

Argyll and Bute Council Gaelic Language Plan 2014 - 2018

A Gaelic Language Plan under Sections 3 and 7 of
the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005
Approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 2 April 2014



Realising Our Potential Together



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our Council is forward looking and ambitious, continuously improving our relationship with our partners, customers and employees to ensure that we deliver the right services, by the best people, in the best way.
- 1.2 Our vision is 'Realising our Potential Together' and this is underpinned by our values:
 - a) We involve and listen to our customers and communities
 - b) We take pride in delivering best value services
 - c) We are open, honest, fair and inclusive
 - d) We respect and value everyone
- 1.3 We recognise the role Gaelic has played in the history of Argyll and Bute and we continue to promote the language and its culture to our communities.
- 1.4 We are committed to giving the Gaelic and English languages equal respect and we will continue to make an active offer of Gaelic services to be made available to the public in the authority's area.
- 1.5 We are proud to be one of the local authorities which regularly host The Royal National Mod. The very first Gaelic Mod was held in Oban in 1892 and has since grown to be a major annual festival attracting visitors from across Scotland and also abroad. The economic benefits realised from holding such a high profile event in Argyll and Bute are welcomed by our communities and continues to emphasise the strong relationship which Argyll and Bute has with the Gaelic language, culture and history.
- 1.6 We recognise the importance of Gaelic in our communities where Gaelic continues to be used.
- 1.7 This Gaelic Language Plan describes how the Council, together in partnership with other organisations, will address the needs of our individuals, groups and communities who continue to see Gaelic as a major element in their daily lives.

Councillor Dick Walsh
Council Leader

Sally Loudon
Chief Executive

2 Argyll and Bute Council

- 2.1 Argyll and Bute Council is one of 32 unitary local authorities in Scotland. It is responsible for a range of services including education, social work, waste management, maintenance of public roads (other than trunk roads), planning and building control, strategic housing, environmental health, leisure and culture, and emergency planning.
- 2.2 The Council came into being on 1 April 1996 following Scottish local government reorganisation. It is the result of the amalgamation of the former Argyll and Bute District Council, part of the former Dumbarton District Council, the old Argyll and part of the Dumbarton sub-regions of Strathclyde Region.
- 2.3 Nowadays, in terms of area, Argyll and Bute Council is the second largest of Scotland's 32 councils but in terms of population, it ranks 22nd. The population estimate from the 2011 census was 88166¹. Argyll and Bute covers nearly 10% of the total area of Scotland but has less than 2% of the population.
- 2.4 From Appin in the North, to Campbeltown in the South, Argyll and Bute stretches for over 100 miles and from Tiree in the West to Helensburgh in the East it stretches a further 80 miles. 23 of Argyll and Bute's islands are inhabited and 17.1% of its residents are islanders². Islands account for a third of Argyll and Bute's total area.
- 2.5 Argyll and Bute Council operates under 4 departments: Chief Executive's, Community Services, Customer Services, Development and Infrastructure.
- 2.6 There are 4 administrative areas within the Council: Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islands, Oban, Lorn and the Isles, Bute and Cowal, Helensburgh and Lomond.
- 2.7 The Council's political management arrangements comprise:
 - a) Full Council of 36 elected members covering 11 multi member wards
 - b) Area Committees for the 4 administrative areas within Argyll and Bute
- 2.8 Historically, Argyll is the heartland of Scots Gaelic. The next section describes in more detail the use and interest in Gaelic in Argyll and Bute.

¹ Figure taken from the 2011 census population estimates

² Figure taken from the 2011 census population estimates

3 Gaelic in Argyll and Bute

3.1 The Gaelic language has been spoken in Argyll since around the 5th century when it first came to Scotland. It was the common language in the kingdom of Dal Riata from the time an Irish Gaelic colony came over as the first Scots and the kings were anointed at Dunadd Hill until the ninth century. The kingdom was of great importance in the spread of Christianity in Northern Britain after Columba founded Iona in 563 AD. Throughout our history the language has been a key element in developing many aspects of Scottish culture.

3.2 Use and Interest in Gaelic

The data below illustrate the decline of Gaelic speakers in the local authority of Argyll and Bute between the census carried out in 1991 and the 2001 census. This could be due to inward migration of non-Gaelic speakers diluting the percentages, as well as older Gaelic speakers declining in numbers.

