



T : 0300 244 4000  
E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Jamie Greene MSP  
[REDACTED]

Our Reference: 202100220857  
Your Reference: MV Pentalina

23 July 2021

Dear Jamie

Thank you for your letter to Mr Michael Matheson, MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport regarding the MV Pentalina and Clyde and Hebrides ferry services. Mr Matheson has asked me to respond in my capacity as Minister for Transport, with responsibility for ferry services.

Since becoming Transport Minister, I have prioritised ferries, emphasising the Scottish Government's on-going commitment to supporting and improving these vital lifeline services. At my request, Transport Scotland officials are working closely with CalMac (CFL) to identify where improvements to the resilience and reliability of ferry services can be made.

Please see the following responses to your queries:

**1. Can you please provide an update on the expected completion and delivery dates for the MV Glen Sannox?**

Tim Hair, Turnaround Director of Ferguson Marine, updated the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee in June 2021. His report details the impact that COVID-19 and the shortage of local skilled labour has had on delivery schedules. The delivery of MV Glen Sannox (801) is now planned for between July 2022 to September 2022.

The Scottish Government stands firm on its commitment to delivering the vessels MV Glen Sannox and Hull 802, as well as delivering a sustainable future for Ferguson Marine and its workforce, of which the delivery of Glen Sannox and Hull 802 is key. We continue to work with the yard to do everything we can to ensure that the vessels enter service as quickly as possible, to deliver service improvements.

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## **2. What are the current cost projections for the completion of the MV Glen Sannox?**

The cost to complete vessels 801 and 802 remains the same, between £110.3m -£114.3m.

## **3. As the agreement with Pentland Ferries to charter the MV Pentalina was unable to be secured, can you confirm what further options the Scottish Government is considering to charter relief ferries for our beleaguered ferry routes?**

We continue to work with CFL and CMAL to actively explore opportunities for chartering suitable, alternative, additional tonnage for the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network — including a potential freight vessel for the Stornoway-Ullapool route over the peak summer months, which has been discussed during the regular meetings with the Comhairle and Transport Scotland officials. If successful this will increase the resilience of the fleet as a whole, and provide CFL with greater flexibility to respond to disruption on the network.

## **4. For what reasons did the negotiations between Scottish Government-owned CMAL, CalMac and Pentland Ferries not succeed?**

Pentland Ferries Ltd made a business decision not to make the MV Pentalina available for charter.

## **5. What intervention or back-up plan does the Scottish Government have to ensure an efficient and reliable ferry service to island residents during the busy summer season?**

As noted above, we continue to work with CFL and CMAL to source additional tonnage.

Timetables have been scaled up to maximum possible levels to align with the easing of travel restrictions. Booking ferry travel in advance, wherever possible, continues to be strongly encouraged for all passengers, including islanders. Some capacity will be held back for 'Turn up and Go' travel, which will be of particular benefit for islanders travelling at short notice. CFL are reviewing this measure on a route by route basis to ensure that overall utilisation is being maximised.

CFL continue to take guidance from Transport Scotland's Resilience Team and Health Protection Scotland during the pandemic, and one metre physical distancing on public transport, including ferries, with appropriate risk mitigations, remains in place at this time.

Transport Scotland and CFL will continue to keep all of this under review and will continue to engage closely with our stakeholders, whose participation has been crucial in helping inform and shape our response and restart of services.

We also continue to actively explore further opportunities for chartering additional tonnage and looking at other credible, affordable and viable options to improve resilience and services. I am pleased to confirm that we have managed to secure the short term Time Charter of the MV Arrow to provide some resilience and additional capacity on the Stornoway to Ullapool service.

## **6. Given that the MV Caledonian Isles will likely be at least 30 years old once the MV Glen Sannox is introduced on the Ardrossan-Arran route, what plans are there to either renew or replace the Caledonian Isles given that it is well beyond its intended life expectancy of 25 years?**

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The Scottish Government announced its £580m, 5-year investment in vessels and ports as part of the Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021-22 to 2025-26 on 4 February 2021. The £580m does not include the cost of the new vessels MV Glen Sannox and Hull 802. An outline of which projects are included can be found at Annex D of the published document.

Delays associated with the completion of MV Glen Sannox and Hull 802 and their delivery has prevented the replacement of vessels approaching the end of their operational life and delayed potential vessel cascades that could alleviate capacity constraints elsewhere on the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services network. The delay has also prevented the opportunity to retain a “spare” major vessel that could increase fleet resilience. However, working with CFL and CMAL, we aim to replace ferries by the end of their normal working life.

## **7. What is the Scottish Government’s estimation of the economic cost to Arran of this delay?**

Please see the response given to your parliamentary question, S5W-35362, on 11 March 2021: “The Scottish Government recognises the importance of the provision of safe and reliable lifeline ferry services for the economy of Arran. Transport Scotland has not undertaken what the economic impact has been of disruption and cancellations on the Arran ferry route.

