

# NATIONAL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2018-2023



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# KEY MESSAGES

## ◦ GAELIC BELONGS TO SCOTLAND.

This is about the past, the present and the future. Gaelic is part of our history and heritage. It is an important part of life in Scotland today and this Plan will help to secure its place in the future.

## ◦ WE HAVE A CLEAR AIM FOR GAELIC.

Our aim is that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations.

## ◦ THIS AIM MUST BE A SHARED AIM.

This aim does not sit with one organisation or community, and many groups, bodies and individuals have a role and a contribution to make in achieving this.

## ◦ OTHER ISSUES IMPACT ON THIS AIM.

A number of wider issues, economic and infrastructural, have an impact on progress and we will ensure their impact on Gaelic is recognised and addressed.

## ◦ WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

This Plan, in the following pages, sets out clearly the priorities and necessary steps in order to make progress with this aim and where we need your help and support.

# OUR AIM IS THAT GAELIC IS USED MORE OFTEN, BY MORE PEOPLE AND IN A WIDER RANGE OF SITUATIONS.



## **A faster rate of growth and wider impact**

We are confident this Plan contains the right priorities to achieve a faster rate of growth for Gaelic in Scotland.

## **Building on impressive progress**

Building on impressive progress, this Plan offers both benefits and opportunities for individuals, families, communities, voluntary, private and public sector organisations.

## **A range of new commitments**

The Plan includes a challenging combination of priority areas where the momentum must be maintained and developed, along with outlining key commitments we believe will make a difference.

## **Vital developments in community, education, media and economy**

Among these key commitments are taking a fresh look at supporting communities in areas where Gaelic is spoken by significant numbers, maximising the impact of the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education, continuing to support the wide contribution of MG ALBA and developing new digital initiatives.

## **Social and economic value**

The Plan builds on the significant social impact Gaelic makes in Scotland. It also develops the opportunities for economic benefits that accrue from Gaelic.

## **Partnership and wider impact**

There are good opportunities for making progress with commitments made by public authorities and bodies, for new partnerships and for considering how Gaelic can have an impact on wider issues.

# FOREWORDS

# 1

I am very pleased to endorse the work Bòrd na Gàidhlig has done in setting down a clear direction for the growth of Gaelic over the next five years in this new National Gaelic Language Plan.

Over recent years I have been very impressed by the many Gaelic events I have attended and initiatives I have seen. Many have been characterised by a strong sense of purpose and commitment and a high standard of delivery or performance.

It was not so long ago when we did not have any of the structures in place for Gaelic that we have now and as a result Gaelic suffered in Scotland. All this has changed. There are now a range of strong and positive developments in place for Gaelic and we are seeing good progress as a result.

This brief foreword may not be the place to draw attention to particular Gaelic projects or examples of progress. However, it is the place to say that many Gaelic developments have been innovative, impressive and leading in their sectors.

It has also been good to see that many Gaelic initiatives have been characterised by strong partnership working and co-operation. We need this to continue and I would like to encourage all authorities and bodies to continue to consider what steps they can take to co-operate in the promotion of Gaelic in their areas.

This welcome momentum must be maintained and we must continue to respond to and overcome challenges as we work to increase the numbers of people using, learning and speaking Gaelic in Scotland.

The main aims of this Plan are the promotion of Gaelic, the learning of Gaelic and the use of Gaelic. I am confident that these aims will ensure we continue to make good and necessary progress.

I would like to commend Bòrd na Gàidhlig for producing this next version of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23. This is a Plan for all of Scotland, for individuals, communities, for bodies and authorities.



I am looking forward to seeing more progress with these aims and to see more strong examples of partnership working as we make progress with the priorities and commitments in this Plan.

**JOHN SWINNEY, MSP**  
**Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for  
Education and Skills**

# NATIONAL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2018-2023

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23, which has been written as a result of collaboration, co-operation and input from a wide range of organisations and individuals. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed so generously and constructively to its creation.

The key message which this Plan conveys is that the increased use of Gaelic has to be at the heart of what we do as individuals, families, communities, public authorities, private sector and voluntary groups. More people of all ages using Gaelic more often will ensure that Gaelic will flourish.

Our vision is that greater use of Gaelic will be achieved through realising the social, economic and educational benefits that Gaelic brings to Scotland. This includes ensuring that Gaelic is at the heart of economic developments – in those areas where Gaelic has been and remains a strong part of the culture – such as developments planned in Lochaber, Wester Ross, South Uist and Lewis; in opportunities created by accessing the digital world in new and creative ways to engage and enthuse young people; and in opportunities created by the high levels of attainment achieved by pupils in Gaelic medium education.

It is central too that the opportunities for people of all ages to learn Gaelic continue to grow. The Plan acknowledges the challenges surrounding the recruitment and training of high quality staff to meet the growing demand for Gaelic education, and outlines new commitments to develop additional routes into this most critical of sectors.

All these developments are based on building the links between usage, learning and promotion to suit the social and economic circumstances of different communities - Gaelic-speaking rural areas, speakers

in Scotland's towns and cities and the world-wide community of Gaels connected digitally.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig has a role in delivering key aspects of this plan and in ensuring that the national effort to grow the use of Gaelic is undertaken in a co-ordinated, strategic and cost-effective manner across the public, private and voluntary sectors. An Implementation Strategy, which will articulate how the priorities and commitments are delivered, measured and monitored, will be published within six months of this Plan being launched.

My hope is that the goodwill and support afforded to Gaelic during the preparation of this National Gaelic Language Plan will continue through the lifetime of its delivery and that by 2023 more people of all ages will be using Gaelic more often.

Gaelic has so much to offer everyone in Scotland and I hope that this Plan will allow everyone to play a part in the journey that we are on now and for generations to come.



**Allan MacDonald**  
Chair, Bòrd na Gàidhlig

# INTRODUCTION

# 2

This is the third National Gaelic Language Plan. It will cover the years 2018-23 and it is required by the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. As set out in the Act, this Plan has been prepared by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and approved by Scottish Ministers.

The Plan will show how the Scottish Government (SG), Bòrd na Gàidhlig, public authorities, voluntary and private sectors, communities, families and individuals across Scotland can help to make progress with the aim, priorities and commitments set out in the following pages.

## Plan Outline

We would like to explain how this Plan is set out. In the next section there is an overview which sets out the overall aim of this Plan and it lists the priority areas where we will maintain a strong focus.

Then, section 4 provides more detail. It outlines where Gaelic sits in relation to wider national priorities and lists the contribution which Gaelic can make to national commitments.

## Gaelic Today

Section 5 focuses on the place of Gaelic in Scotland, the UK and internationally, the gains that have been made over recent years and where progress still needs to be made. This section evidences why the priorities and new commitments have been selected.

## Gaelic Communities

In section 6, the Plan describes the approach that underpins the priorities and commitments in relation to three broad categories of community. It is clear that a 'one size fits all approach' is neither appropriate nor effective and this part provides the rationales for the different communities.

## Priorities and Commitments

Following this, in sections 7, 8 and 9, the Plan returns to the aim and priority areas and more detail is included at this stage. As mentioned above, a strong emphasis will be maintained in the areas listed as priorities, and a number of key commitments are included which we believe will strengthen the areas where there is already considerable activity.

