

**Recommendations for
the advancement of
Gaelic Publishing in Scotland**

A Report for Bòrd na Gàidhlig

by

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Summary

In February 2006 Bòrd na Gàidhlig instructed a group of Gaelic publishing representatives to investigate the views of the Gaelic publishing sector about the current state of Gaelic publishing in Scotland, and to make recommendations which would guide the way ahead in this sector, to include new structures and operational methods which would renew and reinvigorate Gaelic publishing in Scotland in the years ahead.

The national plan for Gaelic states as follows: *literacy is necessary in language development and language loyalty. This is encouraged and strengthened through consistent reading. If readers eagerly seek out, read and debate Gaelic writing, it provides encouragement for editors and promotes hope in authors.*

The main recommendations in this report are in line with the above statement.

Major Recommendations

1. The structure which deals with Gaelic publishing in Scotland should be re-created in order to bring it into line with current requirements.
2. A much wider selection of Gaelic books is required, ranging from romance, detective, science-fiction, history and reference, so that Gaelic readers can enjoy a range of books of all kinds.
3. A dedicated distribution centre and a dedicated marketing strategy are required.

4. A training programme is required as is support for writers, publishers, translators, designers and editors.
5. A national Centre is required for professional services such as translation, proofing, editing, sub-titling and general support and advice.
6. There is a need for an effective structure to cover the written needs of Gaelic, which can offer a co-ordinated career path and employment in this sector.

1. FOREWORD

In February 2008 Bòrd na Gàidhlig instructed a group of Gaelic publishing representatives to investigate the views of the Gaelic publishing sector about the current state of Gaelic publishing in Scotland, and to make recommendations which would guide the way ahead in this sector, to include new structures and operational methods which would renew and reinvigorate Gaelic publishing in Scotland in the years ahead.

For the purposes of this report, those compiling this report will be referred to as the Group.

This report takes cognizance of the views of individuals and groups having expertise and involvement both in Gaelic publishing and in a wider Gaelic context in Scotland. The Group wishes to thank them for giving of their time and expertise.

It is clear that there is a need for a national Gaelic publishing strategy if there is to be development and expansion in the sector. Such a strategy must be put in place and acted upon immediately so that Gaelic publishing can fulfil audience requirements.

It is abundantly clear that a vibrant Gaelic publishing sector is required in order to increase literacy and enjoyment and to act as a support to the many other Gaelic endeavours linking within the Gaelic communities.

2. FURTHER INFORMATION

2.1 Gaelic Publishing in Scotland

2.1.1 There is no current Gaelic publishing strategy in Scotland which can embrace marketing, books, periodicals, newspapers and associated matters. There is no structure within which the skills of budding writers and publishers can be developed, nor is there any structure which could offer assistance with building a body of Gaelic publishing interest on a wider platform.

2.1.2 Added to this, the Gaelic education legacy has meant that many Gaelic speakers experience literacy difficulties in their native tongue and are not as fluent in this aspect as they would wish. This fact can negatively influence job opportunities and can mitigate against development of the publishing sector.

2.1.3 No formal training courses or schemes exist for translators or for editors. Despite that, *Fosglan* in Lews Castle College offers Gaelic translation services as well as advice and guidance. The Group welcomes the Gaelic Act and the developments which will ensue as a result, and is aware that the Gaelic needs of public bodies and others will increase in respect of translation and editing services in order to satisfy the requirements of the Act. The staff of the Gaelic Books Council devote a lot of time to editing and to the provision of editorial related advice and it now seems an opportune time to bring all editorial services together in an established unit for the purpose.