North Ayrshire Council has commissioned economic impact analysis of the value of the ferry route to the community on Arran, shared with the Ardrossan Taskforce, and this analysis demonstrates the high value of services to Arran and reinforces the importance of the redevelopment of Peel Ports owned assets at Ardrossan, the redevelopment of Brodick terminal undertaken by CMAL and investment in the MV Glen Sannox (Hull 801) which we anticipate will be delivered to CalMac Spring 2022.”

## **8. What recent discussions has the Cabinet Secretary, or other Scottish Government officials, had with island residents and businesses regarding the delays to the replacement ferry?**

Regular meetings are held with ferry stakeholder groups and committees across the entire network, including the Arran Ferry Committee. We have continued to engage with stakeholders, including local authorities and ferry committees, throughout the Covid pandemic, discussing both ways in which capacity and resilience can be increased.

Allow me to reassure you that there has been a considerable amount of work undertaken by ferry operators, CMAL and Transport Scotland to safely maximise both vehicle and passenger capacity on Scotland’s ferries, whilst ensuring the safety of both passengers and crew. I and my officials will continue this important dialogue with MSPs, local authorities and other key stakeholders, as the Scottish Government addresses these key issues facing our ferries’ network.

Yours sincerely



**GRAEME DEY**

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The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland Region

Mr Michael Matheson MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport  
The Scottish Government  
St. Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

5<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

I am writing to you concerning the recent news that the plan to charter the MV Pentalina has been scrapped after Pentland Ferries pulled out of talks with CalMac.

You will no doubt be aware of the long-standing issues around reliability on the Ardrossan-Arran ferry route which has left residents on the Isle of Arran often unable to travel to the Scottish mainland because of frequent delays and cancellations. This is not a simple matter of inconvenience for island residents, many need to travel to the mainland to access key public services such as healthcare, businesses need to transport products and tourists need to reach their destination.

The disruption on the route is primarily because the two vessels serving the route, the MVs Isle of Arran and Caledonian Isles, are well beyond their intended life expectancy and require frequent repairs and maintenance. The replacement vessel, the MV Glen Sannox, is currently running nearly five years behind schedule, having originally being intended for launch in 2018.

These issues have been compounded further by the Coronavirus Pandemic which required a reduction in passenger capacity on each vessel to allow for suitable social distancing measures to be implemented, and the MV Isle of Arran being drafted as a relief vessel for the Ullapool-Stornoway route between May and late June.

The introduction of the MV Pentalina was intended to bring much-needed resilience to CalMac's fleet and provide relief on the Ardrossan-Arran route during the summer. This setback will have significant consequences for residents on both sides of the shore, not least the potential of these ferry delays to hamper Ardrossan's and Arran's respective economic recoveries from the pandemic.

It's clear that a long-term solution to this situation is required and I would be grateful if you could address the following questions:

1. Can you please provide an update on the expected completion and delivery dates for the MV Glen Sannox?
2. What are the current cost projections for the completion of the MV Glen Sannox?
3. As the agreement with Pentland Ferries to charter the MV Pentalina was unable to be secured, can you confirm what further options the Scottish Government is considering to charter relief ferries for our beleaguered ferry routes?
4. For what reasons did the negotiations between Scottish Government-owned CMAL, CalMac and Pentland Ferries not succeed?
5. What intervention or back-up plan does the Scottish Government have to ensure an efficient and reliable ferry service to island residents during the busy summer season?
6. Given that the MV Caledonian Isles will likely be at least 30 years old once the MV Glen Sannox is introduced on the Ardrossan-Arran route, what plans are there to either renew or replace the Caledonian Isles given that it is well beyond its intended life expectancy of 25 years?
7. What is the Scottish Government's estimation of the economic cost to Arran of this delay?
8. What recent discussions has the Cabinet Secretary, or other Scottish Government officials, had with island residents and businesses regarding the delays to the replacement ferry?

Thank you for your time in this matter, I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie Greene". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
**West Scotland Region**



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland

Graeme Dey MSP  
Minister for Transport  
The Scottish Government  
**BY EMAIL**

1<sup>st</sup> December 2021  
**My Ref: JG0408/SN**  
Please quote on all correspondence

Dear Graeme

**Engagement with Arran Ferry Action Group re upcoming closure of Ardrossan Harbour**

Please find enclosed a letter I have received from a concerned resident of the Isle of Arran, which is self-explanatory.

Arran, which is in my region, relies heavily on the lifeline ferry service and for the islands Ferry Action Group to be feel that they are not being engaged with on such important matters as the future of the ferry service really is not good enough.

