



SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

DRAFT GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2016 – 2021

This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on *[insert date]*.

FOREWORD

This plan is in draft format for the purposes of consultation. Upon completion of the consultation period and following endorsement by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) a Foreword will be included at this section from the Chief Officer, Alasdair Hay.

Contents

Structure of the Gaelic Language Plan

The key components of our Gaelic Language Plan are:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

This chapter provides the background and context relating to the preparation of Gaelic Language Plans under the 2005 Act and the structure of the SFRS's main areas of operation. It also provides a summary of the demography of the Gaelic language.

Chapter 2 – Core Commitments

This chapter sets out how the SFRS will use, and enable the use of Gaelic in relation to our main business functions. It covers key areas of operation such as corporate identity, signage, communication with the public and the use of Gaelic on our website. This chapter sets out *the basic minimum level* of Gaelic language provision to which we are committed to providing in the lifetime of the Plan.

Chapter 3 – Policy Implications for Gaelic: implementing the National Plan for Gaelic

This chapter sets out how the SFRS will help implement the *National Plan for Gaelic*. It also shows how we intend promoting the use of Gaelic in service planning and delivery, particularly in policy areas, such as community engagement. This chapter also considers how we will take account of Gaelic and our Gaelic Language Plan when drafting new policies and considering new strategies.

Chapter 4 – Implementation and Monitoring

This chapter sets out how the implementation of our Gaelic Language Plan will be taken forward, and how implementation and outcomes will be monitored.

Summary

The SFRS recognises that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's heritage, national identity and cultural life. The SFRS is committed to the objectives set out in the *National Plan for Gaelic* and has put in place the necessary structures and initiatives to ensure that Gaelic has a sustainable future in Scotland.

The SFRS recognises that the position of Gaelic is extremely fragile and if Gaelic is to be revitalised as a living language in Scotland, a concerted effort on the part of government, the public and private sectors, community organisations and individual speakers is required to:

- *enhance the status of Gaelic;*
- *promote the acquisition and learning of Gaelic;*
- *encourage the increased use of Gaelic.*

This document is the SFRS's Gaelic Language Plan 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.

The SFRS's Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the 2005 Act, and having regard to the *National Plan for Gaelic* and the *Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans*.

Introduction

Setting the Context for Developing Gaelic Language Plans

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 was passed by the Scottish Parliament with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect with the English language.

One of the key features of the 2005 Act is the provision enabling Bòrd na Gàidhlig (the Scottish Government's principal Gaelic development body) to require public bodies to prepare Gaelic Language Plans. This provision was designed to ensure that the public sector in Scotland plays its part in creating a sustainable future for Gaelic by raising its status and profile and creating practical opportunities for its use.

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The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the 2005 Act, and having regard to the National Gaelic Language Plan and the Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans.

The requirement to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan

The requirement for a public body to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan is initiated by Bòrd na Gàidhlig issuing a formal notice to that effect under section 3 of the 2005 Act.

Approval of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Gaelic Language Plan:

The SFRS's Gaelic Language Plan will be submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval.

Consultation on a draft Gaelic Language Plan

The 2005 Act requires public bodies to bring the preparation of its Gaelic Language Plan to the attention of all interested parties. The SFRS has consulted publicly on the draft of its

Gaelic Language Plan and took into account representations made to it during the consultation process.

The draft plan was available on the SFRS's website for 6 weeks inviting the public to comment. The draft plan was promoted through social media and the public were invited to comment on the draft via email.

Overview of the functions of The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the use of Gaelic within our area of operation

The SFRS came into existence on 1 April 2013 replacing 8 separate regional fire authorities. Responsible to the Scottish Government the SFRS is overseen by a publically appointed Board and managed by a Chief Officer and executive management team based at its Headquarters in Cambuslang.

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 provides the statutory basis for the SFRS to deliver a range of core services and functions that means while the service is ready to respond to fire and other emergencies, it also maintains a strong focus on prevention and protection arrangements to ensure the safety of our communities. The associated Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 sets the overarching strategic direction for the SFRS in the delivery of its services to the communities of Scotland.

