



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
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ALBA

Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) is a named relevant authority within the [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#). As such our new Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 was subject to an initial screening to determine whether a full Islands Communities Impact Assessment was required, to consider whether it is likely to have an effect on an island community, which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities) (Section 8 of the Act).

Following analysis of the data we had available and wider consultation it was concluded that the Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 would have a positive impact on many of the Island Communities, given the prevalence of Gaelic speakers, its usage in daily life and culture. Our Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 will therefore have no detrimental effects on island communities and a Full Impact Assessment was not deemed to be necessary.

Initial Screening

Step One: Developing a clear understanding of your objectives:

- Is the policy, strategy or service either **new** or **under** review?
- What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?
- How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service?
- What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?

Background – A new Gaelic Language Plan

HES is a charitable Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) whose statutory functions are set out in the Historic Environment Scotland Act 2014. Its primary purpose is to investigate, care for and promote Scotland's historic environment and to manage its collections as a national resource for reference, study and research - as set out in the Framework Document between Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Government.

Edition 2 of Historic Environment Scotland's Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared within the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. It sets out how we will use Gaelic in the operation of our functions, how we will enable the

use of Gaelic when communicating with the public and key partners, and how we will promote and develop Gaelic.

Our plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and having regard to the [National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-2023](#) and the [Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans](#). Our plan aligns delivery to the overall aims of the national plan: increasing the use of Gaelic, increasing the learning of Gaelic and promoting a positive image of Gaelic.

Policy Objectives

The new Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 will set out our aims, actions and related Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in terms of protecting and promoting Gaelic. The plan is structured to include our strategic priorities and how we will meet the corporate service aims outlined by Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Our strategic priorities are as follows:

1. We will work together with communities to promote and preserve Gaelic language and culture. We will listen to communities and support them to connect with, celebrate, and enjoy the historic environment and their heritage, developing new creative outputs.
2. We will investigate opportunities for Gaelic speakers to undertake foundation apprenticeships, modern apprenticeships, graduate placements and work placements and continue to develop volunteering within Historic Environment Scotland.
3. We will drive research that enhances our understanding of Gaelic in the context of the historic environment and intangible cultural heritage (ICH).
4. We will implement changes based on the findings of our Gaelic Interpretation Review and share these findings with others to inform best practice.
5. We will establish and build on partnerships with children and young people, educational professionals and other organisations to continue to develop engaging learning and education resources in Gaelic.
6. We will increase opportunities to learn about climate change, biodiversity and landscape through Gaelic.
7. We will support our colleagues to learn Gaelic, gain an increased understanding of Gaelic language and culture and how it relates to our work.
8. We will celebrate and promote Gaelic to national and international audiences.
9. We will continue to work in partnership with others to further progress for Gaelic at a national level by engaging in the Faster Rate of Progress workstreams.
10. We will celebrate our achievements and success in Gaelic and will work with others to share experiences and develop best practice.

Identification of Islands in the Plan

We have a particular interest in working with island communities, and organisations based there, to support Gaelic language and culture where Gaelic is most prevalent in our Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026. This includes a particular focus on islands where Gaelic is most prevalently spoken, or *Key Gaelic Communities*, being identified as those in Na h-Eileanan Siar, Skye, Tiree, Islay and Jura – places where, in the 2011 census, 20% or more of the population had Gaelic language abilities.

Intended Outcomes

We hope that the actions and aims of this plan will result in beneficial outcomes including the following:

- HES supports Gaelic language and culture in island communities, with a focus on key Gaelic communities, through the activities and actions in our Gaelic Language Plan
- HES and others working in Gaelic communities are informed about how they can further support communities in areas where there is a large number of Gaelic speakers
- HES establishes and builds on partnerships with community groups and organisations based in the islands or who's work impacts island communities positively
- The actions and activities in the Gaelic Language Plan will have a particular focus on island communities given that the majority of key Gaelic speaking communities are island based.

Step Two: Gather your data and identify your stakeholders

- What data is available about the current situation in the islands?
- How does any existing data differ between the islands?
- Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?

Available Data

- **2011 census Gaelic language report**
This report details statistics from the 2011 census on the use of Gaelic in Scotland and contains information on the use of Gaelic by island residents. We will consult the 2022 census data regarding use of Gaelic by island residents when this information becomes available.
Key Gaelic Communities as identified by this data include those in Na h-Eileanan Siar, Skye, Tiree, Islay and Jura – places where, in the 2011 census, 20% or more of the population had Gaelic abilities
- **Research: *The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community (2020)***
We are aware of recent research and recommendations relevant to Gaelic and island communities such as *The Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular*

Community (2020), Conchúr Ó Giollagáin, Gòrdan Camshron, Pàdruig Moireach, Brian Ó Curnáin, Iain Caimbeul, Brian MacDonald, Tamás Péterváry. We will endeavour to strengthen Gaelic in island communities being mindful of this research.

- **Short Life Working Group on Economic and Social Opportunities for Gaelic Report to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy (2023)**

HES will support the recommendations made in this report where we have been named and will work in partnership with others to contribute to recommendations.