## Implementation and Monitoring

Section 10 provides an overview of how the Plan will be implemented, monitored and reviewed. Key to this is the Implementation Strategy and annual monitoring reports.

# THE NATIONAL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2018-23

# AN OVERVIEW

# 3

## ○ **Our aim**

**Our aim is that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations. We will achieve this by focusing on the three headings below:**

**Increasing the use of Gaelic**

**Increasing the learning of Gaelic**

**Promoting a positive image of Gaelic**

## ○ **Priority Areas**

**We set out clearly the priority areas where we will continue to make progress with the aim above.**

## ○ **Commitments**

**We also list the key commitments that we will pursue in order to make significant progress in the priority areas.**

## ○ **Partners**

**This work will demand a co-ordinated approach and we will list the key partners involved and the contributions they can make to strengthening Gaelic.**



## USING GAELIC

### Increasing the use of Gaelic

This includes speakers and learners increasing their use of the language. It involves developing more situations where Gaelic can be used. It involves using Gaelic in situations where it has not been used previously and the increased use of Gaelic in daily life.

The increased use of Gaelic strengthens the community of speakers and contributes to its confidence. This expands opportunities for Gaelic and Gaelic users, thus increasing awareness and the profile of the language.

The priorities listed are critical for the future of Gaelic.

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## USING GAELIC

An increase in the use of Gaelic will be promoted and supported by means of the areas listed below. This will be done in collaboration with key partners and providers and through Bòrd na Gàidhlig initiatives and programmes.

### Priorities

- Initiatives which promote the use of Gaelic in homes and communities
- Initiatives which promote the use of Gaelic by young people
- Gaelic in traditional and new media
- Gaelic in the arts, publishing and creative industries
- Gaelic Language Plans
- Gaelic in the workplace
- Gaelic use in heritage, tourism, food and drink, environment and leisure industries
- Initiatives which strengthen language richness, relevance and consistency
- Initiatives promoting links with Gaelic abroad and with minority languages



## LEARNING GAELIC

### Increasing the learning of Gaelic

This includes promoting, supporting and expanding Gaelic learning at all levels and in all sectors. The benefits from this are clear: as progress is made with this, it will increase the number of those who understand, speak, read, and write Gaelic, and their ability to use Gaelic with confidence.

The priority areas listed below are the most important ones where we believe progress can be made. In addition, they have the potential to contribute to other important areas of Gaelic interest and activity.

Gaelic learning is of critical importance for the future of the language.



## LEARNING GAELIC

An increase in the learning of Gaelic will be promoted and supported by means of the areas below. This will be done in collaboration with key partners and providers and through Bòrd na Gàidhlig initiatives and programmes.

### Priorities

- Gaelic in the family
- Gaelic medium workforce recruitment, retention, training and supply
- Resources and support for learning
- Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)
- Gaelic medium education (GME) in primary and secondary schools
- Gaelic learner education (GLE) in primary and secondary schools
- Gaelic in Higher and Further Education
- Adult Gaelic learning



## PROMOTING GAELIC

### Promoting a positive image of Gaelic

Ensuring that a positive image of Gaelic is promoted and strengthened depends on a number of initiatives. It also includes ensuring that Gaelic is valued and that its important contribution to the social, cultural and economic life of the nation is recognised.

The priorities listed are the areas which are important in making progress with this aim. There is an overlap with other priorities, yet all those below have a particular contribution to make to promoting a positive image of Gaelic.

The promotion of a positive image of Gaelic is critical to strengthening the appeal and status of Gaelic in Scotland and abroad. This depends on users and non-users alike.

## PROMOTING GAELIC

A positive image of Gaelic will be promoted by means of the priority areas listed below. This will be done in collaboration with key partners and providers and through Bòrd na Gàidhlig initiatives and programmes.

### Priority areas

- Support for Gaelic from the Scottish Government, Parliament and wider political support
- Gaelic Language Plans implemented by public authorities (local authorities and public bodies)
- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic and raising awareness through:

Gaelic media and other media

Gaelic education at all levels, and

Gaelic arts

- Promoting the social, economic and cultural value of Gaelic
- Positive messages about Gaelic, bilingualism, and about diversity and inclusion





# NATIONAL PRIORITIES

# 4

## Scottish Government's Purpose and Economic Benefits

We are confident that Gaelic makes a strong contribution to the Scottish Government's purpose of creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. We will ensure that this will continue to be a prominent focus in the years ahead.

Gaelic in Scotland has made important gains over recent decades. The progress we have made enables us to demonstrate the benefits in education, in arts, in broadcasting, in skills and training. Gaelic can also demonstrate economic benefits, particularly in island and rural areas. For example, this is clear when we reflect on the impact of the work of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, of MG ALBA, of Fèisean nan Gàidheal and of An Comunn Gàidhealach to name some examples.

The report, *Ar Stòras Gàidhlig*, was commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise in 2014 to assess the economic and social value Gaelic brings to Scotland. The report was positive; it found that the businesses in the creative industries, tourism, heritage, and food and drink sectors, in particular, benefit from their use of Gaelic, and that this has the potential to bring significant economic value.

## Scottish Government National Outcomes

The Scottish Government has 15 national outcomes which describe what it aims to achieve. Gaelic makes a strong and varied contribution to these. As is clear from this Plan, Gaelic operates in many sectors and on many levels. Gaelic can, therefore, make a contribution to the national outcomes that focus on the economy, education, young people, on tackling inequality, on communities, on a fair and inclusive national identity and on the quality of public services.

## Partnership Working

The contribution of public authorities, bodies, the private sector and communities is central and essential to the current aim of promoting and supporting Gaelic in Scotland. The development of Gaelic Language Plans has contributed to this. We will ensure this strong emphasis continues and that new partnership opportunities are cultivated and encouraged.

## Manifesto Commitments

The current Government's manifesto commitments for Gaelic, set out below, are in the areas of education, arts and broadcasting.

- *We will implement new legal duties and rights to support Gaelic medium education as part of our on-going commitment to stabilise and increase the number of Gaelic speakers.*
- *We support the central role of Gaelic arts in engaging people with the language, and enhancing the relevance of the language to Scottish society.*
- *We will maintain our investment in BBC ALBA as a vital part of Scottish broadcasting output, and in recognition of its contribution to the development of the Gaelic language.*

There are also opportunities for Gaelic to contribute to other commitments. The manifesto commitment of a planned increase of almost double the number of hours of free early years' education and childcare to 30 hours a week for vulnerable 2-year-olds and all 3 and 4-year-olds by 2021 is a huge opportunity for Gaelic medium education. So too is Gaelic medium education's achievements in attainment, with the capacity to contribute to the Scottish Attainment Challenge.



## Wider Impact

This Plan’s focus on community as the driver for change can contribute to the Scottish Government’s focus on community empowerment and engagement. Other reforms, such as community land ownership and the Islands Bill, based on the initiative, Our Islands, Our Future, will also have an impact on many of the communities with Gaelic speakers and so are important to this Plan and the progress of Gaelic in Scotland.