3.3 Census Data 2011

- 3.3.1 The following data has been extracted from the 2011 Census in which the people of Scotland were asked 4 questions about the Gaelic language – whether they could understand spoken Gaelic, speak, read or write Gaelic.
- 3.3.2 In Argyll and Bute as in Scotland, more generally, the number of Gaelic speakers fell between 2001 and 2011. The number of Gaelic speakers in Argyll and Bute fell by over 15% in this period.
- 3.3.3 Of people aged 3 and over, almost 6% had some Gaelic language ability in 2011. Of these 4.3% said they could speak, read or write the language.

3.4 Gaelic in Employment

- 3.4.1 Currently we do have posts within the structure of Argyll and Bute Council where Gaelic is essential or desirable. The majority of these posts are within the Education service and specifically in our schools. Posts where Gaelic is essential as a skill include Gaelic Childcare and Education Worker, Gaelic Language Auxiliary, Teacher of Gaelic Medium, Principal Teacher of Gaelic Medium, Teacher of Gaelic (secondary schools), Education Support Worker – Gaelic. Posts for which Gaelic is desirable include Head Teacher of Gaelic Medium, Principal Teachers of Languages in Secondary School and Head Teachers of Secondary Schools. Additionally there are pre-five workers employed in Gaelic Medium pre-five units.
- 3.4.2 The Council recently opened ‘furan’ which is Oban’s Gaelic Centre. The centre has an Administrator who is a fluent Gaelic speaker.

3.5 Gaelic in our Schools

3.5.1 There are currently six primary schools (Bowmore, Rockfield, Salen, Sandbank, Strath of Appin and Tiree) in the local authority which offer the opportunity of Gaelic medium education. Based on the projected pupil roll numbers for 2013/14 there has been a 16% increase across these schools since 2011/12. The pupil roll in the schools which offer Gaelic medium is as follows:

Name of School offering Gaelic Medium	Pupil Roll
Bowmore	21
Rockfield	40
Salen	36
Sandbank	38
Strath of Appin	4
Tiree	22
Total	161

3.5.2 Over 45 of our primary schools currently offer Gaelic for Learners in the Primary School.

3.5.3 There are currently five secondary schools that offer Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig to Advanced Higher level – Dunoon Grammar, Islay High, Oban High, Tobermory High and Tiree High.

3.6 Ionad Chaluum Chille Ìle/Columba Centre, Islay

On the Isle of Islay, Ionad Chaluum Chille Ìle, (the Columba Centre, Islay) operates in partnership with the Gaelic College on Skye, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. The centre provides classes, courses and activities on Gaelic language and culture on Islay and, more recently, in other parts of Argyll.

4 Gaelic Language Policy

4.1 Scope

This plan applies to all employees and elected members of Argyll and Bute Council. The overall intention is to create a working environment where the Gaelic language and culture is celebrated and promoted both inside the council and externally throughout our communities.

4.2 Policy Statement

- a) Argyll and Bute Council's policy is to expand and promote the range of Gaelic services and resources which are available to our service users.
- b) We will also ensure that the principle, introduced by the National Gaelic Language Plan that the Gaelic and English languages will be accorded equal respect, will be implemented across all of our services.
- c) We are committed to the promotion and future growth of Gaelic education, language and cultural activities through continued awareness raising and language learning opportunities for employees and our communities.
- d) This Plan builds on the work that the Council has undertaken in the past in implementing our first generation language plan, promoting Gaelic Education and, specifically, on the benefits to be realised through bilingual learning.
- e) We aim to increase the number of Gaelic speakers in Argyll and Bute, increase the opportunities for using Gaelic in the community, home and workplace; promote bilingualism in the home and in our education establishments, maximise the economic benefits of Gaelic related activities in the area and to promote the status and visibility of Gaelic in Argyll and Bute.
- f) A bilingual logo (Gaelic and English), demonstrating equal respect for both languages, will be created and adopted at the first rebranding opportunity.
- g) We will contribute towards the creation of area work plans concentrated around Gaelic schools, in conjunction with parents, initiatives and Gaelic groups, based on the main sections in the National Plan.
- h) We will ensure that the formation, renewal and monitoring of policies will be in line with the National Gaelic Language Plan.

4.3 The National Context

- 4.3.1 Section 2 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 requires Bòrd na Gàidhlig to "prepare and submit to the Scottish Ministers a national Gaelic language plan", and revised versions thereof "no later than 5 years after the date on which the most recent plan is published".

4.3.2 The National Gaelic Language Plan 2012 - 2017 sets out the main aims and actions under the key domains – Home; Education and Learning; Community; Workplace; Arts, Media, Heritage and Tourism. To successfully implement these actions, a national partnership between the Scottish Government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and local authorities together with many other public, voluntary and private bodies will have to be created to ensure that a consistent approach is undertaken to guarantee a sustainable future for the language.