We understand from the information and data above that further support is needed to strengthen Gaelic in island speaking communities and support revitalisation efforts. The strategic priorities in our Gaelic Language Plan were created while being mindful of this context and our need to support Gaelic in island communities

We consider that our plan will have a beneficial impact in strengthening Gaelic and therefore supporting the spoken language and culture of many island communities around Scotland. We will have a focus on supporting key Gaelic speaking communities located in the islands through the actions in our plan and working with these communities to explore, enjoy and protect their Gaelic heritage.

We will continue to seek opportunities to work in partnership with communities, Comainn Eachdraidh (Local Historical Societies), organisations and the councils where island key Gaelic communities are based, including working closely with the Outer Hebrides Heritage Forum and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar on their work related to heritage, Gaelic, community outreach and the historic environment.

Step Three: Consultation

- Who do you need to consult?
- How will you carry out your consultation?
- What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?
- What information has already been gathered through consultations and what concerns have been raised?

Further guidance on HES and public consultations is available at [HES policy, plan and project alignment on HESnet](#).

We conducted a public consultation for HES' Draft Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 for 6 weeks from 8 March – 19 April 2023 online through Citizen Space. This platform allowed anyone to submit their feedback on our draft plan. We received 33 responses, including 5 responses in Gaelic, and responses from 3 organisations (the Social Enterprise Academy, The University of Edinburgh and VisitScotland).

The consultation was promoted through professional networks, our social media channels and was featured in national press. including two interviews with BBC Radio nan Gàidheal and a front-page feature on The Scotsman. Our social media posts were targeted at Gaelic speakers and communities, including island communities.

Partial postcodes were being asked for tailor activities and learning resources that are useful and relevant support in supporting communities in areas where there is are many Gaelic speakers.

The number of consultation responses from individuals residing in local authority areas with offshore inhabited islands are stated below:

- Argyll and Bute Council (3 responses)
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (No responses)
- Highland Council (No responses)
- North Ayrshire Council (1 response)
- Orkney Islands Council (No responses)
- Shetland Islands Council (1 response)

We included the following question in our public consultation: *What impact do you think our Gaelic Plan might have on people in island communities?*

17 out of 33 respondents answered this question. An overwhelming majority considered that our draft Gaelic Language Plan will have a positive impact on people in island communities.

Positive impacts included:

- Creating opportunities for these communities related to education, employment and recreational activities
- Demonstrating a value for the language and culture of many island communities
- Encouraging the use and learning of Gaelic
- Strengthening the identity of these communities and pride in their heritage

Comments were also made about developing our understanding of these island communities and that not all island communities have many Gaelic speakers.

A summary of our public consultation can be found on our website alongside our Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026.

Step Four: Assessment

You must now determine whether in your opinion the policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities).

To form your opinion, the following questions should be considered (please delete YES/NO as appropriate) and any further explanation or evidence provided below:

Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities? **No**

Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts? **No**

Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as different levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)? **No**

Are these different effects likely? **No**

Are these effects significantly different? **No**

Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the mainland or between island groups? **No**

If your answers are NO to the above questions a full ICIA will be NOT be required and you can proceed to Step Six.

All answers are “No” based on the evidence available and on HES’s intended approach, so a full ICIA is not required.

Step Six: Making adjustments to your work

Please state how any adjustments are going to be made to your work to mitigate any effects on Island Communities. If no adjustments will be made please state this and include any justification.

- Should delivery mechanisms/mitigations vary in different communities?
- Do you need to consult with island communities in respect of mechanisms or mitigations?
- Have island circumstances been factored into the evaluation process?
- Have any island-specific indicators/targets been identified that require monitoring?
- How will outcomes be measured on the islands?
- How has the policy, strategy or service affected island communities?
- How will lessons learned in this ICIA inform future policy making and service delivery.

Our Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 will have no detrimental effects on island communities and therefore no mechanisms or mitigations will be necessary.

The way in which our Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026 will be monitored and implemented is outlined below.

A Gaelic Language Plan Implementation and Monitoring Group will be established. This group will have responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of different aspects of our Gaelic Language Plan.

A Gaelic Action Plan will be developed that will outline specific details, timescales, and teams involved, to achieve the actions, aims and KPIs set out in the Gaelic Language Plan. A quarterly internal progress report will be produced and shared with the Gaelic Language Plan Implementation and Monitoring Group.

We will complete an annual monitoring report for Bòrd na Gàidhlig. This report will be made publicly available on our website.

We have identified high-level key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of our Gaelic Language Plan.

KPI 1: Established baseline and reporting on Gaelic related grants and funding.

KPI 2: Completed scoping exercise to determine how HES can best support communities with a large number of Gaelic speakers.

KPI 3: Increased HES colleagues' confidence and fluency in Gaelic language.

KPI 4: Increased HES colleagues' understanding of Gaelic and how it relates to our work.

KPI 5: Worked with our partners to establish and share best practice in Gaelic.

KPI 6: Achieved 80% or more of the Corporate Service Aims by the end of our Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2026.

Certain activities in our plan will be particularly relevant to island communities, especially key Gaelic communities with a higher number of Gaelic speakers. We will ensure that people living in island communities are considered and have an opportunity to be involved in the actions and activities that will be of interest or particularly relevant to them. For example, in our work under KPI 2 'Completed scoping exercise to determine how HES can best support communities with a large number of Gaelic speakers', we will ensure that these communities are included and consulted in this exercise.