I would appreciate it if you could ensure, as Transport Minister, the Arran Ferry Action Group are included in future meetings as they do have valuable expertise and insight which I believe can only be beneficial to have access to as the island approaches these changing times with the closure of Ardrossan Harbour.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
Member for West Scotland

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 29 November 2021 09:44  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Letter from your constituent [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 28 November 2021 14:17  
**To:** Greene J (Jamie), MSP <Jamie.Greene.msp@parliament.scot>  
**Subject:** Letter from your constituent [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Friday 26 November 2021.

Dear Jamie Greene,

I am writing to voice concerns about Arran's lifeline ferry service, and in particular regarding plans for Ardrossan Harbour, which is scheduled to close in Autumn 2022. Currently, there is no agreement with Peel Ports. There has been no tender process, and therefore no contractor has been appointed. There are no final designs for the shore side infrastructure.

Although they represent a majority of island residents, the Arran Ferry Action Group's repeated requests to provide input to the Task Force over the past two and a half years have met with zero success. Despite multiple requests to meet with him, Transport Minister Graeme Dey MSP actually avoided the Arran Ferry Action Group on his recent trip to Arran. [Peaceful Pensioner Protest is Snubbed—Arran Banner, 24/09/2021] Since then Mr. Dey has advised the Arran Ferry Action Group to go through "local channels" to request a meeting with the Task Force—despite the fact that Mr. Dey heads up the Task Force and is thus the only one who can issue such invitations.

The next task force meeting is scheduled for 7 December. Your help is urgently needed to ensure that Arran's vital needs and input won't continue to be ignored. The Arran Ferry Action Group has valuable expertise, insight, and residents' views to contribute. We're counting on you to help ensure Arran voices are heard.

Thank you.

[REDACTED], [REDACTED]

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Farranferries.scot%2F&data=04%7C01%7CJamie.Greene.msp%40parliament.scot%7C038c76d09b2a435e32ca08d9b279b4ee%7Cd603c99ccfdd4292926800d>



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jenny Gilruth MSP  
Minister for Transport  
St. Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

10<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Dear Minister,

We are writing to you regarding the shameful shortages of basic provisions on several Scottish islands, which are the direct result of substandard ferry services and Scottish Government inaction.

Disruptions to ferry services are nothing new to islanders. However, under the watch of the SNP Government they have been subjected to an ageing ferry fleet breaking down with alarming frequency. It has been apparent for a number of years that a pipeline of new ferries was required to be commissioned given the ageing fleet, yet new vessels have been significantly delayed with completion dates repeatedly moved and will now cost at least quarter of a billion pounds. We now have a service so unreliable that it cannot even be trusted to supply basic food items to the people of the Hebrides. This is unprecedented in modern times. I am sure that you will agree this situation is unacceptable.

As Scottish Conservative MSPs who represent the communities that rely on these services, we are shocked that this issue is not being handled by the SNP Government with the urgency it deserves. We simply cannot stand by whilst islanders suffer from food shortages, people are forced to sleep in their cars and local businesses are severely impacted. Our constituents deserve to see action taken now to deliver a more reliable service.

As Transport Minister, it is your responsibility to ensure that ferries run properly between the islands and the mainland. As there has been no positive response from the SNP Scottish Government to the calls for Parliament to be recalled to address this matter, we therefore insist that you urgently convene a summit with all MSPs from the affected areas, to determine the actions and timelines required for the SNP Government to resume lifeline ferry services and prevent the situation getting this critical again in the future.

We look forward to your urgent response to this request.

Yours,

**Douglas Ross MSP** Highlands and Islands and Leader of the Scottish Conservatives  
**Rachael Hamilton MSP** Shadow Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Islands  
**Graham Simpson MSP** Shadow Minister for Transport  
**Edward Mountain MSP** – Highlands and Islands  
**Donald Cameron MSP** – Highlands and Islands  
**Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP** Highlands and Islands and Convenor of the Cross Party Group on Islands  
**Russell Findlay MSP** – West of Scotland  
**Jamie Greene MSP** – West of Scotland  
**Pam Gosal MSP** – West of Scotland





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Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland

Jenny Gilruth MSP  
Minister for Transport  
The Scottish Government  
**BY EMAIL**

7<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**My Ref: JG0475/SN**

**Please quote on all correspondence**

Dear Ms Gilruth

### **Cumbrae Ferry - removal of monthly travel pass**

Further to my letter of 29<sup>th</sup> September, you may be aware that the monthly travel pass was thankfully reinstated by CalMac and is intended to remain until approximately a month before the new Ar Turas ticketing system goes live.

However, although grateful, there are still concerns among the residents of Cumbrae which are being raised with me, specifically by those who use the ferry daily for employment purposes. I am being asked if the new ticketing system is going to provide them with a discounted service which, given the current cost of living crisis I feel it should.