4.3.3 The headline target in the National Plan is that the 2021 National Census confirms the restoration of the number of Gaelic speakers to the levels recorded in the 2001 census.

4.3.4 The National Gaelic Language Plan 2012 - 2017 carries forward the first Plan’s vision of a sustainable future for Gaelic as a “healthy, vibrant language, increasingly used, valued and respected in a modern, multicultural and multilingual Scotland”. The strapline ‘Fas is feabhas/Growth and quality’ reflects the three overarching aims which inform the Plan:

- a) Arresting the decline in the overall number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland by increasing the number acquiring the language;
- b) Expanding the range of situations in which Gaelic is used, in line with the Gaelic Language Act’s key principle of equal respect for Gaelic and English; and
- c) Helping speakers of Gaelic, both learners and native speakers, to develop their competence and their confidence in using it, and ensuring that the language itself continues to be healthy and vibrant.

4.3.5 The National Plan for Gaelic also contributes to the Scottish Government’s National Outcomes as follows:

DEVELOPMENT AREA	NATIONAL OUTCOME NUMBER	NATIONAL OUTCOME STATEMENT
Home/Education and learning	5	Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
	4	Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
	3	We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation
Community/Workplace	11	We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
	2	We realise our full economic

		potential; with more and better employment opportunities for our people
Arts, Media, Heritage and Tourism	13	We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity
The whole Plan	15	Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

5 Argyll and Bute

- 5.1 Argyll and Bute Council was one of the first six public authorities across Scotland issued with a statutory notice by Bòrd na Gàidhlig to produce a Gaelic Language Plan. This Plan was approved in June 2008; and section 7 of the Act outlines the requirement to review the Gaelic Language Plan no later than 5 years after the date of approval of the previous Plan.
- 5.2 The Council's first generation language Plan consisted of an ambitious set of actions which resulted in a challenge to fully implement the actions. This second generational plan aims to build on the developments made by the Council in implementing the first Plan as well as learning invaluable lessons on the challenges that were faced together with identifying new priorities and areas for development.
- 5.3 The Council's second generational language plan is closely aligned to and assists in contributing to the targets contained in the National Gaelic Language Plan 2012 – 2017.

6 Themes

As our language plan is closely aligned with the national plan as prepared by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, we have identified the following themes to focus on.

6.1 Gaelic in the Home

The Council will continue to promote the importance of Gaelic in the home and in family settings by encouraging young people and adults to improve their Gaelic language skills. Provision of language learning classes will be available to Council employees, adult learners and parents of Gaelic Medium pupils.

6.2 Gaelic in the Community

The Council will increase the opportunities to use Gaelic in both formal and informal settings for native and fluent Gaelic speakers and learners of the language. Provision of language courses in partnership with Ionad Chaluum Chille Ìle will be planned across Argyll and Bute. The Council will also continue to work with local and national based organisations to promote

Gaelic and increase the level of opportunities our communities have to use the language.

6.3 Gaelic in Education

As providers of Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in 6 areas across Argyll and Bute, the Council acknowledges the duty it has to continue to offer a high quality level of education to pupils within these units, associated pre-school units and secondary schools. We will endeavour to offer Gaelic Learners in Primary Schools (GLPS) and Gaelic Learner Education (GLE) in all areas. We also recognise the important role the Council has in shaping national policy on education initiatives and policies. In addition the Council plans to undertake a detailed analysis of the number of pupils in GME in proportion to the communities they live in.

6.4 Gaelic in the Workplace

The Council will continue to assess opportunities to offer Gaelic across services with a view to it becoming mainstreamed across the organisation. The Council will also encourage partners to promote the use and increase the status of Gaelic in Argyll and Bute. We will increase resources available to staff to increase their language skills and understanding of the Gaelic language. We will carry out a staff audit of Gaelic skills to identify the language skills of staff in speaking, reading and writing the language. Elected members and employees will be able to access language learning opportunities.

6.5 Gaelic in the Arts, Heritage, Media and Tourism

The Council will continue to support its links with Royal National Mod and local mods to maximise the number of participants using Gaelic at these events. The Council aims to increase the number of supported events where there is an opportunity to use Gaelic. Through these events, the Council will aim to gain a detailed analysis of the economic benefits which are realised by holding Gaelic related events in Argyll and Bute.

6.6 Gaelic in Economic Development

The Council will continue to identify and assess opportunities for increased economic benefits for the area through the delivery of Gaelic associated events, e.g. The Royal National Mod is held in Argyll and Bute every 3/4 years, as well as scoping the opportunities for economic benefits to be realised through cultural tourism.