2.1.4 The Gaelic Books Council was established in 1968 under the auspices of the Department of Celtic Studies in the University of Glasgow, in order to provide support for publishers and writers. This is implemented through a scheme of small grants and through the editorial services

previously mentioned. The Books Council is predominantly funded by Creative Scotland, but that funding is such that it does not allow the Books Council any further business development nationally. The lack of funding means that there is and never has been career path development and most books in publication are through the auspices of one full-time publisher and a few part-time voluntary groups. They are:

- *Acair* which is a limited company comprising three of a workforce which has published many and varied titles since the company was established in the seventies
- *Clàr* which publishes a number of independent titles and whose imprint is used to publish *Ùr-sgeul* titles
- *Leabhraichean Beaga* which publishes children's books
- A number of other small independent publishers which publish a small variety some of which are 'niche titles'

2.1.5 *Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig* was established in 1999 to provide materials for the Gaelic-medium education curriculum. *Stòrlann* is a limited company, funded by specific grants for Gaelic as well as by *Bòrd na Gàidhlig*, for the preparation and distribution of books and to co-ordinate all Gaelic educational materials. *Stòrlann* also is an independent publisher.

2.1.6 Other than the curriculum material provided by *Stòrlann* many of the Gaelic books published are done so in piecemeal fashion. Their production, in many

cases is not part of a marketing or development strategy.

2.1.7 As mentioned earlier most of the Gaelic Books Council funding comes from Scottish Arts Council. The Books Council also received investment funding of £80k from Bòrd na Gàidhlig for *Ùr-sgeul*. Below is shown the Books Council income over the last three years.

<u>2003-04</u>	<u>2004-05</u>	<u>2005-06</u>
£287,907	£319,479	£385,352

It is clear that the Books Council income has risen 34% (£97,445) over the last three years. 40% of the book Council's income is received from Creative Scotland and 28% is earned through sales. Income from sales has risen by 17% over the last three years, but income from Creative Scotland has risen by only 3%. Most of the income received by small publishers is received from the Books Council.

2.1.8 Stòrlann is the other main company engaging in Gaelic publishing. Stòrlann is different from the Books Council in that most of their work deals with education books and related curricular activities. Stòrlann was financed over the past three years as follows: £200k for an administration and development team working alongside other contracted organisations and individuals so that their programme is delivered; £500k top-sliced from local authority specific grants so that an annual rolling programme of materials for use in schools can be commissioned and distributed throughout schools; and a further £100k for the project *Gàidhlig on-line*.

2.1.9 Developments such as *Ùr-sgeul* are proof that there is a market for Gaelic books although publishers sell only between five hundred and a thousand copies of each book. This serves to illustrate that Gaelic is not a commercial venture. Publishers are also dependent on large general distribution centres although what they require is a specific distribution centre where their Gaelic titles are given prominence.

2.1.10 The difference between fair and balanced financial investment and poor investment was made obvious to the Group when they visited Wales and held discussions with the Director and staff of the Welsh Books Council and in the discussions held with Mgr. Gearóid de Grás of the Irish Books Council.

2.1.11 The Welsh Books Council is in the fortunate position of being confident that its work receives investment and surety in accordance with the needs of the Welsh publishing agenda. The Welsh Books Council is adequately staffed and employs approximately fifty persons (Appendix 2). This not only ensures that their output is greatly increased and that they can organise extensive and varied marketing, but that morale in the Welsh publishing industry is high.

2.1.12 In Ireland, on the other hand, although investment in Irish publishing is a good deal higher than that afforded in Scotland, they struggle to recruit appropriately, thus causing gaps in their system and causing loss of heart resulting in low morale.

2.1.13 According to a survey carried out by the Gaelic Books Council on behalf of this Group (see Appendix 1) the majority of retailers in Scotland are happy to sell Gaelic books, but there is a need for a marketing strategy to embrace

publicity, distribution and advertising. New forms of distribution require to be examined particularly in the Highlands and Islands.