There are a range of other issues - economic, demographic, infrastructural and more - that have direct and indirect impacts on the use and profile of Gaelic. We need to put these matters at the centre of our thinking, explain what their impact on Gaelic could be and make clear that Gaelic, along with other issues, should be a consideration.

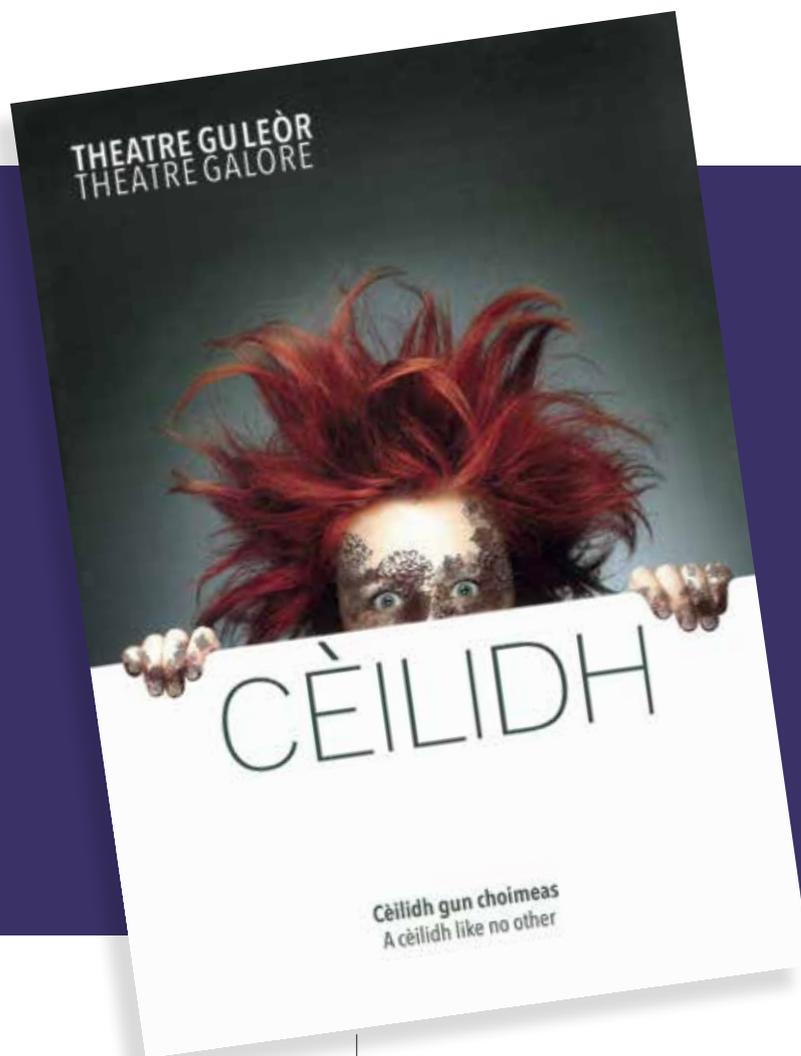
As we make progress with the priorities and commitments in this Plan we will also be supporting the Scottish Government with its Programme for Government. This will include the specific commitments relating to Gaelic and the many other areas where Gaelic has an impact.



## IN SUMMARY

*The opening page of this Plan states that Gaelic belongs to Scotland and the paragraphs above demonstrate the breadth and diversity of this relationship and the strong contribution that Gaelic makes to wider and related priorities.*





# Gaelic Today

# 5

## Impact of Current Activities in Support of Gaelic

This section focuses on the place of Gaelic in Scotland, the UK and internationally by providing a brief review of recent progress. The review shows where we have made gains and in what areas we need to do more. It also demonstrates why we have selected certain priorities.

## Language Planning and Research

This Plan has been prepared against the background of language planning and research. We have looked at the current position of Gaelic in the context of theoretical models of language planning and this Plan has also benefitted from a number of studies that have been carried out recently. We have been able to benefit from a report assessing the impact of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2012-17, and also from an important report on Scotland's Census 2011. There have also been significant reports on language corpus matters, on Gaelic adult education and on Gaelic school education.

## Gaelic in Scotland

We have made good progress in recent years and we must ensure that momentum continues. The 2011 Census showed that around 87,000 people in Scotland (around 1.7% of the population) have some Gaelic language skills. For the first time there was an increase in the number of speakers aged under 25, even though the overall figure decreased slightly. Ensuring that the growing population of young Gaelic speakers is supported to continue using the language, and to pass it on to the next generation, is critical to the maintenance of Gaelic as a living language.

The location of Gaelic speakers is also important. The Census also showed that Gaelic speakers live in most communities across Scotland, with approximately 50% living in the Highlands and Islands, and 50% across the rest of the country. This is looked at in more detail in section 6.



## Gaelic in the United Kingdom

Gaelic is one of a number of indigenous minority languages which are actively used by hundreds of thousands of people in the UK. They all add to the richness of UK culture and contribute to the country’s diversity. Some, such as Welsh, have a stronger legal status than Gaelic and some less so. Almost all the public sector support for Gaelic is linked to the Scottish Government except for Gaelic broadcasting which is the responsibility of the UK Government under the powers of the 2003 Communications Act.

## International Context

It is estimated that there are between 5,000 and 7,000 different languages spoken worldwide and speaking more than one language is the norm for some 60% of the world’s population.

Scottish Gaelic is recognised as an indigenous language in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, a European Council treaty, which the UK has ratified. As part of its role in monitoring languages, UNESCO has identified Gaelic as in the *definitely endangered* category based on the reduction of learning Gaelic in the home as a mother tongue.

Gaelic is used frequently by speakers in many parts of the world, including those brought up speaking the language and significant numbers of learners. Nova Scotia, Canada, is home to a vibrant community of Gaelic speakers, comprising those brought up with Gaelic and those learning the language.

These links contribute to the use and profile of Gaelic. There are also links with other minority languages. Both have distinct benefits for Gaelic in Scotland. There are structures in place which promote such links and a number of Gaelic bodies and interests have developed their own connections. These will be encouraged and promoted.

Such examples include the British Irish Council, Celtic Colours in Nova Scotia, the Colmille scheme and SG’s Nova Scotia bursary scheme. There are more, and bodies such as MG ALBA and the universities have good working relationships in place. MG ALBA in particular is creating artistic and economic links with other minority-language broadcasters which extend the reach of the channel.



## Gaelic in the Home and Community

The use of Gaelic both at home and in the community is critically important. Many elements can have a direct and an indirect impact on language use in these domains. Learning Gaelic in the home, from parents and the wider family, is more important than ever for the language to thrive. Our challenge is to assess the key initiatives that shape language use in the home and community and ensure effective support is in place which builds on the work delivered by Comunn na Gàidhlig over many years, and increasingly now by community trusts.

Within the context of this Plan, it may be helpful to consider community as being: communities with high percentages of Gaelic speakers; communities within towns and cities; and communities linked through media and technology. This is further expanded in section 6.

## Gaelic in the Economy

Language and culture create self-esteem, nurture self-confidence, define identity, improve quality of life, encourage self-reliance and promote engagement in dialogue. They preserve our heritage, help us make sense of our future, and are empowering. These are

essential instigators and pre-requisites of economic development and growth which creates jobs, improves lives and is inclusive of others.