I would ask what recent discussions you have had with CalMac and Transport Scotland regarding the timescales for Ar Turas to come into operation. How much can islanders expect to pay for their tickets to and from the Isle of Cumbrae, do you expect these tickets to be more or less expensive than they were prior to the new system being introduced?

I am aware you had discussions with the island community back in June however, what recent discussions have been had with those concerned on the island regarding the costs and timescales.

I am sure you will appreciate the concerns which are being raised with me as people face a financially uncertain future. Therefore, I would be grateful for your response to these queries.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
**Member for West Scotland**



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Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.greene.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202100260476  
Your Reference: Ferry Serice

15 December 2021

Dear Jamie

Thank you for your letter of 1 December 2021 on behalf of a constituent regarding concerns around the Ardrossan harbour re-development project and the Arran Ferry Action Group (AFAG) representation at the Ardrossan Task Force.

It is acknowledged that there continues to be community frustrations on a number of issues on Arran, including the harbour re-development project. However, ensuring that community views are heard and understood is of major importance and we continue to address these where practicable.

I can assure you that the Scottish Government remains committed to a solution at Ardrossan that can be delivered in a cost effective way reflecting the needs of all of the partners involved. Engagement with Peel Ports on the legal and commercial arrangements continues. It is accepted these have taken longer than originally foreseen and remain challenging, however, we are considering all project delivery options and we hope that a resolution is forthcoming in the near future.

In regards to island representation; the Arran Ferry Committee (AFC) is the recognised body for engagement on ferry related issues and are a member of the Ardrossan Task Force. It is suggested that the AFAG engage with AFC to raise any concerns on ferry and/or project related issues and these can then be raised at the Task Force. The Ardrossan Task Force has received a list of 78 questions from AFAG regarding the project which will be responded to in due course.

In addition I can confirm that both Transport Scotland and Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd have over a number of years engaged with the AFAG on a number of issues pertaining to the Ardrossan project where AFAG have made their views known and these will continue to be fed into the project as it

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progresses.

I hope this response is helpful to your constituent in confirming that we are doing all we can to progress and deliver the Ardrossan project and our continued commitment to engage with the communities of Arran.

Yours sincerely



**GRAEME DEY**

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16<sup>th</sup> December 2021

*Dear Minister,*

I have received a significant number of complaints from constituents in respect of further delays and cancellations to ferry services in the West of Scotland and Islands.

Concerns have been raised regarding the Largs – Cumbrae route, where yesterday marked the fourth consecutive day of such delays and cancellations, with no ferry service running until after 6pm. I understand the Tarbert – Lochranza service is currently cancelled until at least the 20<sup>th</sup> of December as the relevant vessel has been moved to cover the Largs – Cumbrae route with no replacement available.

There have also been maintenance problems, for example the MV Loch Shira has required repairs at least twice in the last month, however it would appear that there was insufficient forward planning to provide a replacement vessel in time.

It goes without saying that these services are a lifeline for island residents. My constituents are struggling to get to and from work, to make urgent medical appointments such as vaccinations, and to see loved ones. I have been informed that care home and hospital staff have been unable to get on or off Cumbrae, and most alarmingly that delays have caused some residents to miss their Covid-19 booster vaccinations, which is vitally important given the seriousness of the Omicron variant.

With that in mind, I would like to ask what urgent action is being taken to alleviate these pressures, and when can my constituents expect their ferry services to return to normal sailing times?

I have attached some of the correspondence I have received on the matter for your information, with my constituent's names and addresses redacted at their request. I look forward to your reply, which I will forward to them.

Yours sincerely,

*Jamie Greene MSP*



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Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.green.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202100266634  
Your Reference: o

21 January 2022

Dear Jamie

Thank you for your email, dated 16 December 2021, on behalf of your constituents regarding the disruption to ferry sailings on the Largs - Cumbrae service and on the return to normal sailings on other ferry routes.

CalMac Ferries Ltd (CFL) managed the recent removal from service, due to an oil contaminated breakdown of MV Loch Shira covering the Largs – Cumbrae route, through redeployment of other vessels from the fleet. CFL have indicated that the vessel should be ready for service by 2 February after repairs being completed in drydock.

I note your point about maintenance problems with MV Loch Shira and insufficient forward planning to provide a replacement vessel. This is not the case. Under the terms of the CHFS2 contract CFL are required to maintain lifeline services and this requires them to re-deploy vessels when necessary. MV Loch Tarbert normally operates on the Tarbert-Portavadie route, which as you are aware, is a mainland to mainland route whereas the Largs-Cumbrae service operates an island service. CFL, therefore, took the decision, as part of their route prioritisation protocols, to re-position MV Loch Tarbert to operate the Largs-Cumbrae service, resulting, in the suspension of the Tarbert (Loch Fyne)-Portavadie and Tarbert-Lochranza routes.