The priorities for the SFRS have been laid out in the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 with the following Strategic Aims defined within the Strategic Plan 2016:

Strategic Priority 1: Performance Measures

Strategic Priority 2: Safety, Well-being and Prevention

Strategic Priority 3: Response and Resilience – Managing Risk

Strategic Priority 4: Response and Resilience – Evidence based decision making

Strategic Priority 5: Partnership

Strategic Priority 6: Service Transformation

Strategic Priority 7: Modernising Response

Strategic Priority 8: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

Strategic Priority 9: Effective Governance and Performance

Strategic Priority 10: People

Operating across Scotland the SFRS employs around 8,000 personnel including full-time, retained and volunteer personnel. With over 350 premises the SFRS has the largest geographic footprint of any of Scotland's public authorities providing its services to all of Scotland's communities and those visiting the country.

Identifying and understanding the needs of Scotland's communities is as relevant to the fire service as it is to any other public authority. The SFRS has to balance the demands of providing a national service with the needs of local communities.

There is a significant correlation between some protected characteristics, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, and risk from fire and other emergencies. Moreover, the SFRS recognises social and economic disadvantage on equal footing with those characteristics identified in equality legislation. Older people, people with disabilities, people living alone, people from deprived backgrounds and those with complex social needs are all more likely to be at risk from fire or other emergencies than those who do not have these characteristics. While we have corporate priorities to address these inequalities it is at the level of local service provision that we can make a difference.

Gaelic within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service area of operation.

Operating across Scotland the SFRS operates in areas of the country where Gaelic is used as part of everyday life as well as in some areas where it is not.

The total number of Gaelic speakers recorded in the 2011 census was 57,375, 1.1% of the Scottish Population. Gaelic speakers are spread throughout Scotland and just over half live in the Highland counties. The main stronghold of the language is the Western Isles and Gaelic is spoken by a majority of people in the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area, and in the parish of Kilmuir in the Isle of Skye within the Highland Council area.

There are an increasing number of Gaelic medium schools across Scotland and in areas where Gaelic may not otherwise be spoken by the majority population such as in South Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire local authority areas.

Gaelic within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's authority:

The SFRS recognises that within its workforce there are employees who can speak, read and write in the medium of Gaelic. An immediate priority of the plan is to identify staff with skills in the Gaelic language and determine the extent to which this internal resource can be utilised for the promotion of Gaelic and the delivery of services.

The Gaelic Language Plan in the Corporate Structure

This plan is the policy of the SFRS and has been endorsed by our senior management team.

Position with operational responsibility over the plan

The senior officer with operational responsibility for overseeing preparation, delivery and monitoring of the SFRS's Gaelic Language Plan is:

Elaine Gerrard,
Diversity Manager
elaine.gerrard@firescotland.gov.uk
01698402230

Position with day to day to day responsibility over the plan

The officer with operational responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the SFRS's Gaelic Language Plan is the Diversity Manager. Questions about the plan should be addressed to:

Denise Rooney
denise.rooney@firescotland.gov.uk
01324629121

Individual staff members

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will inform staff of their duties under the Gaelic Language Plan through regular internal communications and management/employee meetings.

Planning and Policy Implications for Gaelic

Mainstreaming Gaelic

The SFRS recognises that the various priority areas identified in the National Gaelic Language Plan will be primarily implemented through our Gaelic Language Plan but that opportunities will arise to promote and develop the language through existing SFRS policy measures. The SFRS will examine current policy commitments to identify areas where Gaelic can be incorporated and the priorities of the National Gaelic Language Plan initiated through additional methods. We see this development as corresponding to the aim to include Gaelic as an everyday part of life in Scotland.

In the formation, renewal and monitoring of policies, the SFRS will consider the commitments made in this Gaelic Language Plan, and ensure that the impacts on Gaelic will be in line with the National Gaelic Language Plan.

