

Jura Passenger Ferry 2008 – 2017 – summary

jurapassengerferry.com

Background in Summary

- 2005 Community questionnaire showed 80% of the community requesting an independent study into the feasibility of a direct link between Jura and the mainland (last link was 1974)
- 2006 Business case prepared showing suitable destinations
- 2007 Marketing survey carried out within the catchment area using independent business and Visit Scotland. 3-week feasibility trial carried out.
- 2008 Advertising for expressions of interest and tenders sent out.
- 2009 First 3-year pilot service carried out as well as major developments to improve infrastructure at both ends put in place (pontoons, car parking, connecting public transport services. Average 4.8 passenger numbers carried (PNC).
- 2010 Passenger numbers steadily increasing – revenue subsidy secured for a further 2 years. 4.8 PNC
- 2012-2019 – Revenue subsidy support continued year on year from Transport Scotland and Argyll & Bute Council. Passenger numbers levelling out. Average 5.4 PNC.*

Social and Economic Benefit

- 55 min crossing (using alternative route to mainland takes approx. 4hr – (Craighouse – Islay – Kennacraig). Colin McLean, HIE Development Manager said *'The project aims to boost the level of economic activity and visitor spend on Jura as well as enhance the sustainability of local businesses'*. * see attached testimonials.
- Councillor Duncan MacIntyre, Argyll and Bute Council roads and transportation spokesperson said *'These improvements at Craighouse are to be welcomed with open-arms. The new ferry service will not only enable people to visit this remote and beautiful island, but it will also enable the residents of Jura easy access to Lochilphead, Oban, Glasgow and beyond thanks to good connections with local bus services'*
- Friends and relatives are finding the service beneficial, removing the feeling of isolation which improves social wellbeing. It would now be difficult to imagine what life would be like without the ferry so embedded in the way of life for the Jura community. Tayvallich was never so isolated, but there have always been links between these two communities, the ferry makes it easier to meet and attend other functions for the good of both communities.
- The economy of the island has seen a considerable uplift, particularly for the Community Shop, Hotel, Antlers and even the Distillery.
- The service has also provided the community with other requests such as;
 1. Jura's younger generation use the service to return home at the weekends from mainland college and universities
 2. Allows access to services at Lochgilphead that are difficult do get on Islay – dental appointments and ear, nose and throat being the most popular
 3. Access to emergency speech and language therapy swallowing assessment if someone had a stroke
 4. Blood transportation when flights and other services are disrupted
 5. Freight and emergency deliveries, especially on Sundays
 6. Business appointments with stakeholders and government bodies who cannot afford the time to travel overnight
 7. A means of travel when other services are disrupted due to breakdown or bad weather
 8. and knowing that a direct link is there between Jura and the mainland.

The feasibility study carried out in 2005 by Steer Davies Gleave na.steerdaviesgleave.com set out the following objectives;

Vision

'To enhance the viability of a sustainable community on Jura'

Outcome objectives

- To increase Jura residents' interaction with the mainland
- To increase economic activity on Jura
- To maintain the unspoilt environment of Jura

Output objectives

- To enhance the speed and flexibility and reduce the cost of resident trips to the mainland, preferably by car
 - To facilitate an increase in tourist expenditure by enabling Jura to be easier for tourists to visit
 - To minimise the detrimental effects of traffic, infrastructure or other changes on the environment of Jura
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- In conclusion the service has met all of the above objectives with the exception of a direct car link. Not only that, it has also demonstrated further positive impact to the community both on Jura and Tayvallich. In terms of return on investment, the marketing survey carried out in 2008 predicted a return of £3 for every £1 spent, although we have not carried out a recent survey to gauge this. This does not take into account the benefits across the water at Tayvallich nor the indirect benefits the service has as a mainland link which removes the feeling of isolation that people may have. We believe that further investment and support for this service can only improve this transport link and in turn improve the well-being and life to the island.