It is well recognised that Gaelic contributes powerfully in this way and our knowledge of the important role that Gaelic plays in the Scottish economy continues to develop. The research undertaken by Highlands and Islands Enterprise in 2014 showed the potential value of Gaelic as an asset could be up to £149 million. Similarly, the impact of MG ALBA was demonstrated in 2015 to create good quality employment, particularly in areas of low population, and add value to the economy.

It is clear that Gaelic plays an important part in increasing employability and providing employment, and that it is generating wealth for Scotland, well in excess of the level of public investment. Put simply, Gaelic contributes and adds value to the Scottish economy.

Connected to this is the fact that a healthy economy, particularly in island and rural Gaelic-speaking communities, is vital to the future of Gaelic. During the course of this Plan, there will be political change and support structures will require to be monitored and reappraised in light of that change so as to maintain the momentum in the Gaelic economy.



Opportunities to also grow the potential of Gaelic in the economy need to be progressed, particularly in collaboration with our enterprise and skills agencies, and working with employers, communities and young people

arts and traditional music. Two of MG ALBA's projects, FilmG and LearnGaelic.scot, have also proved to be of great value. MG ALBA/BBC ALBA add significant value to Gaelic, to Scottish culture and to the economy.

## Gaelic Media

At this point it is difficult to think of Gaelic in Scotland without reflecting on the role of MG ALBA/BBC ALBA and BBC Radio nan Gàidheal. Gaelic broadcasting has played an increasingly important role in Gaelic development in recent years. The Gaelic digital television channel, BBC ALBA, serves a wide audience of Gaelic speakers and learners, and a wider Scottish audience. Continued support of Gaelic television, radio, publishing and online presence is essential to promoting positive attitudes to the language across Scotland. They also provide resources for Gaelic speakers and learners and promote the increased use of Gaelic.

MG ALBA/BBC ALBA make a unique contribution to a number of other important areas of Gaelic development such as Gaelic adult education, school education, initiatives for young people and Gaelic in the home and community.

MG ALBA/BBC ALBA benefits can be seen in employment, skills, training, creative industries, sports,

## Gaelic in the Arts and Creative Industries

The impact of the Gaelic arts is immense both for the language community and nationally. The Gaelic arts have the potential to promote language attachment and loyalty. The arts provide opportunities for expression and skills development, for access and participation and for engagement and pursuing excellence. In all of this, the appeal and profile of Gaelic is raised in Scotland and beyond, language use is strengthened and cultural life enhanced with welcome economic and social benefits.

The contribution of Creative Scotland has been critical in this. Beyond this a number of other authorities and bodies have also been supportive. The link between the Gaelic language and Gaelic arts and culture is an important part both of Gaelic's history and the place of Gaelic today. Tourism agencies and heritage groups also play a pivotal role in this development. The support for key groups is critically important, but so also are larger events and festivals where Gaelic artists and writers are included.

If our aim is to increase the use of Gaelic, then we need to see the valuable work of the Gaelic arts continue. This includes An Comunn Gàidhealach, particularly through their organising of the Royal National Mòd and local mods, it includes Fèisean nan Gàidheal, which brings Gaelic language and arts to young people today and it also includes groups like Ceòlas, a range of drama organisations, and arts centres.

Support for Gaelic publishing, particularly through the work of Comhairle nan Leabhraichean, Acair and others, ensures that Gaelic continues to provide opportunities for writers, publishers and consumers. Such support produces enhanced linguistic skills amongst those using Gaelic.

The arts have a positive and varied impact. The use of Gaelic in the arts is important for speakers, readers, learners and for awareness of Gaelic in Scotland and beyond. If the increased use of Gaelic is our aim, then the arts have a central place in this aim.

## Gaelic Language Plans

In many cases, Scottish public authorities are taking important steps to support Gaelic in their areas and in line with their functions. Bòrd na Gàidhlig has a role to support and encourage this. The mechanism of Gaelic Language Plans enables partnership working between Bòrd na Gàidhlig and those public authorities.

Gaelic Language Plans are found throughout Scottish public life. To date, over 50 Gaelic Language Plans have been developed and implemented by local authorities, public bodies, national parks, health boards, academic institutions and by the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government, and some 20 others are being prepared.

The impact of these is evident in the increased visibility of Gaelic in public authorities, in developing initiatives and projects which support increased learning and use of Gaelic as well as increased service delivery such as Gaelic medium education and Gaelic learner education.



## Gaelic Language (Corpus)

Corpus development is an essential part of Gaelic language planning in ensuring that effective learning and confident usage are supported now and in the future. There are a number of initiatives and projects underway which contribute to ensuring the richness, relevance and consistency of Gaelic. These projects vary in size and scope but all have a useful function and make an important contribution.

One of the key projects in this field is Glasgow University's Digital Archive of Scottish Gaelic (DASG), of which the creation of Corpas na Gàidhlig is a key strand. This project has digitally captured 337 Gaelic texts, of various styles, ages, and subjects. The analysis of the resulting 20 million words captured provides the basis on which other initiatives are based, such as Faclair na Gàidhlig, the historical dictionary project.

Other important projects in this area include work on providing new terminology for schools (An Seotal); place-name advice (Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba); and more recently, an advisory committee (Comataidh Comhairleachaidh Cànanain) to oversee new projects and ensure that the view of the user community is at the heart of all corpus developments.



## Using Gaelic

*Increasing the use of Gaelic in homes and communities presents a number of challenges. Although it is possible to point to a range of initiatives that have an impact on this, we believe it is an area that would benefit from a review of approach in order to ensure the most effective measures are in place*

*Creating greater links between Gaelic and the economy can support those communities which have high levels of Gaelic usage to be more sustainable. There are two aspects to this – the economy created by investment in Gaelic and the wider economy to which Gaelic speakers contribute.*

*MG ALBA/BBC ALBA make an immense contribution. We will ensure we collaborate with and support our colleagues in MG ALBA/BBC ALBA with their varied ambitions.*

*During the period of this Plan, we aim to bring a stronger and more coherent focus to the Gaelic arts on account of the essential contribution the arts makes to increasing the use of Gaelic.*

*Gaelic Language Plans have been important in increasing the use of Gaelic, and in the years ahead we would like to focus on increased collaboration with and between authorities, and to ensure a strong emphasis on supporting public bodies with Gaelic usage.*

*Corpus development is central to using Gaelic. Gaelic must remain a consistent and relevant language today and into the future. For that reason it is important that initiatives to create new, and coordinate existing, terminology and maintain the richness of the Gaelic language continue to be supported.*

*We also see potential in our international links and we will look very closely at how these can be enhanced for the benefit of Gaelic both here in Scotland and in other places.*

## Gaelic Education in Scotland

Gaelic medium education (GME) is now established within Scottish education. Its aim is for young people to be able to operate confidently and fluently in Gaelic and English as they progress from early years, through primary education and into secondary education, realising the recognised benefits of bilingualism.