6.7 Language Corpus

The Council will adhere to the principles and guidelines of the most recent version of the Gaelic Orthographic Convention when carrying out any orthographic, terminological and place-name development. This will be done in consultation with Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba.

7 Delivery of the Plan

- 7.1 As part of the Improvement and HR service, the Improvement and Organisational Development (IOD) team leads on the delivery of the Gaelic Language Plan supported by lead officers from across the Council and, where possible, by external partner organisations.
- 7.2 Lead officers will provide regular update reports to the Improvement and Organisational Development team and the Policy Lead Councillor for Community, Culture, Customer and Communication.
- 7.3 The Council will continue to invest resources in Gaelic education, language and culture and will realign priorities and resources for future development although we recognise that this is a difficult economic period for public services and with this in mind, we will make best use of resources.
- 7.4 The Council will also continue to consider any external and partnership funding opportunities that are appropriate. The Council accepts that a strong working relationship with other organisations operating in Argyll and Bute which deliver services and activities through Gaelic are pivotal to sustaining growth in Gaelic in Argyll and Bute and will lead to effective implementation of our language plan, thus creating more opportunities for Gaelic to be used.

8 Review and Monitoring of the Plan

- 8.1 As a strategic corporate document, the Gaelic Language Plan will be monitored and scrutinised to the same level as the Council's Corporate Plan and service plans through a scorecard and presented at Council meetings.
- 8.2 Performance reports are submitted to the designated Gaelic lead spokesperson by lead officers on a quarterly basis and an annual monitoring report will be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
- 8.3 It is important to acknowledge that the language plan remains adaptable and flexible to the priorities set out by the Council, particularly when circumstances may change.

9 Promotion of the Plan

- 9.1 The plan will be promoted to all employees and elected members through the use of the website, 'The Hub' - which is the staff intranet, Cascade and newsletters.
- 9.2 Externally, the plan will be promoted through the website, the use of social media sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter and The 'furan' Gaelic Centre in Oban.

- 9.3 A Gaelic forum will be established and this will be a key mechanism for promoting the plan to community planning partners and Gaelic organisations and individuals operating across and outwith Argyll and Bute.

10 Responsibility of the Plan

- 10.1 Overall responsibility for the Plan lies with the Chief Executive and the Policy Lead for Community, Culture and Housing.
- 10.2 The senior officer with operational responsibility for overseeing preparation, delivery and monitoring of the plan is the Head of Improvement and HR.
- 10.3 Any queries about the day-to-day operation of the Plan should be communicated to gaelic@argyll-bute.gov.uk and will be co-ordinated by the Improvement and Organisational Development team.

11 Action Plan

Ref	Outcome	Success Measures	Target/Timescale
GP1	Gaelic is audible and visible in our communities	Delivery of 2 locally sourced Gaelic awareness sessions in identified localities	4 localities per annum 50 participants per annum
		Number of groups accessing Gaelic Centre in Oban	10 groups (by 2015)
		All internal and external signage replaced bilingually when required	100% within lifetime of the plan if signage condition requires replacement
		Increase Gaelic materials available through the library service	Target tbc once baseline is known 2015
		Website and multimedia platforms will have an increasing amount of Gaelic material	As platforms come on stream – at least 10 per cent in Gaelic
		Increase printed material available through the medium of Gaelic	Establish baseline of bilingual documents by end of 2014
		Formal process in place for translation and interpretation	2015
		Develop a standard policy for bilingual signage	2015
		Monthly press releases in Gaelic	Average of 2 per month by 2015
GP2	People have high quality opportunities for the use of Gaelic as a choice in a range of community initiatives	Improve monitoring framework for partners delivering activities	Agreed feedback protocols by 2015
		Gaelic forum meets biannually	2014

		Commission research to identify baseline Gaelic activities delivered	Report produced 2014
		Assess impact of community initiatives	Baseline study 2014 Annually from 2015 (analysis of the impact on local communities)
		Increase number of local Gaelic partnerships operating in Argyll and Bute	Increase to 9 by 2016 (baseline = 7)
GP3	People have access to Gaelic learning and usage opportunities	Number of students attending Gaelic language learning classes/courses	400 - 2014 (baseline = 358)
		Offer free Council venues for local provincial mods	Implement from 2014
		Continued financial support for local Gaelic partnerships	Annually on receipt of progress reports
		Promotion of Gaelic learning opportunities through the wider learning community and in collaboration with Bòrd na Gàidhlig	Working with CLD, advertising on website; distribution of fliers 2014
GP4	Bòrd na Gàidhlig are integrated into the Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership	Bòrd na Gàidhlig are invited to become a member of Argyll and Bute CPP.	2014
GP5	Continue to strengthen Gaelic activities for families with children aged 0-3	Gaelic Bookbug and other parent and toddler Gaelic activities, delivered in areas with Gaelic Medium Education(GME)	All areas with GME plus 5 additional areas (baseline = 6)