3. STRUCTURES AND COSTINGS

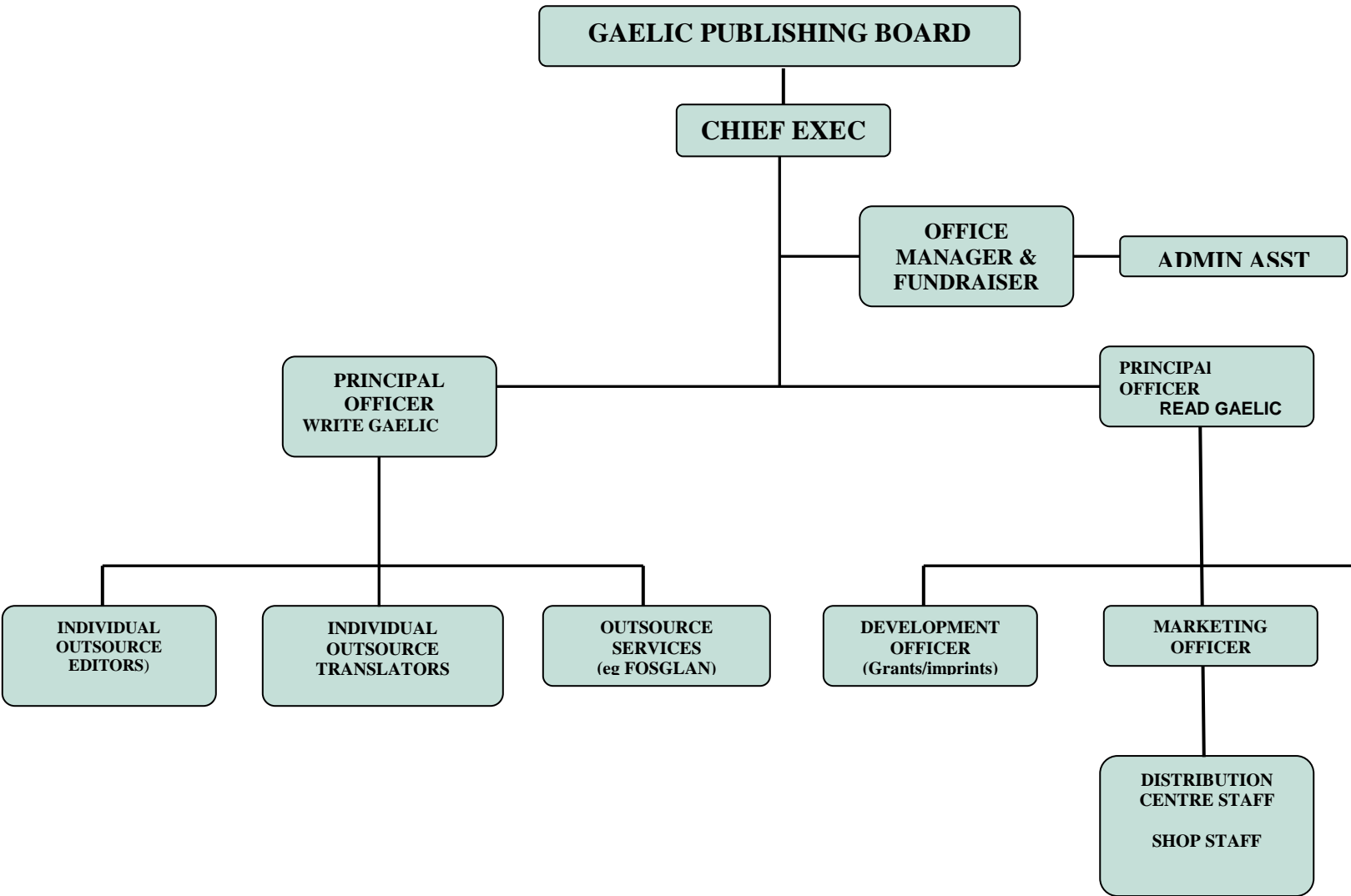
3.1

As mentioned above, the Group has sought many views and advice on the most effective way forward for the future development of Gaelic publishing in Scotland. The Group has concluded that there must be a fundamental change in structure and support across the board for Gaelic readers and writers in Scotland. The Group's recommended structure can be seen in **Figure 1** below.