GME is currently available in a number of education authority areas across Scotland. There are also a growing number of Gaelic medium schools in Scotland and dual stream (Gaelic and English) primary schools where GME is in the majority. Gaelic early learning and childcare is also available in parts of Scotland. Gaelic medium secondary education is also available in a number of secondary schools in Scotland.

Gaelic learner education (GLE) is distinct from GME in that it is delivered to those who are in English medium education as an additional language. There has been encouraging growth in recent years in GLE, particularly at primary school level where it provides young people with an introduction to Gaelic language and culture.

Just as important as the opportunities which exist for young people to learn Gaelic in school, are those available to develop Gaelic skills as part of an individual's progress into the world of work. This focus on skills development linked into enterprise, through Developing the Young Workforce and other initiatives, will undoubtedly open up new pathways for Gaelic speakers to progress their skills in preparation for entering the workforce and has the potential to develop Gaelic skills still further by allowing young people to undertake modern apprenticeships through the medium of Gaelic.

Educational agencies and public bodies in Scotland also have a vital role to play in supporting and developing Gaelic education in Scotland. Education Scotland, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), the Scottish College for Educational Leadership (SCEL), universities and colleges and teacher education institutions make an essential contribution to the promotion, support and growth of Gaelic education in Scotland. Along

with these bodies, Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig supports pupils, teachers and families through its role in providing resources for Gaelic education.

## Gaelic Teaching and Support Staff

Our aim is to support the growth of Gaelic education. With this we must also maintain a consistent emphasis on supporting the training and recruitment of teachers and other staff for Gaelic in schools and early years. In recent years, there have been improved numbers of Gaelic teachers entering the profession and this must be maintained. This improvement has largely resulted from continuing to support the traditional routes into Gaelic teaching and encouraging new or alternative routes. This approach must continue to feature and be promoted in our support for Gaelic education.

## Post-school Gaelic Learning

Further and Higher Education also offers excellent opportunities for Gaelic speakers and those learning the language to develop their skills. In 2016-17 approximately 500 students were registered on Gaelic undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Scotland across six institutions, with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and others offering a range of further and higher education courses through the medium of Gaelic.

Distance learning programmes offered by Sabhal Mòr Ostaig attract Gaelic learners from every corner of the world, helping to grow the number of speakers overall and providing employment for tutors.

Traditional communities have developed an increasing role in providing support structures for Gaelic learning institutions and for individual Gaelic learners.

## Adult Learning

Beyond the formal learning routes, we know that approximately 3,500 people are actively learning the language, through a wide range of different courses and in communities the length and breadth of the country.

Likewise, the Gaelic learners' website LearnGaelic.scot attracts thousands of regular users from across Scotland and abroad and, alongside the high quality content available on BBC ALBA and BBC Radio nan Gàidheal, this adds up to a valuable set of resources for Gaelic learners. On-going research will help us better understand the needs of adult Gaelic learners and inform strategies for supporting them in the future.

Gaelic language plans across the public sector in Scotland have seen a rise in opportunities to learn and use Gaelic within the workplace. Many employers are actively supporting their staff to learn Gaelic in order to provide a better level of service to the public they serve.

## Learning of Gaelic

*In education, there has been growth and progress. Each year we can point to new initiatives that strengthen the fabric of Gaelic education in Scottish schools.*

*There is also a clear consensus that Gaelic education is central to the ambition of Gaelic growth and for this reason education and learning will remain central to this Plan, as they were to the previous Plan, and be included in relevant priority areas and key commitments to ensure further growth and improvement.*

*Our clear view is that Gaelic education makes an important contribution to the aim of increasing the numbers of those speaking, using and learning the language. Gaelic education also contributes to other areas of Gaelic activity and interest, such as the arts and the economy. We are, therefore, clear that with Gaelic education the momentum needs to be maintained and increased.*

*Outwith formal education, we need to maintain and increase support for families, communities, workplaces and individuals to access and use a wide variety of means to acquire Gaelic, whether understanding, speaking, reading or writing skills.*

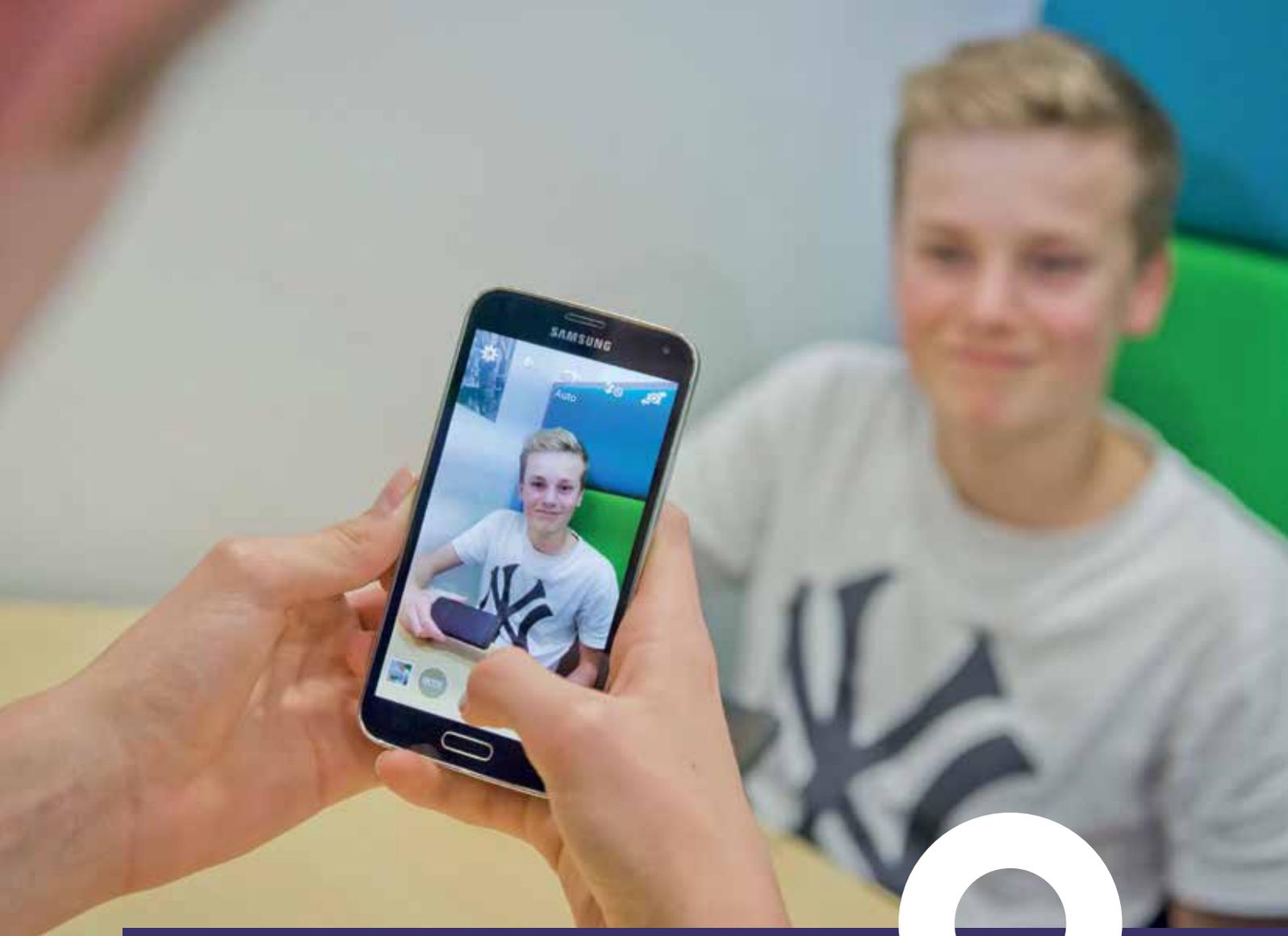
## Status of Gaelic

In recent years there has been a significant improvement in the status of Gaelic in Scotland. By this, we mean that the public recognition and support for Gaelic has improved and that many public authorities and bodies in Scotland have been very positive about the support they offer Gaelic.