Commitment to the objectives of the National Gaelic Language Plan

The SFRS is committed to ensuring that the National Plan is implemented, and in this section we set out how we will achieve that aim.

Home and early years

The SFRS recognises that a sustainable future for Gaelic requires more people to learn the language and that attention requires to be focused on the home, education and adult learning as the key means of achieving this.

Education

The SFRS recognises that creating a sustainable future for Gaelic requires not only increasing the number of people able to speak the language, but increasing actual usage. We recognise the importance of enabling more people to use Gaelic as their preferred and normal mode of communication in an increasingly wide range of daily activities.

Community

The SFRS recognises that the status of a language is affected by its presence in the daily environment and the extent to which it is used, valued and perceived to be valued by those institutions which play an important role in our daily lives. As part of our first Gaelic Language Plan we will take steps to explore:

- Increasing the profile and use of Gaelic through the availability of a range of Gaelic medium services in areas where 20% or more of the population have Gaelic abilities
- Supporting initiatives that make use of the skills and abilities of Gaelic speakers in community activities.

The Workplace

The SFRS recognises the need to strengthen the relevance and consistency of Gaelic, the importance of facilitating translation services and to promote research into the language. As part of our first Gaelic Language Plan we will take steps to explore:

- Creating a positive attitude to Gaelic in the workplace through awareness-raising and signage.
- Increasing opportunities for staff to learn Gaelic and for speakers to develop their language skills.
- Promoting recruitment of Gaelic speakers to ensure the language is increasingly visible and used in the workplace and in providing services to the public.

Media and Arts; Heritage & Tourism

The SFRS recognises the need to strengthen the relevance and consistency of Gaelic, the importance of facilitating translation services and to promote research into the language.

Corpus

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Scottish Government National Priorities

The SFRS is working to strengthen the language across our communications and organisation which will contribute to the cultural wellbeing of the people of Scotland. The SFRS is committed to achieving the Scottish Government's strategic objectives of creating a Scotland that is:

- Wealthier and fairer
- Smarter
- Healthier
- Safer and stronger
- Greener

Plan Commitments

High Level Commitments

The following high level aims have been outlined as the key priorities for the SFRS in support of the current national Gaelic language plan and National Outcomes:

- Acknowledge the starting point for a greater understanding of the value and means by which the Service can use the Gaelic medium.
- Support and encourage staff to use their Gaelic language skills while carrying out their duties.
- Ensure that all staff is aware of the Plan and their responsibilities in ensuring it is implemented.
- Ensure that there is a connection with the Gaelic media to increase visibility and audibility of the work of the SFRS.
- Explore opportunities to work with partner organisations such as Police Scotland and local authorities on meeting our collective responsibilities under the Act.
- Any Gaelic services and resources will demonstrate equal respect for Gaelic and English.

The SFRS are committed to achieving the high level aims through the implementation of this Gaelic language plan.

Service Standard Commitments

Creating the conditions for the use of Gaelic in public life is identified by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, in its statutory Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans, as a key factor in normalising the use of Gaelic. The Bòrd has identified five core areas of service delivery that it wishes public bodies to address when preparing their Gaelic Language Plans:

- Visibility
- Staffing
- Day to day operations
- Communications
- Corpus

The core commitments play an important role in raising the profile and visibility of Gaelic. The SFRS intends to enable and encourage the use of Gaelic through the above core areas, to raise the profile of Gaelic in its business functions and in the delivery of its regulatory services.

In this first Gaelic Language Plan for the SFRS will focus on identifying the current use of the Gaelic medium within its workforce, in its service provision and its corporate profile. The overarching ambition of this first Plan is to consolidate existing practice, identify where can build on those existing practices and take steps to more actively promote the ambitions of the Bòrd na Gàidhlig for future iterations of our Gaelic Language Plan. The following pages detail the actions the SFRS will be taking over the next five years to deliver this Plan effectively.

