

# An Comunn Gàidhealach

ORGANISERS OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL MOD

## Response from An Comunn Gàidhealach regarding the National Gaelic Language Plan 2017-2022

### Question 1

The structure for the Plan consists of an aim, priority areas and commitments. Do you have any comments on how we structured the Plan and the overall aim we have selected?

- The plan is well structured and the aim is correct and has a sense of continuity. It is easy to follow and the priority areas and commitments provide a logical route to support the aim.

### Question 2

We believe that the promotion of a positive image for Gaelic is essential and we think that the areas above (being priority areas) are the key areas that can make a contribution to this. Do you have any comments on the areas we have selected or alternative suggestions?

- Growing the number of learners of Gaelic is vital to the future prospects for the language, and the image of the language is a significant influence on learners and users. The promotion of a positive image for Gaelic is critical and requires a strategy with defined roles for participants. The strategy should re-emphasise the importance of cross-party political support to counter any polarisation of political views that may surround the language.
- Some thought should be given to new initiatives to catch the attention of young people – making Gaelic “cool” and a desirable asset to their lives.

### Question 3

We believe education and Gaelic learning are central to this Plan. We have also listed the priority areas that we believe should be a focus for ongoing activity. Do you have any comments on this emphasis and on the priority areas selected for learning Gaelic?

- The priority areas listed should be the focus for ongoing activity. Continuing success in this area will bring considerable resource issues to the fore. It is important that the resolution of these resource issues does not adversely impact upon the promotion of a positive image for Gaelic.
- Post-school and adult Gaelic learning is currently an area of uncertainty that is reliant on the support and co-operation of a multitude of independent tutors and learning institutions. This area requires support and direction.

### Question 4

We believe the (priority) areas selected are important for promoting the increased use of Gaelic. Do you have any comments or suggestions that you would like to make in relation to promoting the increased use of Gaelic?

- The priority areas listed are wide-ranging (ranging from home and families to promoting links with Gaelic abroad and with other minority languages) and it is important that the range of priorities does not dilute efforts to increase the number of people using Gaelic, and also increasing opportunities for them to do so in relation to as many public services as possible.

### Question 5

In questions 2, 3 and 4, you were asked about your views on the priority areas identified. In this question, we would like to hear any views or suggestions you may have on the key commitments we have identified and views on any key commitments you think should be included in order to make progress with the aim of increasing the number of people speaking, using and learning Gaelic in Scotland and the number of situations in which it is used?

- The commitment to review current initiatives to improve effectiveness, identify gaps and new opportunities in communities with a high percentage of Gaelic speakers is welcomed and must be a high priority.
- If increased use of Gaelic is our aim, then the arts have a central place in this aim. The commitment to support long-term sustainability amongst Gaelic Arts bodies is welcomed. Long term sustainability is a worthy aspiration and we assume that the inference to short and medium-term support is also under-written.
- The support to build working relationships with Nova Scotia is noted and welcomed.
- Joint development with Ireland is noted and welcomed. We note the strong support that is offered by other minority languages within the UK and elsewhere and suggest that joint research, if practicable, should be global rather than focused on only one other minority language community.

### Question 6

The earlier consultation questions have been fairly specific. If there are any other points you would like to make and feel you have not had the opportunity to do so, please write them below.

- Perhaps the general context of Minority Language survival should be emphasised. Many of the difficulties that we face in Scotland are also being experienced in Wales, in Ireland, and elsewhere. Whilst our situation is difficult we are not alone. Minority languages world-wide are confronted by an onslaught from mainstream languages and perhaps this context needs to be stated.