

<p>Co-chomhairleachadh mu cheadachadh màl geàrr-ùine Freagairt le Bòrd na Gàidhlig 28 Dàmhair 2021</p>	<p>Licensing of Short Term Lets Consultation Response by Bòrd na Gàidhlig 28 October 2021</p>
<p><b>A bheil càil sam bith eile mun t-siostam ceadachd a thathar a’ moladh, no a’ bhuidh a dh’fhaodadh a bhith aige, a bu toigh leat iomradh a thoirt air dhan Chomataidh. Bhiodh e feumail nam biodh na beachdan agad goirid agus nan toireadh tu seachad fianais airson taic a thoirt do thagraidhean sam bith a chaidh a dhèanamh.</b></p> <p>Is e Bòrd na Gàidhlig a’ phrìomh bhuidheann ann an Alba air a bheil dleasanas gus leasachadh Gàidhlig a chur air adhart agus gus comhairle a thoirt do Mhinistearan na h-Alba mu chùisean Gàidhlig.</p> <p><b>Tha a’ Ghàidhlig na pàirt riatanach den dearbh-aithne Albannach.</b> Is e cànan nàiseanta a tha innte, air a labhairt thar Alba. Tha Riaghaltas na h-Alba “ag aithneachadh gu bheil a’ Ghàidhlig na pàirt bhunasach de dhualchas, dearbh-aithne nàiseanta agus beatha chultarail na h-Alba”<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>’S e prìomh amas a’ Phlana Cànain Nàiseanta Ghàidhlig 2018-2023<sup>2</sup> (PCNG) gum bi a’ Ghàidhlig ga cleachdadh nas trice, le barrachd dhaoine agus ann an raon nas fharsainghe de shuidheachaidhean. Tha e a’ dol air adhart gu bhith ag aithris gu bheil “cùisean eile a’ toirt buaidh air a’ chuimse seo”. Tha iad sin a’ gabhail a-steach cùisean eaconamach agus bun-structarail (mar taigheadas). Tha am Plana a’ toirt cunntas air an fheum a tha ann “dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil a’ bhuidh a tha aca air a’ Ghàidhlig air aithneachadh agus gu bheil a’ dèiligeadh ris”.</p> <p>Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a’ toirt freagairt dhan cho-chomhairleachadh seo oir tha sinn ag aithneachadh gu</p>	<p><b>Is there anything else about the proposed licensing system, or its potential impact, that you would like to mention to the Committee. It would be helpful if you could keep any comments brief and provide evidence to support any claims made.</b></p> <p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig is the principal public body in Scotland responsible for promoting Gaelic development and providing advice to the Scottish Ministers on Gaelic issues.</p> <p><b>Gaelic is an essential aspect of Scottish identity.</b> It is a national language; spoken across Scotland. Scottish Government “recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland’s heritage, national identity and current cultural life”<sup>9</sup>.</p> <p>The National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-2023<sup>10</sup> has the overall aim that Gaelic “is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations”. It goes on to state that “other issues impact on this aim”. These include economic and infrastructural issues (such as housing). The Plan notes the need to “ensure their impact on Gaelic is recognised and addressed”.</p> <p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig is responding to this consultation because we recognise that a holistic</p>

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-scottish-governments-draft-gaelic-language-plan-2021-2026/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>



feumar modh-obrach iomlanach airson coimhearsnachdan seasmhach agus mar sin airson cànan na Gàidhlig a bhith seasmhach. **“Tha eaconamaidh fallain, gu sònraichte ann an coimhearsnachdan eileanach agus dùthchail far a bheil a’ Ghàidhlig air a bruidhinn, riatanach don àm ri teachd airson na Gàidhlig”**<sup>3</sup>.

Tha e air aithneachadh san fharsaingeachd gu bheil buaidh anabarrach aig dìth taigheadais sna h-eileanan agus ann an sgìrean dùthchail. **Is ann ann an cuid de dh’eileanan na h-Alba a tha na coimhearsnachdan leis a’ cheudad as àirde de dhaoine le cuid de sgilean sa Ghàidhlig.**

Ann an 12 de na h-eileanan bha an co-rèir de luchd-còmhnaidh le sgilean sa Ghàidhlig nas àirde na 40% - tòrr na b’ àirde na an cuibheas Albannach de 1.7%. Sa mhòr-chuid, bha iad sin sna h-Eilean Siar (10), agus Ratharsaigh agus Tìriodh. A thuilleadh air sin, b’ e an àireamh san Eilean Sgitheanach 37%.