The Scottish Government has made progress with a number of Gaelic priorities recently; there has been consistent support from the Scottish Parliament and a number of authorities have demonstrated important support for Gaelic. Bòrd na Gàidhlig's work with Gaelic Language Plans has contributed to the increased status of Gaelic in over 50 public authorities.

An important part of securing the place of Gaelic in Scotland today is ensuring that attitudes towards Gaelic among non-speakers are positive. In 2011 and 2013 there were surveys of attitudes and these clearly indicated that a majority of people in Scotland are both aware of Gaelic and supportive. These surveys also indicated that BBC ALBA was having a positive effect on attitudes to Gaelic in Scotland.

However, hostility to Gaelic is still found in the media and in some political exchanges. In response to this, it is important that a positive media profile is promoted and Bòrd na Gàidhlig will lead work with key partners to ensure that positive attitudes are maintained. The on-going support and leadership of the Scottish Government is important to this work.



## CONCLUSION

*Gaelic development has made good progress and yet there is much to do. From the brief review above of the impact of current initiatives, it is clear that we need to maintain the progress we have made and increase the momentum by means of new commitments.*

*Our review of current initiatives also brings us to the conclusion that there are a range of priorities that need to be pursued. These have been categorised under the headings of increasing the use of Gaelic, increasing the learning of Gaelic and promoting a positive image of Gaelic.*

*These are the three headings we have used to categorise our priorities and commitments. We are aware that some priorities and commitments will of course contribute to all three.*

# Gaelic Communities

# 6

In implementing our priorities and commitments, we need to recognise that not all Gaelic users are the same, and that Gaelic is used as the language of choice by many people in different communities across Scotland, in island and rural areas, as well as in towns and cities across the country. There are also Gaelic speaking communities in other countries and technology has created another type of community, via radio, TV and online, which links individuals worldwide.

Increasing usage in and across these communities requires a variety of solutions but also offers huge opportunities for the different types of community to support each other. In all types of communities, the work of volunteers has been and will continue to be of critical importance. However, it is important that the needs of different communities are understood and that support is tailored to fit those needs.





## Island and Rural Communities

A particular emphasis must be given to maintaining and strengthening Gaelic in the island and rural communities where it remains relatively strong and is the first language for a sizeable proportion of the people.

One of the main challenges facing these communities is retaining an economically active population. Demographic projections for the Outer Hebrides show a potential decline in excess of 13% by 2039, with young people particularly affected.

Research conducted in 2015 found that the top five factors that would make the region a more attractive place to live, work and study for young people were 1) High quality jobs 2) Opportunities for career progression 3) Good access to housing 4) Good access to further and higher education, and 5) Affordable transport links. Another significant issue raised by young people was access to high speed mobile connectivity.

Gaelic-speaking island and rural communities must be re-energised in a way that will retain and attract young people. This will require innovative solutions from a range of partners in relation to employment, affordable homes in the right places, the provision of quality child and health care, access to affordable and reliable transport links and connection to high speed broadband and mobile services. These communities have the potential to offer the opportunity to the increasing number of people learning the language to make the transition to confident users.

## Towns and Cities

Towns and cities across Scotland have seen the most rapid increase in numbers of Gaelic users in recent times, mainly driven by the growth of Gaelic medium education. Here, the primary need and opportunity is to bring speakers together more often – particularly young people with adults – to create dynamic communities which support and grow the use of Gaelic within these urban settings.

Gaelic arts and cultural events already play a central role. This needs to expand, as do other types of infrastructure to support using Gaelic whether it be through sports, training or social activities, thus creating vibrant and thriving communities which can capitalise on opportunities for growth.

## Communities Linked by Technology

Technology can open up a whole new range of opportunities for Gaelic. Radio and screen-based use of Gaelic is growing and has the potential to further increase the range of social and economic benefits for Gaelic users nationally and internationally.

At the same time, young people are watching less and less linear TV and there is a challenge to create Gaelic digital offerings that attract and engage them if they are to continue to engage with and generate further Gaelic content. Fully embracing this opportunity is vital for the language.

# USING GAELIC

# 7

## INCREASING THE USE OF GAELIC

### Priority Areas

- Initiatives which promote the use of Gaelic in homes and communities
- Initiatives which promote the use of Gaelic by young people
- Gaelic in traditional and new media
- Gaelic in the arts, publishing and creative industries
- Gaelic Language Plans
- Gaelic in the workplace
- Gaelic use in heritage, tourism, food and drink, environment and leisure industries
- Initiatives which strengthen language richness, relevance and consistency
- Initiatives promoting links with Gaelic abroad and with minority languages

Working with all key partners we will maintain a strong focus on the increased use of Gaelic.

This will include a range of initiatives that have the potential to influence the use of Gaelic in homes and communities, with a particular focus on engaging and supporting young people.

It will involve a focus on Gaelic speaking rural communities, opportunities for Gaelic to be used in Scotland's towns and cities, and increasing links through technology.

The importance of Gaelic in the economy is increasingly recognised, not only as a generator of value but also as a factor in increasing confidence that contributes to entrepreneurial activity. Increasing the use of Gaelic, particularly in island and rural communities, has the potential to address some of the challenges that face communities.

Gaelic media is central to increasing use and is of great importance to Gaelic in Scotland. This includes the work of MG ALBA, the collaboration with the BBC in BBC ALBA and the work of the independent production companies.

In addition, the benefits of Gaelic media stretch into many areas and sectors, and as well as contributing to learning they also make a strong and unique contribution to the increased use of Gaelic.

Gaelic use in the arts and the other creative spheres also has a range of positive benefits from economic to raising the appeal of Gaelic and strengthening loyalty to the language. In addition, the arts offer opportunities for skills development, for access to performances and for expression and participation. They do this at community, national and international levels.



There is also significant potential in heritage, tourism, food and drink, environment and leisure industries for using Gaelic. Gaelic can add value to these through making a link to a distinctive culture, a spectacular environment and the natural world, providing a unique tourism experience and an appreciation of heritage in a range of leisure pursuits.

Traditional industries, such as fishing and crofting, and sectors such as health and social care, also provide opportunities for using Gaelic and for increasing the value of the language to speakers. The growth in community land ownership can have a similar impact.