Visibility

The presence of Gaelic in the corporate identity and signs of a public authority greatly enhances the visibility of the language, increases its status and makes an important statement about how Gaelic is valued and how it is given recognition. Developing the use of Gaelic through signage can also enrich the vocabulary of Gaelic users, raise public awareness of the language and contribute to its development.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service recognises the importance of extending the visibility of Gaelic and increasing its status.

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1. Corporate Logo and Signage							
Visible normalisation of Gaelic as a core element of the Service's identity and signage	Audit the current use of Gaelic in SFRS signage		X				
	Identify opportunities for use of Gaelic signage		X				
	Consider policy to implement dual signage on a replacement basis			X			
	Audit the range of corporate communications to identify potential documents for dual language publication		X				

Staffing

In order to deliver services through the medium of Gaelic, it is necessary to develop the requisite job skills and language skills of staff. The provision of language learning for staff helps promote adult Gaelic learning and promotes Gaelic as a useful skill in the workplace. The identification of jobs in which Gaelic is a designated skill will contribute greatly to the status of the language and to identifying it as a positive skill to acquire.

The use of Gaelic in advertising also helps recognise that Gaelic should be used in public life and that Gaelic users have an important role to play within a public authority. Whatever the level of Gaelic skills required it is important that authorities ensure that Gaelic is a genuine occupational requirement. Authorities should adopt and apply objective criteria to ensure appointments are made in each case on a fair and consistent basis, and reflect the identified skills needs of the post.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service recognises the importance of seeing Gaelic as an important job skill and of identifying situations in which its use is essential or desirable. The Service also recognises the importance of enabling staff to develop their Gaelic skills if they wish to do so.

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
2. Awareness of Gaelic Skills Amongst Existing Staff							
The SFRS is aware of Gaelic speakers within its workforce and takes steps to support them	Conduct audit to identify number and skill level of Gaelic use within SFRS workforce		X				
	Identify the extent to which Gaelic speakers use Gaelic in the delivery of services and/or daily work activities in an informal basis		X				
	Ascertain the extent to which existing Gaelic		X				

	speakers wish to communicate in Gaelic in the workplace						
	Identify ways the SFRS could facilitate a more formalised method for staff to communicate in Gaelic as a part of their roles			X			
	Plan a programme of work to support the normalisation of Gaelic use in the workplace				X		

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
3. Review Employment Practice to Encourage the use of Gaelic							
The Service's employment practices recognises the value of Gaelic language skills	Review the appointments process for some roles to determine the usefulness of identifying Gaelic as a desirable criteria for some posts					X	

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
4. Identify Best Practice for Future Implementation							
Work with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig to identify best practice in employment practice as it relates to the Gaelic language	Seek the assistance of the Bòrd to identify additional, appropriate initiatives in preparation for the second SFRS Gaelic Language Plan.	X					

Day-to-day Operations

The use of Gaelic at the initial point of contact that members of the public have with a public authority increases the visible and audible presence of the language, and contributes to the sense that the use of Gaelic is possible and welcome. In addition to raising the profile of the language, it also creates opportunities for its practical use and encourages members of the public to use Gaelic in subsequent dealings with the public authority.

The use of Gaelic in interactions with the authority by mail, e-mail and by telephone is important in creating practical opportunities for the use of the language, and in contributing to the sense that its use is possible and welcome. The presence of Gaelic in a wide range of bilingual forms and Gaelic only forms can also greatly enhance the visibility and prestige of the language. The preparation of Gaelic forms, applications and similar documents, can also assist in expanding the range of Gaelic terminology and the awareness of the Gaelic-speaking public of such terminology, thus helping the development of the language itself.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service recognises the importance of creating opportunities for the practical use of Gaelic in a wide range of everyday situations and is committed to increasing its level of provision in this area.