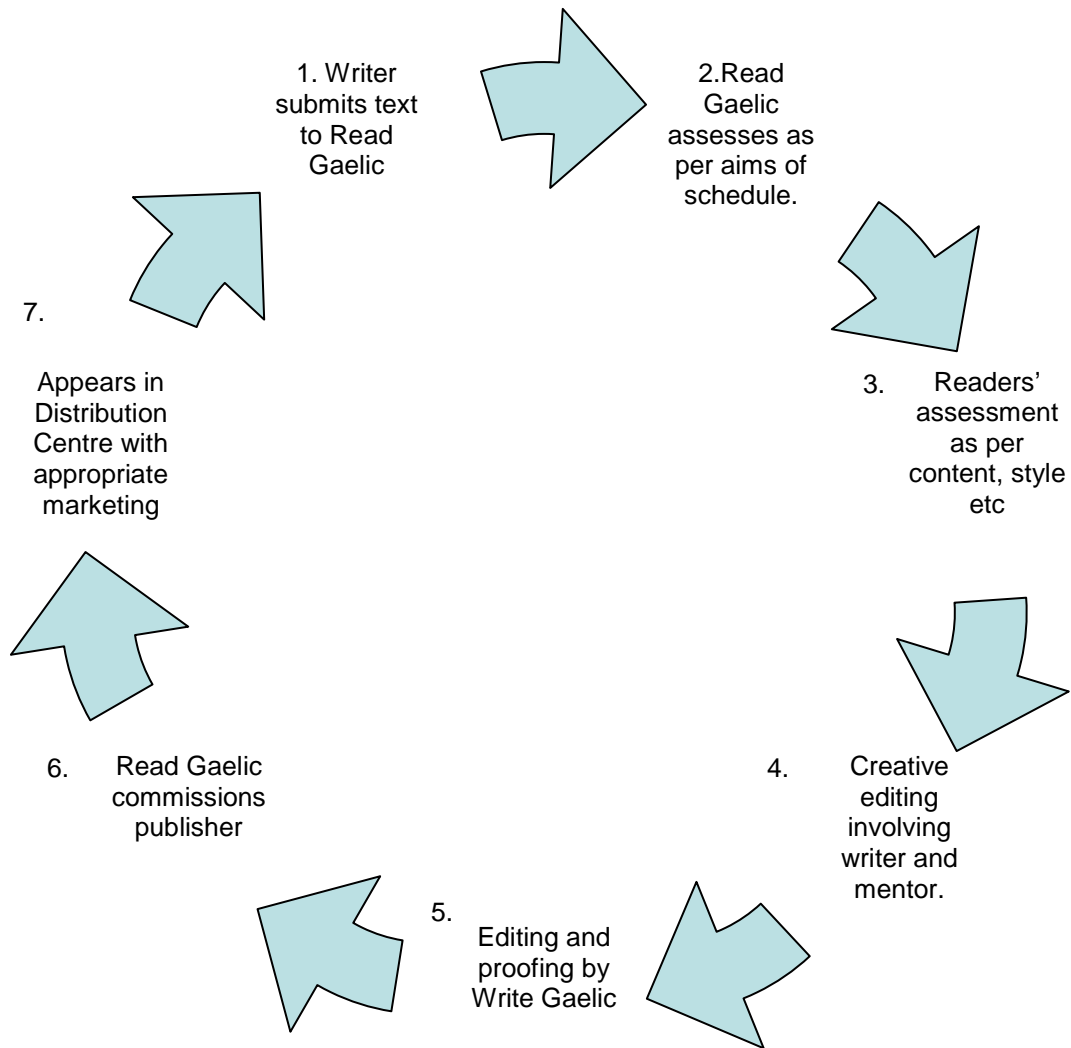
3.2 As shown in the figure, the Group recommends two separate and specific departments – *Write Gaelic* and *Read Gaelic*. Both these departments will be run by one principal officer each, with the Director providing co-ordination and giving advice and service to the Board of Directors.

3.3 **Figure 2** illustrates the main steps through which a text must proceed in order to become a completed Gaelic publication.