Future proofing and lessons learned

We are approaching the end of our eighth season where we have identified, in summary, the following;

1. The current vessel, we believe, is not fit for purpose in terms of sustainability and viability – a more commercially built vessel is possibly required for this journey (this has been identified due to several breakdowns and discussions with the operator). We will be looking into other short sea journey services to compare and consider. This could be a simple alteration of engines.
2. Service contract requires a minimum of 3 years – in order to attract a viable tender as 2009-2011.
3. A 3-5-year contract would secure a more sustainable service, reduce management costs and allow the service to be appropriately introduced and marketed into the local area transport and tourism network.
4. In terms of the economy, the season is changing and becoming broader. We may consider a 7/8 month contract which could increase passenger revenue – this could also incorporate a shoulder season in quieter months. Discussions with transport advisors is required.
5. The Jura Development Trust is a volunteer organisation and therefore, as expected, spread thin in terms of man hours. Were we to succeed in a new contract term, we need to build in a small management fee to assist with the operation going forward – however, again, with a 3-5 year contract the time and hours spent on securing support and revenue funding would be reduced.

Passenger numbers carried in summary 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
March	43	-	100	13	60
April	260	240	277	406	364
May	354	491	557	579	695
June	231	305	401	464	526
July	455	454	591	564	651
August	411	456	589	654	691
September	297	455	435	462	498
	2,051	2,401	2,950	3,006	3,485

Passenger numbers for 2018 will be incorporated end Oct 20

Testimonials

Dr Abby Beastall – Jura Medical Practice

'Benefits of the passenger ferry to the community from a health point of view are the access to psychological therapy at Lochgilphead - particularly the Child and Adolescent service which does not visit Islay. Psychological/psychiatric services on Islay are hugely overstretched and looking to the future access directly to Lochgilphead may be important for Jura patients. We can't get from Jura. Also there is no optician now on Islay and very limited and inadequate dental services so access to these services via the passenger ferry will become more and more important as it is not possible to get to Lochgilphead/Tarbet and back in a day via CalMac. The passenger ferry has also been used to transport doctors to injured/ill patients on yachts in the bay at Craighouse.'

Chris Lamb – Manager of the Jura Community Shop

'I would like to emphasise the great benefit and positive impact that the passenger ferry has on the Jura Community and the Shop. The regular daily arrivals of holiday makers, tourists and business people are a huge asset to Jura bringing business and trade and increasing takings over the summer months. The quick journey and accessibility to and from the mainland enables locals also to come and go to the mainland with ease, especially now the buses link up with the passenger ferry timetable. The huge volumes of people that arrive on Jura at special times over the summer season is amazing! Such times being the Fell Race, Sport's Day, Half Marathon, Regatta and the Jura Music Festival all of which would not be as successful if people were not able to get to Jura so easily. The service enables people to travel light which in turn encourages people to buy provisions etc. once they arrive here - again boosting the takings over the summer as they stock up on arrival and throughout their stay on Jura. Nicol is always friendly and accommodating, providing an excellent safe and professional service. When the service stops over the winter we really miss the regular sightings in the bay and arrival of the boat, looking forward to the start of the season at Easter when the island 'opens' once again for visitors and the busy times ahead.'

Christine Fairman – local resident and nurse

'I used the service every month when I worked in Balloch, journey time 2.45hrs, compared to 6hrs with CalMac. It was also cheaper, as I did not need to buy a meal, which you do when travelling with CalMac. When you are down the village when the ferry comes in, often there are 10 people coming off the ferry, on business, day trips, visiting relatives, can we afford to lose that business? I think if we lost the passenger service it would be a huge step backwards for Jura.

My daughter is coming over in August, she will leave Balloch at 8am and be here by 11am, amazing. She has a full extra day as part of her holiday. If she travelled by CalMac, she would not be here until 4pm, having travelled all day, which is a waste of a day. Family tend to visit more frequently using the passenger ferry, which is very important living here. Long live the Passenger Ferry.'

Supporting documents available on request;

- i. *Direct Ferry Link – Feasibility Study 2005 – produced by Steer Davies Gleave*
- ii. *A Review of the 3-year pilot (2009-2011)– Social, Economic and Environmental Impacts – produced by Slainte Ltd*



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