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
5. Frontline Services to the Public							
The SFRS values the engagement with Gaelic language communities	Work with Gaelic speaking communities to identify the extent to which their needs are being met by the Service	X					
	Audit existing practices of providing translated documentation		X				

	Identify key documents and messages which might benefit from provision in Gaelic		X				
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Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
6. Identify Best Practice for Future Implementation							
Work with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig to identify best practice in day-to-day operations in the Gaelic language	Seek the assistance of the Bòrd to identify additional, appropriate initiatives in preparation for the second SFRS Gaelic Language Plan.				X		

Communications

The use of Gaelic in the media and a range of printed material can assist Gaelic development in a variety of ways. It helps increase the visibility of the language, it enhances Gaelic's status by being used in high profile publications, and it can help develop new and enhance existing terminology. The use of Gaelic in the media helps demonstrate a public authority's commitment to making important information available through the medium of Gaelic, as well as enhancing the visibility and status of the language. As more people access information about public authorities through their websites, making provision for the use of Gaelic can significantly enhance the status and visibility of the language.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is committed to increasing the use of Gaelic in these areas where the subject matter is of most interest to the general public or relates specifically to Gaelic issues.

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
7. Interacting with Gaelic Media							
Interact in a positive way with Gaelic medium media	Audit existing arrangements with Gaelic media outlets		X				
	Identify and establish ongoing relationships with Gaelic media to ensure that co-operative arrangements are in place	X					

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
8. Effective Communication							
Provide good quality written translations in Gaelic where appropriate to do so	Audit current dual language information held by the SFRS		X				
	Develop a process for accessing translator services		X				
	Develop a guidance note on when it is appropriate to translate SFRS material into Gaelic		X				

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
9. Identify Best Practice for Future Implementation							
Work with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig to identify best practice in Gaelic language communication	Seek the assistance of the Bòrd to identify additional, appropriate initiatives in preparation for the second SFRS Gaelic Language Plan.				X		

Corpus

The development of Gaelic in this sector is vital to the future of Gaelic in Scotland. Attention to this will allow Gaelic to develop new terminology and registers leading to greater relevance and consistency. For those reasons steps will be taken to ensure the continued development of the Gaelic language.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service recognises the importance of developing the Gaelic language to ensure that it is fit for all appropriate purposes and for use in the growing range of contexts in which it features.

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
10. Gaelic Orthographic Conventions							
The SFRS will adhere to Gaelic Orthographic Conventions	The SFRS will ensure that translating services contracted are in line with the latest orthographic conventions.	X					

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
11. Observation of Correct Place Names							
The SFRS will make certain that correct place names are being used across the organisation	Correct place names are to be used across all aspects of the organisation such as maps, correspondence and publications in line recommendations from Ainmean-áite na h-Alba.					X	

Outcome	Activity	Ongoing	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
12. Translations and Interpreting Service Standards							
Maintain a high level of translation standards	Review translation and interpreting services and confirm they are in line with industry standards		X				

Implementation and Monitoring

Timetable

The Gaelic Language Plan will formally remain in force for a period of five years from the date it was approved by Bòrd na Gaidhlig. By no later than the end of this period we will review the plan, make such amendments as necessary and submit it to the Bòrd for approval.

In section 4 – Plan Commitments we have set out the individual target dates for when we expect to implement specific commitments.

Publicising the Plan

The SFRS's Gaelic Language Plan will be published bilingually on our website. In addition, we will:

- Issue a bilingual press release announcing the approval and publication of the plan
- Arrange for media interviews to be offered in Gaelic and English
- Tell staff and stakeholders about the new plan and how to access it through newsletters and the intranet
- Raise awareness of the plan through social media

Resourcing the Plan

The majority of activities outlined in this plan will be, or have already been, incorporated and resourced through the SFRS's budgets, Scottish Government. External funding may be sought for individual projects such as the creation of Gaelic marketing materials and additional Gaelic resources for the staff learning.

Monitoring the Implementation of the Plan

The SFRS will monitor the implementation of the plan through regular reporting to the Service's management team. The Bòrd na Gaidhlig will be kept apprised of progress against the plan annually.