for the delivery of ferry services in Scotland, and the Long-Term Plan for Vessels and Ports which sets out plans and proposals for a programme of investments in the CHFS and NIFS networks until 2045, and proposes how to prioritise decisions during a period of funding constraint when difficult choices between projects are expected to be needed. A further update on this consultation will be provided by Transport Scotland in the coming weeks.

Once the CHFS3 consultation period has ended, responses will be reviewed by a specialist independent analysis team and a recommendations report will be provided to Transport Scotland to consider when finalising the terms of the CHFS3 contract.

We value your input and look forward to hearing your views on how we can improve our Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services.

Please note that this is a public consultation, and all responses will be made publicly available, although personal details will be kept confidential. Should you wish for your comments not to be made publicly available, please select the appropriate box at the end of the consultation.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this important process.

Reliability and Resilience

Community feedback highlighted that the resilience & reliability of ferry services needs to be addressed as a priority due to the impact on business & communities when ferry services are disrupted.

Q1. Do you think that the current performance measures of the ferry services are the right ones:

Yes

No

Please explain your answer

Q2. Are there any additional or alternative performance measures that you think could be introduced to improve resilience and reliability of ferry services?

Yes

No

Please give us your views

Capacity and Demand

Fares have significantly reduced and made Scottish Islands more accessible to everyone through the Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) however, we understand there is a balance to be struck between vessel capacity and passenger demand, therefore we need to find a better way to manage the number of users and the available space.

Community feedback has highlighted the high demand for ferry services during summer. Therefore, there is a requirement to consider the balance between capacity and demand to ensure car spaces are available to make essential or urgent travel.

Q3. We know that vehicle space capacity is at a premium during peak time sailings. Do you have any suggestions that could be introduced to reduce vehicle space demand?

Yes

No

If yes, what are your suggestions?

Q4. To reduce the number of cars on deck at peak times, would you be willing to travel to and from a port using public transport?

Yes

No

If no, please explain your answer

Q5. To reduce the number of cars on deck at peak times, would you be willing to travel to and from a port using active travel modes (walking, wheeling, cycling)?

Yes

No

If no, please explain your answer

Q6. Should operators be required to hold dedicated vehicle deck spaces on busy routes for the use of island residents and key worker personnel required to travel at short notice?

Yes

No

If no, please explain your answer

Community Voice, Transparency and Accountability

Community feedback suggests there could be more dialogue and consultation carried out across the network, giving local communities a better opportunity to provide feedback, which will aid decisions related to ferry services.

Community feedback highlighted that ferry services need to be appropriately timetabled to balance the needs of different users.

Q7. How could communities be provided with a stronger role in providing input on ferries related decisions?

Please give us your views

Q8. Are there ways in which Operators' engagement with local communities can be improved?

Please give us your views

Q9. Is the Ferries Community Board representative of island populations?

Yes

No

If no, please explain your answer

Q10. Does the Ferries Community Board reflect your interests for the next contract?

Yes

No

If no, please explain your answer

Q11. Should communities have greater say in the development of timetables, so they suit the needs of ferry users?

Yes

No

Please explain your answer

Carbon Reduction and Environmental Impact

We are making good progress towards a net zero future; however, low carbon ferry engine technology is still being developed so we need to think of alternative ways to reduce our carbon footprint and our impact on the environment.

Q12. In what ways can ferries reduce their carbon emissions in line with Net Zero targets?

Please give us your views

Q13. Would you consider reducing your car use when travelling by ferry?

Yes

No

If no, please explain your answer

Onward and Connecting Travel

Looking at how onward and connecting travel can be promoted will enable us to provide opportunities for better connectivity and ferry user-access via active travel, public transport, and other more sustainable transport modes.

Q14. What do you think could be introduced to improve public transport connectivity between ferries, rail and bus operators?

Please give us your views

Accessibility

Community feedback showed that some equality groups face additional challenges when accessing and using ferry services.

Q15. Would you support a regular accessibility audit taking place with accessibility groups such as Mobility Access Committee Scotland (MACS), with the aim of improving accessibility at ports and onboard vessels.

Yes

No

What else you think could be done to improve accessibility on our ferry services?

Freight Services

Feedback provided by the community has highlighted that freight bookings can impact available vehicle spaces on vessels.

Q16. Are there ways to improve the Operator's collaboration with hauliers and businesses to better plan commercial traffic volumes?

Please give us your views

Q17. Do you have any suggestions to better manage or reduce the demand on routes which experience high freight volumes?

Please give us your views

Monitoring and Review

Feedback has highlighted that communities would like greater clarity and accuracy on performance reporting to be embedded within the next contract.

Community feedback indicates that the true passenger experience is not reflected in the way the operator reports performance.

Q18. Would you welcome the opportunity to provide feedback to improve services?

Yes

No

If yes, how often should this happen and how should this be conducted?

Q19. Do you have any suggestions on how the Operator could provide a more accurate reflection of the passenger experience?

Please give us your views



Respondent information form

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our [Privacy Policy](#)

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
- Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

Phone number

Address

Postcode

Email

Transport Scotland

Are you responding as a:

- CHFS network resident (Islands including Peninsulas)
- CHFS network resident (Scottish Mainland)
- Are you a CHFS network visitor or tourist?
- CHFS network business (Island and Scottish mainland)

If you are a CHFS network resident (Islands, Peninsulas, Scottish Mainland) please advise which CHFS community in which you are resident, and which local authority area you live in. If you are a visitor or tourist, please advise in which location you are resident:

Why do you mainly use CHFS network services?

- For Business
- For Work/Education
- For Personal/Leisure
- All of the above
- Other

How frequently do you use CHFS services?

- 5-7 times a week
- 2-4 times a week
- Once a week
- Once every other week
- Once a month
- Occasionally
- Seasonal (Summer Period)
- Other

Are you:

- Under 16
- 16 to 18
- 19 to 21
- 22 to 34
- 35 to 44

Transport Scotland

- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 or over
- Other

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
- Publish response only (without name)
- Do not publish response

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

- Yes
- No

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.



**TRANSPORT
SCOTLAND**
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

Transport Scotland
Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road,
Glasgow, G4 0HF
0141 272 7100
info@transport.gov.scot
www.transport.gov.scot

978-1-911672-37-1
© Crown copyright 2023

You may re-use this information (excluding logos and images) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or e-mail: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Further copies of this document are available, on request, in audio and large print formats and in community languages.

Any enquiries regarding this document should be sent to us at info@transport.gov.scot

This document is also available on the Transport Scotland website: www.transport.gov.scot
Produced for Transport Scotland by APS Group Scotland PPDAS1384774 (12/23)
Published by Transport Scotland, December 2023

Follow us:

 [transcotland](https://www.facebook.com/transcotland)  [@transcotland](https://twitter.com/transcotland)
transport.gov.scot



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba