

PE2188/A: Extend the National Entitlement Card scheme to include ferry travel for people aged 60 and over

Scottish Government written submission, 23 October 2025

Does the Scottish Government consider the specific ask of the petition to be practical or achievable?

Ferry fares policy was fully considered and consulted on through the recent Fair Fares Review and Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) processes. The final ICP Strategic Approach was published on 2 May 2025 and confirmed expansion of concessionary ferry travel for under 22s only.

The Scottish Government considers the specific ask of the petition not to be achievable as it is not affordable to expand ferry concessions any further to include over 60s at this time, beyond what is already provided (see below).

What, if any, action the Scottish Government is currently taking to address the issues raised by this petition, and is any further action being considered that will achieve the ask of this petition?

The Scottish Government does provide significant funding to keep ferry fares low for everyone, including over 60s, through Road Equivalent Tariff, islander fares, and funding of local authority ferries.

On a non-statutory basis, the Scottish Government provides 4 free ferry journeys to or from the Scottish mainland per year for over 60s and disabled people, and our funding supports a number of local concessionary ferry schemes that provide older people with free or discounted ferry travel.

Fare levels are set by Scottish Ministers for the Clyde & Hebrides and Northern Isles Ferry Services and by the relevant local authority (supported by their Regional Transport Partnership in some instances) or private operator for ferry services they are responsible for.

The Scottish Government is providing the full funding requested by local authorities to run their inter-island and internal ferry services in 2025-26, around £50 million.

At this time, the Scottish Government is not considering any further action on this request.

Transport Scotland