MV Loch Tarbert re-located to Largs on Sunday 12 December and commenced operating the Largs-Cumbrae early afternoon, initially as a shuttle service until traffic was cleared before resuming with the published timetable.

[Cumbrae: Largs - Cumbrae Slip | 18 October 2021 - 2 January 2022 and 07 February - 24 March 2022 | CalMac Ferries](#)

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MV Loch Tarbert initially covered the service between 12/12/2021 - 18/12/2021, MV Loch Allain then covered the service between 19/12/2021 - 29/12/2021. MV Catriona was redeployed to cover the service from 30/12/2021 as MV Loch Shira required to enter dry dock for her annual overhaul. MV Catriona will continue to operate the Largs – Cumbrae service until MV Loch Shira returns from her annual overhaul which is expected to be at the beginning of February

Throughout this pandemic CalMac Ferries (CFL) have worked very hard to ensure the safety of crew, shore staff and passengers taking account of advice and guidance from the Scottish Government.

The recent spate of Covid-related incidents on some ferry routes and vessels is concerning, we need to remember that the virus is still circulating. We all need to continue to take care and think about how, in our own behaviours at work, home and while travelling, we can limit the ability of the virus to spread.

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): travel and transport - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Topics/healthandcare/coronavirus/covid-19/travelandtransport)

CFL Introduced an essential services timetable across the CHFS network on 3 January 2022 and this will remain in place until at least 6 February 2022, due to the increase in recent Covid-related incidents.

CFL have worked closely with healthcare workers on the island to ensure that timetables operating meet the needs of those who use the service. There is a medical protocol in place which guarantees islanders a booking on the ferry and a taxi should they have an urgent medical appointment on the mainland. Further information is available by following the link below: [urgent medical appointments](#). The Urgent Medical Appointments Protocol allows an island resident to attend their urgent appointment, when the intention is to travel by vehicle but there is no capacity on the car deck for that sailing. The island resident would then proceed to travel on the ferry as a foot passenger, and CFL arrange travel between the mainland port direct to their appointment destination, e.g. hospital, by taxi.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely



**GRAEME DEY**

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Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland

Jenny Gilruth MSP  
Minister for Transport  
The Scottish Government  
**BY EMAIL**

13<sup>th</sup> December 2022  
**My Ref: JG0489/ SN**  
**Please quote on all correspondence**

Dear Ms Gilruth

**Arran Ferry - timetable issues**

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter I have sent to the Managing Director of CalMac Ferries, which is self-explanatory.

I have been made aware that you have already been contacted by representatives on the island who have asked that you become involved on this issue.

I would appreciate it if you would provide me with your response to that request and your thoughts on the possibility of consideration being made to ensure summer bookings can be brought forward.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
**Member for West Scotland**



The Scottish Parliament  
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Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland

Mr Robbie Drummond  
Managing Director  
Calmac Ferries Ltd.  
**BY EMAIL**

13<sup>th</sup> December 2022  
**My Ref: JG0489/SN**  
**Please quote on all correspondence**

Dear Robbie

**Arran Ferry - timetable issues**

I have been contacted by representatives of the Arran Ferry Committee regarding an issue with the late publication of the 2023 ferry timetable and the fact that summer bookings will not be able to be taken until the beginning of March.

This is causing concern among businesses on the island who have stated they are already losing bookings.

It has been suggested that some of this may be due to the introduction of the new booking system however, it has also been suggested that at the Calmac Community Board meeting it was stated that this rollover was not actually the issue.

It is apparent that this is a situation which is wholly unacceptable, I would ask that further consideration is given to ensuring the ability to make summer bookings for the ferry are brought forward and if this is not possible an explanation is provided as to why.

I am copying this letter to the transport minister who I also believe has been contacted and asked to get involved on this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
**Member for West Scotland**

cc: Jenny Gilruth MSP, Minister for Transport





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Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.greene.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202200334848  
Your Reference: JG0489/SN

10 February 2023

Dear Jamie,

Thank you for your letter regarding CalMac's Summer 2023 timetable.

As you may be aware, the delay to confirmation of the fares and related publishing of the timetables and opening of the booking systems was partly due to the necessary detailed consideration and discussions required at all levels of Government in order to find a way to mitigate the impact on ferry fares of an unprecedented level of CPI of 9.1%.

The Scottish Government is aware of the particular cost challenges faced by our island communities, where the ongoing cost of living impacts are arguably more challenging than in any other part of the country. Additionally, I am mindful of the disruption on the ferry network in recent times - particularly in relation to the Clyde and Hebrides network.

I was pleased to announce a six month fares freeze until the end of the summer timetable to help people and businesses from Scotland's rural and island communities. It is the right thing for our island communities and I hope it will go some way to encouraging tourism this summer as island businesses continue to recover from the pandemic.