		Promote the benefits of bilingualism and Gaelic Education in partnership with Comann nam Parant/Bòrd na Gàidhlig and local communities	All areas with GME plus 2 additional areas (baseline = 6)
		Expand the Parental Advocacy Scheme in partnership with Comann nam Pàrant.	All areas with GME (baseline = 6)
GP6	Provide a high quality 3-18 experience for young people accessing Gaelic Education	Increase the number of curricular areas delivered through Gaelic in secondary school curriculum	4 by 2017
		Access to new qualifications through the medium of Gaelic	3 by 2017
		Number of schools offering Gaelic Language in the Primary School (GLPS)	Increase by 5 per year
		Provide CPD opportunities for all Gaelic Education staff	2 courses per year
		Strategy developed to increase the number of qualified teachers able to deliver GME and GLPS	Strategy developed by 2016
		Local and national policies are reviewed and implemented	Ongoing consultation
GP7	Ensure Lifelong Learning opportunities meet the needs of communities	Families, with young people in GME, accessing out of school activities for learning and using Gaelic	1 event per school term per area
		Young people with Gaelic engaging with the wider Gaelic community in a variety of settings	10 opportunities by 2017 per area
GP8	Maintain strong partnerships and networks to ensure breadth and depth of experiences in learning	Access to national/partnership specialist school support staff	2014

GP9	People are aware of the importance of Gaelic in the home	High quality promotion, marketing and literature that informs people of the benefits of creating a bilingual environment in the home setting	All areas with GME by 2015
GP10	People have opportunities for the natural use of Gaelic in the home setting supported by other key partner organisations.	Materials, resources and the language skills provided to empower families to create a Gaelic environment in the home.	All areas with GME by 2015
GP11	Gaelic is audible and visible in the workplace and in Council processes	Increase Council vacancies where Gaelic is desirable	100% by 2015
		Council vacancies which are Gaelic essential or desirable will be advertised bilingually	100% by 2015
		Increase Gaelic content on 'The Hub' and website	2 each quarter by 2015
		Promotion of good news stories in and relating to Gaelic	Ongoing – news stories available on the Council website, 'The Hub', Cascade, Noticeboards
		Staff are engaged with the Gaelic Language Plan	Ongoing – The website, 'The Hub', Cascade
		Mail and email received in Gaelic will be responded to in Gaelic	100%
		Complaints received in Gaelic are responded to in Gaelic within timescale	100%
		Standard bilingual welcome for Council Reception staff	2015
GP12	Staff have opportunities to improve their Gaelic	Carry out a staff language skills audit	Audit carried out in 2014 Findings published in 2015

	language skills and this supports the use of Gaelic in a range of situations, in the workplace and in the community	Council staff and Community planning partners' staff accessing language learning classes	50 new employees by 2014
		Number of staff accessing Gaelic Toolkit	100 per annum
		Committee meetings opened with a Gaelic greeting	100% of full Council meetings opened with Gaelic greeting 2014
		Automated messages on contact with the council to have a Gaelic greeting	Bilingual welcome on switchboard 2014
		Increase Gaelic content on plasma screens at customer service points	Welcome greeting, date to appear bilingually by 2014
		Promotion of Gaelic activities in Argyll and Bute on website, plasma screen and customer service points	Links to national and local organisations, promotion of events, courses etc.
GP13	Gaelic is used in arts, media and culture	Host a successful Royal National Mod	Every 3 years
		Gaelic media organisations included in distribution of all council press releases	100%
		Increase number of Fèisean events held in Argyll and Bute	(baseline tbc) Increase of 10 per annum
GP14	People participate in Gaelic arts, media heritage events	Increase participants in Royal National Mod	Greater number participating when Mod returns to a previous venue (An Comunn Gàidhealach)
		Increase visitors attending Royal National Mod	Greater number of attendees when Mod returns to a previous venue
		Increase number participating in Fèisean events	Increase by 5% per year (408 in 2011/12)
		Increase number attending Fèisean events	Increase by 5% per year (987 in 11/12)
GP15	Gaelic related activities bring economic benefits	Increase economic impact of hosting Royal National Mod	£2.2m (baseline from 2009 Mod)

		Increase tutors in feisean activities	100 by 2016
		Support HIE Research – “Economic and Social Impact of Gaelic Language as an Asset”	Financial contribution to HIE Research