

Bòrd na Gàidhlig

By email: plana@gaidhlig.scot

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A Allan Chòir,

Bòrd na Gàidhlig – Consultation on The National Gaelic Language Plan 2017 – 2022

Historic Environment Scotland welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Draft National Gaelic Language Plan 2017 – 2022. We are a non-departmental public body with charitable status, governed by a Board of Trustees, who were appointed by Scottish Ministers. We lead and enable Scotland's first historic environment strategy Our Place in Time, which sets out how our historic environment will be managed. It ensures our historic environment is cared for, valued and enhanced, both now and for future generations.

We are fully supportive of the work undertaken by the Bòrd in developing the new plan and recognise our own commitments to the promotion of Gaelic within its three main aims. This simpler structure plays well to a broad and cohesive approach to Gaelic planning and we look forward to participating in this process.

Historic Environment Scotland offer the following comments on the proposals put forward in the consultation document. These comments have also been submitted online using your consultation portal.

General Comments

Promoting a positive image of Gaelic to Scotland's many visitors

We support the Bòrd's efforts to promote a positive image for Gaelic and believe this will be vital to changing perceptions of Gaelic, and to highlight the many benefits gained by engaging with the language. With reference to research from Visit Scotland, potentially over half of our visitors to Scotland have a stated interest in Gaelic culture. This being the case, we would advise consideration of Heritage and Tourism as a priority area within this aim.



Q1 The structure for the Plan consists of an aim, priority areas and commitments. Do you have any comments on how we have structured the Plan and the overall aim we have selected

We welcome the new simplified structure to the National plan which lends well to comprehension of the Bord's overall intentions. Distilled down from the three primary aims we can see a clear progression and broadening out of policy.

Q2 We believe that the promotion of a positive image for Gaelic is essential and we think that the areas above 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?

We support the aim of presenting a positive image for Gaelic language and culture which is of vital importance to highlighting the many benefits that come from engaging with the language. The more people will come to know and understand those benefits the greater the desire for bilingual public services will be. With research from Visit Scotland indicating that 51% of overseas visitors have an interest in Gaelic culture, we recommend Heritage and Tourism for consideration as a priority area through which we can disseminate a positive message to our many visitors to Scotland.

Q3 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?

We support the National Plan's emphasis on Gaelic education and learning and acknowledge that this area will be vital if we are to increase the numbers of Gaelic speakers in Scotland. The key to this approach are clear linkages between the priority areas, and progression between the various stages of early years, primary, higher, further education with expanded opportunities within recruitment, training and supply. We would also encourage opportunities for informal and lifelong learning with families, community groups, vocational learners and visitors through activities, projects and digital channels to promote Gaelic language and culture to a wider audience. We are currently in the process of reviewing our Gaelic learning and outreach programme with outcomes aligned to these priority areas.

Q4 We believe the areas selected are important for promoting the increased use of Gaelic. Do you have any comments or suggestions you would like to make in relation to promoting the increased use of Gaelic?

We support the greater use of Gaelic believing this to be a vital component of the National plan. Within Heritage and Tourism we will endeavour to support this aim by strengthening the visitor experience in terms of Gaelic and in doing so to create environments that encourage and promote the use of Gaelic.



Q5 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?

We welcome the National Plan's key commitments and regard them as clear and reasonable statements of intent.

In regards to Promoting Gaelic and as mentioned in question 3. We support the National Plan's emphasis on promoting a positive image of Gaelic with advice to consider Heritage and Tourism as a priority area in this aim.

In regards to learning Gaelic, we welcome the expansion of Gaelic Medium Education, and the clear framing per Civil parish at a 5% of speaker population.

In regards to using Gaelic. We support the greater use of Gaelic within Heritage and Tourism with the development and implementation of our new HES Gaelic language plan 2018 - 2023 and have begun the process of feeding into the Gaelic tourism strategy.

Q6 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.

The National plan for Gaelic 2017 – 2022 makes for encouraging reading with a broad scope to deliver in many areas.

Yours sincerely,

ALEX PATERSON