FIGEAR 1: STRUCTAIR NA BUIDHNE ÙIR



**Figure 2: Steps in the Gaelic publishing process:
READ GAELIC in collaboration with WRITE GAELIC**



3.4 Read Gaelic and Write Gaelic – Costs

3.4.1

The estimated costs associated with establishing and operating both strands of a revamped structure for Scottish Gaelic publishing are shown below. The chart shows the staffing costs only and does not include costs of development and administration associated with the co-ordination of both strands. The scales are based on local authority rates.

3.4.2 Read Gaelic

Chief Exec (Read Gaelic & Write Gaelic)	SP51 -53	£40,140	£42,024
Office Manager	AP3	£18,840	£20,673
Principal Officer	SP40 -42	£31,004	£32,658
Development Officer	AP4	£21,327	£23,610
Principal Officer Marketing	AP5	£24,333	£26,502
Training co-ordinator	AP2	£16,929	£18,324
<u>Distribution Centre Team</u>			
Manager	AP4	£21,327	£23,610
Admin support	AP2	£16,929	£18,324
<u>Shop Staff</u>			

Highlands & Islands (x1)	AP3	£18,840	£20,673
Remainder of Scotland (x1)	AP3	£18,840	£20,673
Total		£228,509	£247,071
<i>Taxes NIC etc (c26%)</i>		£59,412	£64,238
Total		£287,921	£311,309

3.4.3 Write Gaelic

<u>Head Office Staff</u>	<u>Sgèil e</u>	<u>Bho</u>	<u>Gu</u>
Principal Officer	SP40-42	£31,004	£32,658
Admin Support	AP2	£16,929	£18,324
Total		£47,933	£50,982
<i>Taxes, NIC, etc (c26%)</i>		£12,462	£13,255
SubTotal		£60,395	£64,237
Outsource Editors		£15,000	£20,000
Outsource Translators		£50,000	£100,000
Other Outsource Staff		£50,000	£100,000
SubTotal		£115,000	£220,000
Total		£175,395	£284,237

3.4.4

It can be seen from the above that the costs for implementing **Read Gaelic** total between £287,921 and £311,309, and for **Write Gaelic** from £175,395 to £284,237. The table below shows that the estimated costs of the two strands amount to between £415,148 and £545, 556.

<u>Team</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Read Gaelic	£287,921	£311,309
Write Gaelic	£175,395	£284,237
Total	£463,316	£595,546

3.5 Development programme for Gaelic Publishing – Estimated Costs

3.5.1

Apart from staffing costs the Group is aware of estimated projected costs of the actual development programme which would ensue once staff were in post. These costs are shown below.

Commissioning Programme/Úr-sgeul/Imprints etc	£200,000
Marketing Programme	£70,000
Training programme	£70,000
Admin budget	£60,000
Total	£400,000

3.5.2

It is estimated as shown above that at least £400,000 must be allocated to the setting up and implementation of a development programme if any advances at all are to be made in Gaelic book production throughout Scotland.

Taking account of staffing and development costs, the total projected cost of setting up and implementing a new structure for Gaelic Publishing in Scotland is estimated by the Group to be between £863,316 and £995,546.

4. Main Recommendations

1. The existing national structure for Gaelic Publishing in Scotland should be renewed and tailored for modern requirements.

- In order to establish the new structure it should be known by a different name from the existing organisation. The Group recommends that there be two fresh strands within the new organisation so that its aims and aspirations are realised. These strands are **Read Gaelic** and **Write Gaelic**.
- Members of the new Board should be selected according to their expertise and understanding of publishing or a related discipline, through public advertisement.

- The recruited Chief Executive should be able to fashion the new service and to offer strong direction to both strands, **Read Gaelic** and **Write Gaelic**.
- The new organisation should be provided with appropriate funding and facilities commensurate with present day requirements to enable effective marketing of their product.

2. The field of Gaelic publishing must be expanded. A much wider selection of Gaelic books is required, ranging from romance, detective, science-fiction, history and reference, so that Gaelic readers of all ages can enjoy a range of books of all kinds.

