

Highlights

Ferry operator not subsidised by the Scottish Government or local authorities

Their ferry, MV Alfred, is more efficient and emits less carbon than the average equivalent ferry

A wind turbine powers the office, shore base and the ship whilst docked overnight

Transports 150,000 people to and from Orkney annually

Contributing significantly to the tourism economy, by opening up a significant channel of access to the islands.



Pentland Ferries

Pentland Ferries is a privately owned, family company which has operated a ferry service between Gills Bay in Caithness and St Margaret's Hope on South Ronaldsay in Orkney since May 2001. The company transports approximately 50% of the traffic travelling across the Pentland Firth and is one of only two major vehicle ferry operators within Scotland which are not subsidised by the Scottish Government or local authorities. The company operates a custom-built catamaran with the capacity to carry 98 cars, or 54 cars and 12 articulated vehicles/coaches, and 430 passengers, per sailing and offers six scheduled sailings per day, year-round.

As a transport provider, Pentland Ferries are aware of their responsibility to maximise their energy efficiency and minimise their impact on the environment. This was at the forefront of the Company's mind when they custom-built their most recent ship, MV Alfred, which was designed to have significantly improved energy efficiency.

Some highlights below demonstrate the company's environmental protection commitment:

- Power usage – MV Alfred ferry is estimated to use 65% less power and emit 62% less CO₂ than the average equivalent ferry.
- Wind power – Pentland Ferries have their own wind turbine, which powers the office, shore base and the ship while it is berthed overnight.
- Eco lighting – Energy efficient LED is used throughout the ship.
- Water refill stations – a water refill point on the MV Alfred reduces single-use plastics.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle – Pentland Ferries has recycling stations throughout the vessel and sells reusable eco-friendly travel cups made from rice husk.

Pentland Ferries play a vital role within the local community. They provide a crucial transportation service to locals and tourists, and offer local employment opportunities, with 90% of staff being from the area. The company transports around 150,000 people annually, to and from Orkney, and supports tourism businesses by promoting their offerings for free. This is reciprocated, with local businesses promoting the ferry service.



Wider social benefits associated with the business include sponsorship and discounts to local individuals and groups, fund-raising for charities relevant to the company and its employees, as well as being an equal opportunities employer.

