

12 January 2026 - Anonymous 12

To: Scrutiny Communications <Scrutiny@gov.je>

Subject: Feedback attached

Feedback on Travelling with Pets on the UK–Jersey Ferry Routes

I wanted to take the opportunity to share my experiences of travelling with pets on the Jersey ferry routes, based on multiple journeys with Condor Ferries and a recent first experience with DFDS. Overall, my headline takeaway is that DFDS currently feels more pet-friendly, although this assessment is based on only one crossing to date.

Experience with Condor Ferries

I travelled on the Condor UK–Jersey route more than 20 times with my dogs. We consistently chose the shorter crossing to minimise travel time and, as required, left the dogs in the car during the journey.

In most cases, the experience was positive. However, on one occasion we had to raise a formal complaint when our dogs were placed in direct sunlight during a summer crossing. We raised concerns about the car's position immediately when boarding but these were dismissed. Later in the journey, once at sea, we were asked to go down to the car deck and sit with the boot open to provide water, as the heat posed a risk to their health. This situation was distressing and could have been avoided had the concern been addressed at boarding.

Experience with DFDS

I have so far travelled once on the DFDS UK–Jersey route with my dogs, during December/January. As only the longer crossing was available, the lack of choice and significantly increased journey time was a downside.

That said, we were able to book a pet-friendly cabin, which made a substantial positive difference. Although this increased the overall cost, it meant the dogs were not confined to the car for nearly 12 hours, which was far more comfortable and humane for them.

There were, however, some notable limitations:

- Pet cabins are restricted to two people, which meant that as a family we had to pay for two cabins each way.
- Larger or family-sized pet cabins are not currently available, which would significantly improve the experience for those travelling with children and pets.

Boarding and Disembarkation

When boarding with two children and two dogs, I had some initial anxiety about managing everyone at once. This was eased after speaking with the DFDS customer care team, who were very helpful and allowed me to take my children to the cabin first and then return for the dogs. This flexibility was greatly appreciated.

However, the disembarkation process was challenging. Passengers are required to vacate cabins 30 minutes before docking, but pets are not allowed to return to vehicles until the ship has docked. Managing two young children and two dogs in busy public areas for this period felt unsafe and extremely stressful.

This was particularly difficult given that:

- My son is autistic and requires close supervision.
- My daughter is only four years old.
- There were many other dogs present, increasing the need for vigilance and control.

After a long journey, this part of the process felt unnecessarily demanding and could pose safety risks for families in similar situations.

Summary

Overall, my first experience with DFDS was positive, particularly in terms of pet accommodation and customer service. However, there are some process improvements that would significantly enhance the experience, especially for families travelling with pets. These include:

- Greater flexibility around disembarkation for passengers with pets.
- The availability of larger or family-sized pet cabins.
- Continued emphasis on customer care and practical support for those travelling with children and animals.