- **Read Gaelic** will devise a commissioning programme based on market research, to ascertain the needs and requirements of all age groups. Commissioning fees will be paid in order to make inroads into filling gaps in reading requirements.
- Research will be commissioned to ascertain the most effective ways of tackling this gap, whether these be through establishing new imprints, establishing service-level agreements with publishers or some other appropriate mechanisms.

3. A Gaelic distribution centre is required alongside a marketing strategy for the highlighting and sale of all Gaelic publications

- **Read Gaelic** will seek funding from HIE and others to establish a distribution centre in the Highlands or Islands.

- The distribution centre will create employment in its community; two members of staff should be recruited in the first instance to establish the centre using a digital ordering system with links to websites, retailers and customers.
- The Head of **Read Gaelic** will be accountable to the Chief Executive in establishing and implementing a marketing strategy.
- A business plan will be developed containing proposals to extend the existing Gaelic Books Council shop in Glasgow and to establish a new exclusively Gaelic Bookshop in Inverness, to provide a service for the Gaelic population and to encourage people from other areas to engage with Gaelic in the capital of the Highlands.

4.

Training and support is required for Gaelic writers, publishers, designers, translators and editors

- A training officer will be recruited to design and implement a programme to widen skills in the field of all aspects of Gaelic publishing.

5.

A national unit is required for the provision of professional services such as translation, proofing, editing, sub-titling and advice to the following groups:

- Publishers
- Education
- Newspapers and periodicals
- Media (sub-titling)
- Public bodies seeking to prepare Gaelic Plans as required by the Gaelic Act
- The Group proposes the name **Write Gaelic** for this strand.
- A Head of Service and an administrative assistant should be recruited in the first instance to establish this Department. The initial aim would be to create a database to include the names of all the professional people who currently provide these services throughout Scotland so that they can formally be identified as providing the core of the service, although retained within their own communities.

6. There is a need for a formal structure which will create home-based employment opportunities in the field of translation

- As the demand for the **Write Gaelic** service grows as a result of the Act, courses and support systems must be in place to provide relevant guidance to those who may wish to follow a career path in Gaelic publishing.
- **Write Gaelic** will create an accreditation scheme for Gaelic translators and editors as part of the extension of their skills.

5. CONSULTATION

Vales

Garmon Gruffudd, Manager, Y Lolfa
Gwerfyl Pierce Jones, Chief Executive, Welsh Books Council
John Lloyd, Director, Gomer
Mairwen Prys Jones, Head of Publishing, Gomer

Ireland

Gearoid de Ghras, Head of Bòrd na Leabhar Gaeilge

Scotland

Ailean Caimbeul, Chief Executive, Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Alasdair Màrtainn, Taigh na Teud
Anna NicSuain, Head of Gaelic Lews Castle College /Fosglan
Acair Board members
Calum Iain MacLeòid, Director, An Comann Gàidhealach
Catriona Mhòireach, Clàr
Dòmhnall Uilleam MacIlleMhoire, Development Manager, Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Donella Pheutan, Manager, Cànan Earannta
Fiona MacKenzie, Càidreachas Òran Gàidhlig Màiri Mhòr
Gwen Bowie, Clàr/Foillsichearan agus Sgrìobhadairean na h-Alba
Hi-Arts (Western Isles Literature Development Strategy)
Iain Aonghas MacAoidh, Director, Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig
Iain MacDhòmhnail, Director, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean

Jo NicDhòmhnaill, BBC Alba

John Storey, Development Officer, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean

Màiri Rhind, Clàr

Nan NicLeòid, Clò Cràbhaig

Màrtainn MacGriogair, Glasgow University one time chair of
Comhairle nan Leabhraichean

