
Raasay Pontoon Support

1 message

Seaflower Office <info@seaflowerskye.com>

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To: raasaydevelopmenttrust@gmail.com

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to offer my support for the much needed pontoons on Raasay. I am the owner of Seaflower Skye, a boat tour company operating out of Portree on the isle of Skye. We run sea tours to Raasay and it's neighbouring island Rona.

There have been major investments in Raasay House and the new Distillery which has made the island very appealing to tourists. The current pier is designed and only suitable for the Calmac ferry. It is always a stressful operation for us coming in along side and away from the concrete pier. Apart from ourselves, there are also other commercial tour boats, fishing boats and tourist boats trying to get access to the pier. We would love to help increase tourist footfall on Raasay but currently this is very difficult.

There are two areas for boats to tie up, the slipway where the ferry loads + unloads and steps at the end of the pier. The steps are poorly maintained and have a blanket of algae on them, which is extremely slippery. We sometimes have elderly guests, so we avoid these steps as much as possible. The slipway is the far safer option for our customers to disembark.

However, in order to use this, we have to work around the ferry timetable to make sure we do not interrupt their operation.

During our tours we allow guests two hours to explore Raasay, during that time we would tie up on the slipway. With the growing number of boats trying to access the Raasay pier, we often have to leave the slipway to allow other boats access to it. Alternatively the other boats will tie up alongside us and crew/passengers will jump across our deck. This is unsafe, unprofessional and not a good image for tourist boats in Scotland. Both the slipway and steps are tidal and we are unable to leave the boat for any period of time, even to assist elderly guests. We are also constantly juggling ropes to accomodate the tide.

Between the two destinations that we take tourists to, we always try to persuade them that Rona is a better option, as Raasay is far more difficult for us. We find the situation with access to the pier a hassle and very unsafe. Pontoons would certainly make for an easier, more professional looking operation for us and allow much easier access for our guests, thus enabling us to visit more frequently and increasing the amount of tourists on the island daily.

Kind regards,
Ewen
SeaflowerSkye