There are also clear benefits in links with Gaelic in Canada and links with Ireland. These hold significant valuable potential to increase language use, to foster collaborative working and to increase an international presence for Gaelic.

With these priorities, we will increase the use of Gaelic.

## Key New Commitments

We will maintain a strong focus on the priorities set out previously, as we recognise their importance for Gaelic in Scotland.

We also recognise that there are areas where a new emphasis or initiative is needed. These are listed below as key commitments and they have a clear link to the priority areas and to our overall aim.

We are confident that these key commitments contain a new element to add to what is in place or to overcome an obstacle that has been identified.

Working with key partners, we will ensure good progress with the commitments below in the life of this Plan.

## Families

Gaelic use in families and those communities with a significant percentage of Gaelic speakers is critical. Current initiatives will be reviewed to improve effectiveness, identify gaps and new opportunities.

## Young People

Develop initiatives to increase the range of and participation in attractive activities and sports.

Establish a multi-agency fund which supports young people to create new digital platforms and content.

## Communities with High Levels of Gaelic Speakers

Establish a multi-agency fund to support proposals from Community Land Scotland members and other groups for projects that will boost the social and economic value of Gaelic.

## Communities in Towns and Cities

New initiatives in sports and the arts will be developed to create more opportunities for speaking Gaelic.

Develop a programme of support to enable urban Gaelic communities to thrive.





## Gaelic in the Economy

Working with other public agencies, ensure that Gaelic contributes to economic regeneration in developments such as those in Lochaber, Lewis, South Uist, Wester Ross, and others.

## Gaelic in the Workplace

Establish a new initiative which promotes the use of Gaelic in the workplace in the private, voluntary and public sectors, with a particular emphasis on utilising the Gaelic language skills of young people in island and rural communities.

## Gaelic Medium Skills Training

Increase the availability of training and modern apprenticeships through the medium of Gaelic, particularly in communities with high percentages of Gaelic speakers.

## Gaelic Tourism and Heritage

The organisations that use Gaelic in tourism, heritage and linked industries will be supported, and as part

of this a Gaelic tourism strategy will be developed and implemented.

## Gaelic Arts

Progress has been made towards the establishment of a new Gaelic education and arts centre in South Uist. Collaboration between all interested parties will be supported to ensure that the centre is established and operational.

There are a number of bodies that are important for the Gaelic arts. An initiative will be developed to support long-term sustainability in this sector, strengthening its profile and effectiveness.

## Gaelic Overseas

Build closer working relationships with Nova Scotia and identify initiatives that will increase co-operation.

Joint research projects with Ireland will be developed to assess the potential to collaborate on joint developments, particularly in language technology.



## Key Public Authorities and Bodies

Below is a list of the authorities and bodies that have a key role with both the priority areas and key commitments listed in this section. Many of them already have important commitments to Gaelic in place.

Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament, Local Authorities, Scottish Public Bodies, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, MG ALBA, Creative Scotland, VisitScotland, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Historic Environment Scotland, sportscotland, Office of Gaelic Affairs (Nova Scotia), Foras na Gaeilge (Ireland), Gaelic bodies and organisations.



# LEARNING GAELIC

# 8

## INCREASING THE LEARNING OF GAELIC

### Priority Areas

- Gaelic in the family
- Gaelic medium workforce recruitment, retention, training and supply
- Resources and support for learning
- Gaelic in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)
- Gaelic medium education (GME) in primary and secondary schools
- Gaelic learner education (GLE) in primary and secondary schools
- Gaelic in Further and Higher Education
- Adult Gaelic learning



Working with all key partners, we will maintain a strong focus on the many aspects of Gaelic learning. This includes all the areas listed in this section and both formal and informal learning.

The home remains an important factor in passing on the language from parent to child and there are opportunities to increase the understanding of why this is important and to support parents to do so.

Availability of sufficient professional staff is essential to achieve the ambitions for growth in GME so we continue to prioritise GM teacher promotion, recruitment, education, placing and retention. We will maintain our focus on routes into GM teaching. We want to see excellent support in place for teachers and a continued emphasis on the quality of Gaelic learning.

Resources and support remain priorities, for teachers, support staff and pupils as does professional learning and the development for staff. These make a vital contribution to the quality of learning in both GME and GLE. We will ensure that the Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education is promoted, widely used, and is the recognised authority on Gaelic education.

We will encourage the promotion, availability and growth of GME. We will support parents and carers who want GME for their children and those who would like to see a GME school established in their area. The 2016 Education Act has important new provisions for families giving them and Comann nam Pàrant a new role in GME.

Gaelic Early Learning and Childcare is an important element of Gaelic education and of the aim of creating a secure future for Gaelic in Scotland.

We need to see a strong focus on GLE in schools and good use made of the excellent training and resources that are available. We will work to ensure that there is an increased uptake of GLE in both primary and secondary.

We will also maintain our emphasis on all elements of Gaelic post-school education. This includes the excellent work of universities and colleges. We will continue to focus on adult Gaelic learning opportunities, both for those with an interest in learning the language and those who need to use it at work, and on associated resources and tutors.

With these priorities, we will increase the learning of Gaelic.





## Key New Commitments

We will maintain a strong focus on the priorities set out previously, as we recognise their importance for Gaelic in Scotland.

We also recognise that there are areas where a new emphasis or initiative is needed. These are listed below as key commitments and they have a clear link to the priority areas and to our overall aim.

We are confident that these key commitments contain a new element to add to what is in place or to overcome an obstacle that has been identified.

Working with key partners, we will ensure good progress with the commitments below in the life of this Plan.

## From Parent to Child

New initiatives which support families to use Gaelic with their children will be developed.

## Gaelic Education Workforce

New routes to promote, recruit, educate and retain Gaelic teachers will be explored, and existing routes reviewed to identify any gaps. There is a need to focus also on other staff such as ELC staff and language assistants.

'S E LATHA BRÈAGHA A TH' ANN  
IT IS A LOVELY DAY

THA MI DEISEIL  
I AM READY

BHA MI A' COISEACHD  
I WAS WALKING

THA I TIORAM  
IT IS DRY

BIADH  
FOOD

UISGE  
WATER





## Guidance on Gaelic Education

Bòrd na Gàidhlig has issued Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education and, with partners, will ensure it is widely circulated and recognised as the principal authority on Gaelic education.

## Gaelic Medium Education: Supporting Parents

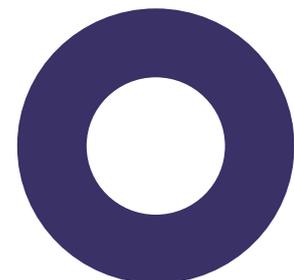
Bòrd na Gàidhlig will support groups of parents who request Gaelic medium education for their children through the provisions of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 which came into force in 2017.

## GME in Areas with Significant Numbers of Gaelic Speakers

The 2011 Census listed fifty civil parishes with 5% or more Gaelic speakers. The aim will be to see GME available to young people in all of these fifty parishes.

## Gaelic Schools

The aim is to increase the number of Gaelic schools from six to ten during the life of this Plan through capital funding initiatives from SG.



## e-Sgoil

The aim of extending the delivery of key subjects through the medium of Gaelic by e-Sgoil will be supported. This will be seen as additionality and not as replacing traditional methods.