Richard Cox, Clann Tuirc

Rob O' Maolalaigh, Chair, Comhairle nan Leabhraichean

Ruaraidh MacIlleathain, Editor, Cothrom

Siùsaidh Hardy, Clì Gàidhlig

Shops

Achins Bookshop, Lochinver

An Comunn Gàidhealach, Stornoway

Ardmarea Stores & Lobster Pot Tearoom, Beàrnaraigh na Hearadh

Blythswood Care Christian Bookshop, Steòrnabhagh

Blythswood Christian Bookshop, Port-rìgh

Bookpoint, Dùn Omhainn

Borders Books, Inbhir Nis

Borgh Pottery, Borgh, Eilean Leòdhais

Broadford Books, An t-Àth Leathann

C & E Roy's Celtic House, Ìle

Cumbrae's Card & Gift Shop, Eilean Cumradh

D. MacGillivray & Co., Baile a' Mhanaich

Dornoch Bookshop, An Dòrnach

Free Church Bookshop, Dùn Èideann

Good News Bookshop, Luirg, Cataibh

Hebridean Jewellery Bookshop, Steòrnabhagh

Hebridean Jewellery, An Gearastan

Hebridean Jewellery, An Ìochdar

Hyndland Bookshop, Glaschu

Loch Croispol Bookshop & Restaurant, Diùrinis, Cataibh

Lovats, Uibhist a Deas

Mallaig Bookshop, Mallaig

Mustard Seed Bookshop, Peàirt

Nairn Bookshop, Inbhir Nàrann

Oban Music & Books, An t-Òban

Ottakar's Bookshop, An Aghaidh Mhòr

Ottakars Bookshop, An t-Òban

Roderick Smith Ltd/The Baltic Bookshop, Steòrnabhagh

Seallam! Visitor Centre, An Taobh Tuath, Na Hearadh

Sutherland's Garage, An t-Àth Leathann

Taigh Chearsabhagh, Loch nam Madadh
Talisman Books, Mealròs
The Anchor Centre, Ulapul
The Beaully Centre, A' Mhanachainn
The Emporium Bookshop, Crombaigh
The Manna House Bookshop, Peairt
The Ullapool Bookshop, Ulapul
Tourist Information Centre, Steòrnabhagh
Waterstone's, Inbhir Nis
Waterstone's, Sauchiehall Street, Glaschu

6. Appendix 1

CONSULTATION WITH RETAILERS: STATISTICS

Mairi NicCumhais, Gaelic Books Council

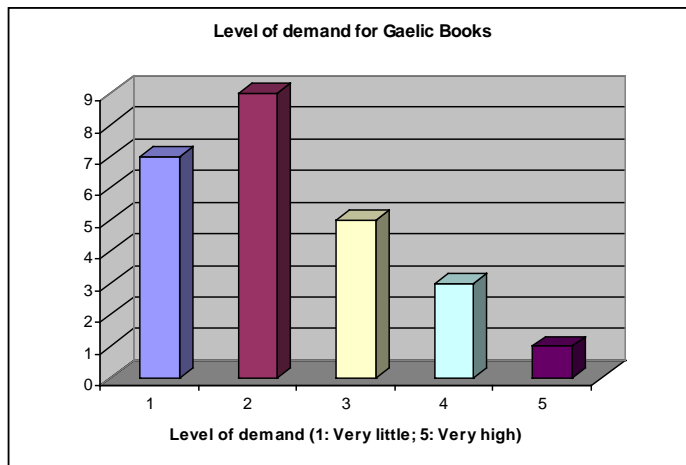
No. of questionnaires sent: 126

Total returned: 45 (36%) **{Completed: 37 (82%)}**
{Returned blank/incomplete: 5 (11%)}
{Returned unopened: 3 (6%)}

Q. 1: Is there any demand for Gaelic books in your shop at present?

Over half (59%) of those who replied stated that there was a demand for Gaelic books in their shops. 36% said there was currently no demand, and 5% gave no answer.