**Is e eileanan mar seo anns a bheil a’ Ghàidhlig nas bitheanta agus a tha deatamach airson a seasmhachd san àm ri teachd.** Air an adhbhar sin, tha buaidh aig taighean a tha air mhàl geàrr-ùine, agus cothrom air taigheadas air a’ Ghàidhlig. Tha Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean aig Riaghaltas na h-Alba<sup>4</sup> “ag aithneachadh cho cudromach ’s a tha a’ Ghàidhlig do dh’iomadh coimhearsnachd eileanach, agus cho cudromach ’s a tha na coimhearsnachdan eileanach sa bheil a’ Ghàidhlig air a bruidhinn do mhairsinneachd agus seasmhachd na Gàidhlig ann an Alba”.

Far a bheil taighean air màl geàrr-ùine a’ lùghdachadh solar thaigheadais ann an eileanan agus ann an sgìrean dùthchail is urrainn dhan sin, gu sònraichte, cur ri dì-dhaoineachadh. Tha Plana Nàiseanta nan Eilean ag ràdh “tha cothrom air taigheadas a’ toirt buaidh air lùghdachadh san àireamh-sluaigh agus a’ toirt buaidh air

approach is required for sustainable communities and thus for sustaining the Gaelic language. **“A healthy economy, particularly in island and rural Gaelic-speaking communities, is vital to the future of Gaelic”**<sup>11</sup>.

It is generally recognised that the impacts of the shortage of housing in island and rural areas is particularly acute. **Some of Scotland’s islands contain the communities with the highest percentages of those with some skills in Gaelic.**

In 12 of the islands the proportion of residents with some Gaelic skills was over 40%-vastly above the Scottish average of 1.7%. These were largely within Eilean Siar (10), plus Raasay and Tìree. In addition, the figure in Skye was 37%.

**It is islands such as these where the Gaelic language is most prevalent, and which are pivotal to its continued use.** Short-term lets and availability of housing therefore also has an impact on Gaelic. The Scottish Government’s National Islands Plan<sup>12</sup> “recognises the importance of the Gaelic language to many island communities, and the importance of the Gaelic speaking island communities to the survival and sustainability of Gaelic in Scotland”.

Where short-term lets reduce the supply of housing in islands and rural areas it can, in particular, contribute to depopulation. The National Islands Plan states “access to housing affects population decline and influences the decisions of young people to leave or return to island communities”<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/BnG-NGLP-18-23-1.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/>



co-dhùnaidhean dhaoine òga fàgail no tilleadh gu coimhearsnachdan eileanach”<sup>5</sup>.

Thamòran eileanan a-cheana a’ dèiligeadh ri dùbhlain co-cheangailte ri bhith a’ cumail/a’ tàladh àireamhan iomchaidh de dhaoine òga. Mar eisimpleir, eadar 2011 agus 2018 thathar a’ meas gun do thuit na h-àireamhan sa bhuidheann aois 16-24 mu 8% ann an Uibhist agus 10% ann an Leòdhas. Tha sin ann an co-theacsa far a bheil co-roinn nas ìsle den t-sluagh air fad aois 16-24 san dà eilean sin na tha sa chuibheas Albannach <sup>6</sup>.

A thuilleadh air sin faodaidh gainnead taigheadais adhbharachadh:

- Meudachadh ann am prìs nan taighean a tha ri fhaotainn. Tha na prìsean sin a cheana air àrdachadh sna h-eileanan mar thoradh air meudachadh ann an cosgaisean togail.
- A’ ciallachadh nach bi e comasach do chuid de bhuidhnean san earrann phoblach (m.e. cùram-slàinte, foghlam) agus san earrann phrìobhaideach prìomh luchd-obrach a thàladh.

Faodaidh iad sin a bhith ann an ceàrnaidhean far a bheil cosgais bith-beò àrd. Is e sin, am buidseat a dh’fheumar gus an ìre bith-beò as ìsle ris a bheilear deònach gabhail mòran nas àirde na tha e ann an àiteachan eile. Mar eisimpleir, tha am buidseat a dh’fheumar airson neach singilte (gun a bhith a’ gabhail a-steach màl) ann an Innse Gall eadar 26% agus 42% nas àirde na tha e anns na h-àiteachan bailteil san RA<sup>7</sup>.