CalMac Ferries opened their bookings for the summer timetable on the 20 January and Northlink Ferries opened their bookings on 18 January.

I hope this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

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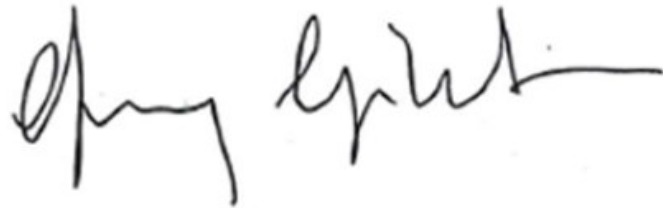
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JENNY GILRUTH

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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland

Jenny Gilruth MSP  
Minister for Transport  
The Scottish Government  
**BY EMAIL**

29<sup>th</sup> September 2022  
**My Ref: JG0475/SN**  
Please quote on all correspondence

Dear Ms Gilruth

**Cumbræ Ferry – removal of monthly travel pass**

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter I have sent to the Managing Director of CalMac Ferries, which is self-explanatory.

I am sure you will appreciate the concern this is causing among residents of Cumbræ and I would be interested to hear your thoughts on this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
**Member for West Scotland**



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jamie Greene MSP  
Member for West Scotland

Mr Robbie Drummond  
Managing Director  
Calmac Ferries Ltd  
**BY EMAIL**

29<sup>th</sup> September 2022  
**My Ref: JG0475/SN**  
Please quote on all correspondence

Dear Robbie

**Cumrae Ferry – removal of monthly travel pass**

I have been contacted by local representatives and several Cumrae residents in connection with the recent decision by CalMac not to continue providing a monthly season pass for travel to and from Cumrae until the new ticketing system is in place.

I enclose a copy of a letter received from [REDACTED] which makes for some rather concerning reading.

I would appreciate it if you could respond to the points raised in the enclosed letter. Cumrae residents are also telling me that CalMac management have lied and misled the local community and the Cumrae Ferry User's Group.

Until the new Ar Turas ticketing system is properly in place, I would appreciate it if CalMac would reconsider their position and give reinstating the monthly season ticket serious consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Jamie Greene MSP**  
**Member for West Scotland**

cc: Jenny Gilruth MSP, Minister for Transport



29<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear West of Scotland MSP Group,

I hope this letter finds you well.

Cumbræ Ferry Users Group and numerous constituents have contacted me about the recent decision taken by CalMac not to continue providing a monthly season pass for travel to and from the Isle of Cumbræ until the new Ar Turas ticketing system was in place.

The news is deeply concerning for Island residents and is entirely contradictory with the discussions between CalMac and Islanders throughout these discussions. There are several concerns I would like you to raise on behalf of the islanders.

1. In the minutes of the Ferry Users Group meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> May 2022, it states that CalMac agreed to continue with the monthly season tickets until the new Ar Turas ticketing system is live.
2. This action point was discussed at the Ferry Users Group Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2022 and further confirmed by [REDACTED] (CalMac) on 30<sup>th</sup> August with a member of the Ferry Users Group that they would be retained.
3. Allegedly the file for issuing these tickets has been removed from the port computer system and [REDACTED] (CalMac) was going to investigate why that had happened and how it could be solved. The Ferry User Group has asked on numerous occasions for a temporary solution to be found to the issue and no answers have been forthcoming.

Official Information

4. [REDACTED] (CalMac), who has replaced [REDACTED] (CalMac), advised a member of the Ferry User Group that the passes were not to be retained. Furthermore, that public communication posters had been issued by CalMac advising of these changes. This is contrary to previous discussions with [REDACTED] (CalMac). The Ferry Users Group member who contacted me was unaware of these posters until [REDACTED] (CalMac) sent them through on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022. I had not seen them until they were shared by the member of the Ferry User Group on the same day.
5. At the last meeting of the Ferry User Group, it was intimated that there were ongoing disputes between CalMac operations and project management teams in relation to the go live dates of October 2022 for the new ticketing system. Operations felt the timeline was unachievable. These issues were supposedly to be resolved before any rash decisions had been taken about a go live date for October.

These are serious concerns for those travelling to and from the island for employment who rely on the one-month season pass. It is worth noting that since the introduction of RET island residents have not benefitted from a reduction in prices to travel on and off the island. The old local 5 book ticket was the same per ticket as a return was after RET.

The decision taken by CalMac to renege on their previously stated position that they would retain the monthly season pass in the interim is very disappointing.

Therefore, I am asking you as representatives of the community, to encourage CalMac to reconsider their position by asking them to reinstate the monthly season ticket until the new Ar Turas system has been rolled out and tested.