## GM Early Learning and Childcare Growth

The aim is to increase GM ELC and that GM ELC should be attached to every GM primary school or unit.

## GM Early Learning and Childcare Expansion

The aim is to ensure GM ELC benefits from the SG's expansion of hours, whilst maintaining all the initiatives that are currently in place.

## GM ELC Training

Establish courses in Childhood Practice that will be available through the medium of Gaelic.

## Gaelic Adult Learning

Develop the existing resources for adult learners and ensure that gaps in support and provision are identified and addressed.

## Key Public Authorities and Bodies

Below we have listed the authorities and bodies that have a key role with both the priority areas and key commitments listed in this section. Many of them already have important commitments to Gaelic in place.

Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament, Local Authorities, Scottish Public Bodies, Scottish Funding Council, Education Scotland, Scottish Qualifications Authority, Skills Development Scotland, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, MG ALBA, Higher and Further Education Institutions, Comann nam Pàrant.



# PROMOTING GAELIC

# 9

## ENSURING THAT A POSITIVE IMAGE OF GAELIC IS PROMOTED

### Priority Areas

- Support for Gaelic from the Scottish Government, Parliament and wider political support
- Gaelic Language Plans implemented by public authorities (local authorities and public bodies)
- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic and raising awareness through:
  - Gaelic media and other media
  - Gaelic education at all levels, and
  - Gaelic arts
- Promoting the social, economic and cultural value of Gaelic
- Positive messages about Gaelic, and diversity and inclusion

Working with all key partners we will maintain a strong focus on ensuring that a positive image of Gaelic is promoted. This includes all the areas listed previously.

It will include a range of initiatives that have the potential to contribute to a positive image for Gaelic.

Gaelic has benefitted from leadership and support from the Scottish Government (SG). We will seek to maintain this support and demonstrate where Gaelic contributes to other SG priorities and encourage Gaelic interests to respond to consultation opportunities.

The mechanism of Gaelic Language Plans (GLPs) has contributed to increasing the status, profile and awareness of Gaelic in Scotland. While we recognise that GLPs achieve many things, we will seek to ensure that a positive image is core to this work.

Gaelic broadcasting has a key role to play in promoting a positive image for Gaelic, as do other media. Surveys of attitude in 2011 and 2013 have underlined this point. Gaelic arts, in all their forms, have an important role to play in promoting a positive image of Gaelic.

Also, as the popularity of Gaelic education grows, it contributes to promoting a positive image for Gaelic. The education system can also be a powerful route to increase the understanding of Gaelic's role in modern Scotland.

In addition, we recognise the need to develop a strong narrative about Gaelic in Scotland and to actively promote clear and positive messages about Gaelic. We will ensure opportunities are taken for this.

With these priorities we will ensure that a positive image of Gaelic is promoted.

## Key New Commitments

We will maintain a strong focus on the activities set out previously as we recognise their importance for Gaelic in Scotland.

We also recognise that there are areas where a new emphasis or initiative is needed. These are listed below as key commitments and they have a clear link to the priority areas and to our overall aim.

We are confident that these key commitments contain a new element to add to what is in place or to overcome an obstacle that has been identified. Working with



key partners, we will ensure good progress with the commitments below in the life of this Plan.

## Scottish Government and Parliament

Gaelic interests will maintain a focus on SG manifesto commitments, national outcomes and policy priorities.

## Public Life

National consultations will receive a response from Gaelic organisations. This will keep Gaelic at the centre of the policy process and will contribute to the profile and image of Gaelic.

## Communications

In order to raise the profile of Gaelic generally, a stronger narrative on Gaelic will be developed through agreeing strong messages, by regularly issuing positive news and stories about Gaelic in Scotland and responding to negative, misleading stories.

## Realising Gaelic as an Economic Asset

Communicate key messages - to individuals, communities, private sector and public sector organisations - around Gaelic and its contribution to the economy.



## Careers Advice

Explain the value of Gaelic language skills in terms of enhancing employability and supporting economic growth to parents, pupils, educators, career advisers, private and public sector.

## Wider Impact

Representations will be made to all relevant authorities on all key issues that impact on Gaelic in areas of low population which have higher percentages of Gaelic speakers.

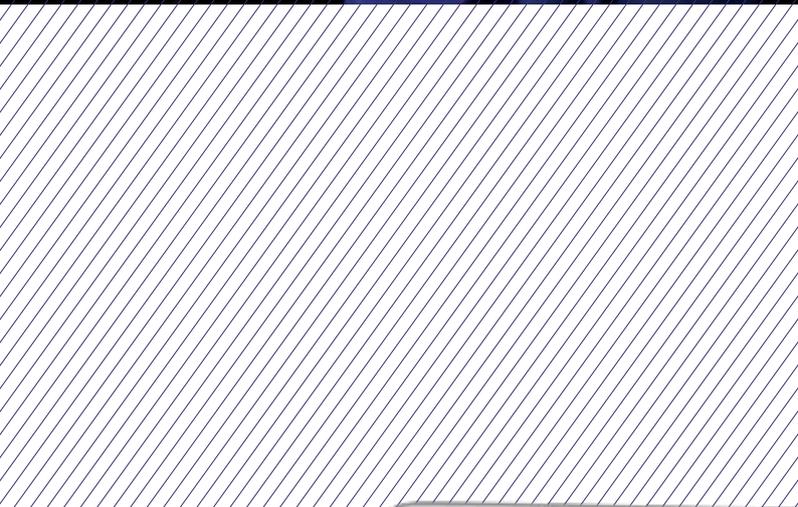
## Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity issues connected to Gaelic will be researched and a strategy to overcome barriers will be developed.

## Key Public Authorities and Bodies

Below we have listed the authorities and bodies that have a key role with both the priority areas and key commitments listed in this section. Many of them already have important commitments to Gaelic in place.

Scottish Government, Scottish Parliament, Local Authorities, Scottish Public Bodies, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, MG ALBA, Gaelic bodies and organisations.



# IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

# 10

The National Gaelic Language Plan outlines the key strategic priorities and new commitments that are necessary to grow the use of Gaelic in Scotland over the next five years.

The responsibility for making progress with the priorities and key commitments in this Plan sits across many different authorities, organisations and communities. Many of the priorities and commitments will be implemented by public authorities via their own Gaelic Language Plans while some will be taken forward by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and others by families, communities and the private sector.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig will publish a detailed National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 Implementation Strategy within 6 months of this Plan being launched. It will outline how each of the priorities and key new commitments will be progressed, by whom and what the targets will be.

In order to track progress on the Plan, Bòrd na Gàidhlig will collate and publish information from a range of sources, including public authorities, Gaelic

organisations and community groups in an annual National Gaelic Language Plan progress report.

Increasing the use of Gaelic is at the core of the National Gaelic Language Plan and ways of measuring this will be developed to give a clear picture as to how the strategies for increasing use are working.

We are determined to ensure that the monitoring of the National Gaelic Language Plan implementation is as open and transparent as possible, so that the public can understand what is happening, what successes are achieved, what the challenges are and the different approaches adopted to deal with the challenges.