Q. 2: If yes, please rate the level of demand:



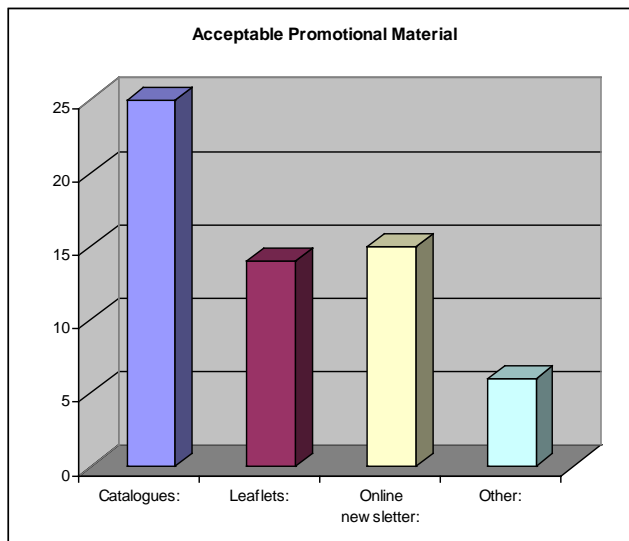
Q. 3: Would it be helpful if there were a single modern distribution centre for Gaelic books to which orders could be sent with a guarantee for same-day dispatch?

Over two-thirds of responses (67%) were in favour of a centralised distribution centre, while 21% were against it and 12% did not answer.

Q. 4: Would it be helpful if there were a single agency providing advance information on proposed new Gaelic books from all individual publishers?

The overwhelming majority (73%) of those who replied were in favour of receiving advance information from a single agency. 17% were not in favour, and 10% did not answer.

Q. 5: If yes, what form of promotional material would you find acceptable?



Other – breakdown

- Posters (Heb Jewellery, Stornoway; MacGillivray's; Loch Crosipol Bookshop)
- Promotional book stand (Tourist Information Centre, Stornoway)
- Hard-copy newsletter (Sutherlands, Broadford)
- CD (Seallam!)

Q. 6: Would it be helpful if a centrally organised Gaelic books sales rep visited you regularly to show existing and new titles from all Gaelic publishers?

There was a fairly even split between those in favour of a sales rep visiting them (40%), and those not in favour (46%). 14% did not answer.

Q. 7: Would you be interested in a scheme offering assistance to booksellers to attend Gaelic events?

The majority (60%) were not interested in assistance to attend Gaelic events (some stating lack of time as the main reason), while 21% were interested, and 19% did not respond.

Q. 8: What kind of information/service do you require to make your Gaelic books sales more effective?

Responses included:

- More info/advice re children's books [CATALOGUE/REP/NEWSLETTER]
- Posters/promo material which can be issued to the public [LEAFLETS/ CATALOGUE]
- Adverts in local newspapers

- A distributor with online ordering [*GBC already offers this facility*]
- A distributor which is a Gaelic book specialist [*GBC already offers this facility*]
- Advance information of forthcoming titles [*CATALOGUE/NEWSLETTER/ REP/LEAFLETS*]
- Author events
- Co-ordinated warehousing for one-stop delivery
- Better range of books & improved quality [*CATALOGUE/NEWSLETTER*]
- Bilingual information re books [*CATALOGUE/REP/NEWSLETTER*]
- More information on what is available, including OOPs, backlists & reprint dates [*CATALOGUE/REP/NEWSLETTER*]
- Regular updates on what is available [*NEWSLETTER*]
- Sales rep visits
- Email updates/electronic newsletter
- Hard-copy newsletter
- Categorized bilingual catalogue with content synopsis
- Top 10 books for beginners/intermediate/advanced or similar

Q. 9: How do you think that could best be provided?

Responses included:

- Catalogue
- Email update/electronic newsletter
- Hard-copy newsletter
- Promotional material in advance (as per Ùr-Sgeul)
- Sales rep visits
- Better designed titles
- Central co-ordination/single point-of-contact

- Regular book fairs/events to promote titles/authors/publishers/retail outlets

Conclusions:

The main findings of this survey are that there is a demand for Gaelic books in shops throughout Scotland. The majority of retailers are in favour of a single distribution centre and would like to receive advance information on forthcoming titles, as well as more information about existing publications. Their preferred format would be regularly updated catalogues.

Appendix 2: WELSH BOOKS COUNCIL – STAFF STRUCTURE 2006

Total Staff: 50