Best Wishes,

[REDACTED]



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E : scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.greene.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202300340455  
Your Reference: Our Ref: JG0475/SN

19 April 2023

Dear Jamie,

Thank you for your letter "Cumbrae Ferry - removal of monthly travel pass" dated 29th September 2022 and received 27th January 2023.

CalMac has continued the sale of one-month season ticket during the interim period up to one month prior to Ar Turas go-live to allow for the tickets to 'run-out'. CalMac has a focus on the go-live event to ensure minimal disruption to ferry users on cut over which is an intense process for CalMac staff.

The Ar Turas eBooking system has been thoroughly tested during its development phase and will bring improved benefits for both customers and staff.

Transport Scotland will continue to review fares policy across the network as part of our Fair Fares Review and Islands Connectivity Plan. Consultation and engagement will be central to the development of the Plan as a whole and the fares review in particular; this provides the opportunity to ensure that our fares policy continues to address the needs of island residents, businesses and communities.

Yours sincerely

**KEVIN STEWART**

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Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.green.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202300353439

Your Reference: Letter from Jamie Greene MSP to Kevin Stewart

16 May 2023

Dear Jamie,

Thank you for your letters of 29 September and 7 October 2022 and 22 March and 20 April 2023 regarding ferry season tickets.

I apologise for the delay in responding to you, which I understand was initially due to a system technicality, while the then Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP, was looking into this issue, which I then looked further into when I became Minister for Transport. However, you should have received an update to make you aware that this was ongoing.

When RET (Road Equivalent Tariff) was introduced, some legacy ticket types were temporarily retained as a transitional arrangement, however these now need to be removed to allow for the move to a modern ticketing system. The Ferries Plan, published in 2012 was clear that these would be phased out, although it has taken CalMac Ferries Limited longer to do this than was intended at the time. Their removal also ensures fairness across the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Service (CHFS) network with routes now having a consistent fare type. Under RET, passengers no longer have to spend significant sums on books of tickets upfront in order to access lower fares. Furthermore, the volume sold of these tickets had reduced significantly since the introduction of RET. In the last full pre-pandemic year of 2019 CFL sold 453,000 tickets on the Largs-Cumbrae route of which only 45 were season tickets. CFL phased out the Largs-Cumbrae 12 month, 6 month and 3 month season in 2021 and the remaining 1 month ticket season ticket has recently been phased out.

Scheduled for introduction on 16 May, the benefits of Ar Turas include better 'live' deck space management for use of capacity, better communication around disruption, a standardised, accessible, digitally enabled service both on-line and through an app, and a means to purchase tickets and apply

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changes instantly.

The comments and depth of feeling from the community regarding this issue have been noted, and I met with Angus Campbell, Chair of Cumbrae Ferry Committee, to hear the community's concerns. Transport Scotland and CalMac continue to discuss the impact of the new ticketing system on some legacy type fares. Following further discussions it is planned that CalMac will make an announcement relating to the Cumbrae service in due course.

Whilst the new ticketing system will be unable to host products which have an unlimited number of journeys attached to them, I have asked officials to explore alternative product options to mitigate this impact. The key point to make is that any product on the new ticketing system will have to have a number of journeys attached to it. Product pricing would additionally need to be taken into consideration.

Meanwhile, Transport Scotland is reviewing fares policy across the network as part of our Fair Fares Review and Islands Connectivity Plan. This will consider a range of issues, including the previously available season tickets. Consultation and engagement will be central to the development of the Plan as a whole and the fares review in particular; this provides the opportunity to ensure that our fares policy continues to address the needs of island residents, businesses and communities.

Yours sincerely



**KEVIN STEWART**

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Jamie Greene MSP  
Member of the Scottish Parliament for West Scotland

Minister for Transport  
Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

20 April 2023

**Our Reference: JG0475/SN**  
**Your Reference: 202300340455**

Dear Minister,

**Cumbræ Ferry – removal of monthly travel pass**

Thank you for your letter dated 19 April 2023 regarding the Cumbræ ferry monthly travel pass.

At the outset of your letter, you state that you only received my letter (dated 29 September 2022, enclosed) on 27 January 2023. I have enclosed a screenshot from my caseworker showing that the letter was indeed sent to your predecessor, Mrs Gilruth, via email on 29 September.

In addition, my office followed up with letters on this issue on 6 October 2022, 26 January 2023 and 22 March 2023. None of these letters were responded to as far as I can see. I would appreciate if you were able to investigate the reasons for these letters not being responded to sooner, particularly the one sent on 29 September, nearly 7 months ago.

I'm sure you will accept that this response time and failure to respond falls out with the general standards that are expected of the Scottish Government and its ministers, all of which are governed by well-established protocols concerning not just the timeous manner of responses, but that the content should also be substantive in nature.

Your belated letter to me on the substance of the issue offered no information that I have already gleaned from constituents, CalMac, the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland. The point being missed is that all parties have made clear that it is only Scottish minister policy direction and intervention which can initiate a solution.