Is urrainn do bhith a’ toirt a-steach siostam ceadachd airson àite-fuirich gearr-ùine, cuideachadh ann a bhith a’ dèiligeadh ris na cùisean sin. Ach, feumaidh am fiosrachadh gabhail a-steach na factaran a leanas:

Sa chiad àite, tha cuid de theaghlaichean stèidhichte air eilean/suidheachadh dùthchail an urra ri teachd-a-steach bho mhàl. Tha sin ann an co-theacsa tuarastalan an ìre

Many islands already face challenges in retaining/attracting sufficient numbers of young people. For example, between 2011 and 2018 the numbers in the 16-24 age group are estimated to have fallen by 8% in Uist and 10% in Lewis. That is in a context where these two islands have a lower share of total population aged 16-24 than the Scottish average<sup>14</sup>.

In addition, a shortage of housing can:

- Increase the price of the available housing stock. These prices are already inflated in the islands due to the additional costs of construction.
- Mean some public (e.g. healthcare, education) and private sector organisations cannot attract key workers.

These can be in areas where the cost of living is high. That is, the budget required to achieve a minimum acceptable standard of living is markedly higher than elsewhere. For example, the required budget for a single person (excluding rent) in the Outer Hebrides is between 26% and 42% higher than in urban parts of the UK<sup>15</sup>.

The introduction of a licensing system for short-term let accommodation can help address these issues. However, its detail also needs to reflect the following factors:

First, some island/rural based families are dependent on letting income. That is in a context of relatively low wages. For example, the average

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/>

<sup>6</sup> Stòrasan Oifis na Stadaistig Nàiseanta

<sup>7</sup> *Inbhe Teachd A-steach As Ìsle Airson Alba Dùthchail Iomallach Ùrachadh Poileasaidh* airson Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eilean, 2016

<sup>14</sup> Source: Office for National Statistics

<sup>15</sup> *A Minimum Income Standard For Remote Rural Scotland: A Policy Update*, for Highlands and Islands Enterprise, 2016



mhath ìosal. Mar eisimpleir, is e an tuarastal iomlan cuibheasach airson obair làn-ùine ann an Innse Gall £26,772. Tha sin còrr air £3,000 (11%) nas ìsle na an t-sùm airson Alba (£30,000)<sup>8</sup>.

San Dàrna àite, tha cuid de theaghlaichean eileanach/dùthchail a tha air gluasad air falbh bhon àite air taigh an teaghlaich a chumail. Gus am bi e comasach dhaibh a chumail, bidh iad ga leigeil a-mach air màl geàrr-ùine. Tha seo a' cumail an ceangail ris an àite agus ga dhèanamh nas coltaiche gun till iad a dh'fhuireach ann aig àm air choreigin.

San Treas àite, tha màl geàrr-ùine a' toirt taic do dh'eaconamaidh turasachd a tha glè thrìc na phrìomh earrann ann an ceàrnaidhean dùthchail agus eileanach. Tha iad cuideachd a' tabhann àite-fuirich do luchd-obrach ràitheil, gu h-àraidh ann an gnothachasan co-cheangailte ri turasachd.

**Bu chòir dhan t-siostam ceadachd airson àite-fuirich geàrr-ùine a bhith cothromach** agus mothachail air na buaidhean math agus dona a tha air am mìneachadh gu h-àrd. Tha feum cuideachd air ceuman eile gus barrachd thaighean a libhrigeadh airson dèiligeadh ris na duilgheadasan fad-ùine a tha air a bhith air taigheadas. Tha iad sin gu sònraichte geur ann an coimhearsnachdan dùthchail agus eileanach.

gross wage for a full time job in the Outer Herides is £26,772. That is more than £3,000 (11%) less than the figure for Scotland (£30,000)<sup>16</sup>.

Second, other island/rural families who have moved away from the area have retained the family home. In order to afford that, they rent it out on short-term lets. This maintains their link with these areas and can make it more likely that they will return to live there at some point in the future.

Third, short-term lets support the visitor economy which tends to be a key sector in rural areas and islands. They also provide accommodation for seasonal workers, notably in tourism-related businesses.

**The licensing system for short-term let accommodation should strike a balance** that reflects the negative and positive impacts described above. There is also a need for other interventions to increase the supply of housing to address long-standing pressures. These are particularly acute in rural and island communities.

<sup>8</sup> ONS: Mion-sgrùdadh Riaghaltas na h-Alba air Suirbhidh Bliadhnail air Uairean is Cosnadh, ONS

<sup>16</sup> ONS: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