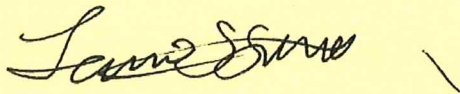
The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP  
jamie.greene.msp@parliament.scot  
0131 348 6137

Many of my constituents on the Isle of Cumbrae are particularly concerned about the removal of the monthly season travel pass following the imminent introduction of CalMac's new Ar Turas ticketing system. The season pass has allowed the ferry service, a crucial lifeline, to remain affordable for many residents and its removal could have serious negative consequences for the community. With that, I would appreciate if you were able to respond to the following points:

- 1) What consultation was carried out with island residents and other interested parties, such as ferry action groups, regarding the removal of the season pass?
- 2) Is it possible to include the season pass in the new Ar Turas system?
- 3) If the Scottish Government is unable to reinstate the season pass, will it consider a scheme or system which still carries similar economic benefits for residents as the season pass?

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Greene', with a small flourish at the end.

Jamie Greene MSP



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Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.green.msp@parliament.scot

Our Reference: 202300353439

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changes instantly.

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Yours sincerely



**KEVIN STEWART**

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Jamie Greene MSP  
jamie.green.msp@gov.scot

Our Reference: 202300356544

Your Reference: 0543 Letter from Jamie Greene MSP Our Ref: JG0543/SN

18 May 2023

Dear Jamie

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 May 2023 regarding changes to the ScotRail service between Largs/Glasgow and Inverclyde.

I understand your constituent's frustration to the removal of the 07:42 service from Largs to Glasgow. This has now been replaced with the 07:54 from Ardrossan to Glasgow, and an additional train has been added to the timetable from Ardrossan to Glasgow departing at 07:26.

ScotRail's May 2023 timetable will also provide journey saving times for those passengers travelling on the Ayr to Glasgow route. Following on from customer feedback the Ardrossan and Largs service will now call at stations in the Garnock Valley to improve connectivity.

In the case of Inverclyde, this does mean the removal of the off-peak express services to and from Gourock. Gourock will still have express trains in peak and a half-hourly service outside the peaks. Passengers from Greenock and further east will be able to take advantage of the hourly express service on the Wemyss Bay line.

The new timetable also delivers a better spread of services which will improve the service for passengers at intermediary stations who can take the Wemyss Bay or Gourock service. These changes will help ScotRail to reliably operate the core Inverclyde service of at least three trains per hour, which is the combination of Gourock and Wemyss Bay services, during the day, with additional fast services at peak times.

ScotRail is now designing new future timetables for services in Inverclyde, which will help grow

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passenger numbers. ScotRail advises that these plans will be shared with customers and stakeholders in Inverclyde in the coming months, and feedback on the proposals will help shape further changes.

The Scottish Government is committed to decarbonising its passenger rail network and its freight rail services.

Details of how this is to be achieved are set out in the Decarbonisation Action Plan, which can be found on the Transport Scotland website at [rail-services-decarbonisation-action-plan.pdf \(transport.gov.scot\)](#).

I trust this is helpful.

Yours sincerely



**KEVIN STEWART**

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Jamie Greene, MSP  
Email: [Jamie.Greene.msp@parliament.scot](mailto:Jamie.Greene.msp@parliament.scot)

23 November 2023

Dear Jamie,

### **CALMAC BID COMMITMENTS**

As part of their bid to operate the Clyde and Hebrides Ferry Services, CalMac Ferries Ltd made a number of commitments covering a wide range of activities during the lifetime of the contract.

By the end of contract year 1 the company reported that 282 (82%) of these commitments were completed or on track to be completed by the planned dates, of this number around 120 are recurring.

At the present time there are 31 commitments that have not been achieved, these relate to the introduction of a new ticketing/booking system, smart-ticketing and a review of crewing levels. A number of commitments are due to be delivered through Contract Year 8.

All of CalMac's commitments are reviewed by Transport Scotland and CalMac. These reviews and validation ensure CalMac are working with and supporting local communities.

Achievements to date include:

- Through the role of CalMac's Transport Integration Manager there is much more collaborative working between the company and other public transport providers.
- CalMac have no employees on zero hours contracts, and continue to be a living wage accredited employer.
- 10 officer, engine and deck ratings will be recruited each year through the company's cadet programme during the lifetime of the contract.
- The introduction of a dedicated freight management team to manage freight capacity on routes with high freight volumes has seen an increase in deck space utilisation.

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I mentioned in the chamber as part of my response to your question that we will develop measures to incentivise the operator and drive efficiency in operational and service provision. The next few months will see work continue on what these will be to ensure the best service delivery.

Yours sincerely,



**FIONA HYSLOP**

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