



Rona and Mairi Stewart playing shinty at the Dell in Kingussie. © Ed Smith

Gaelic Language Plan 2024-28



Cairngorms
National Park
Pàirc Nàiseanta a'
Mhonaidh Ruaidh

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



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Foreword

Part of what makes the Cairngorms National Park so special is the rich tapestry of cultures and languages that have helped shape it. From early Pictish communities to Gaelic, Scots and Doric, the impact of centuries of dialogue and cultural activity can be felt in communities right across the region.

Over 1,000 years ago, Gaelic became the dominant language in the Cairngorms. It's for this reason that so many of our place names are Gaelic in origin: 'allt' meaning a large stream, 'coille' a forest; 'meall' a conical hill and so on. The language has played a vital role in shaping our music, storytelling, sport (especially through shinty) and wider cultural life.

And that heritage is very much alive and well in the Cairngorms of the present day. According to the last census, around 3.6% of the National Park's population speak the language, more than twice the number for the rest of Scotland. The language is particularly strong in Badenoch and Strathspey, where the Badenoch: The Storylands project (amongst others) has done much to celebrate the area's linguistic and cultural heritage, rooted as it is in Gaelic storytelling and creative practice.

For our visitors, too, the appetite to experience Gaelic while in Scotland, especially for those with Scottish ancestry, has never been greater, and the Cairngorms provide an excellent opportunity for people to immerse themselves in the language and the culture of this very special place.

As a Park Authority, we take our duty to recognise and celebrate Gaelic extremely seriously. This plan is of course a key part of that; however, the roots go deeper still. Our vision is for a national park where people and nature thrive together and underpinning this is the concept of Dùthchas, the deep-rooted connection between people and nature. The people of the National Park have an instinctive connection to the land and to this place and that indelible connection – through language, landscape and culture – inspires us all to care.

It's my pleasure to introduce this third Gaelic Language Plan 2024-28. I look forward to working with many of you to deliver it.

Sandy Bremner, Convener



1. Introduction

1.1 About our Gaelic Language Plan

As the public body responsible for coordinating activity within the UK's largest national park, we are committed to ensure that the unique cultural and linguistic value of Gaelic to the Cairngorms National Park is fully recognised and celebrated. This third edition of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan, covering the period 2024-28, sets out how we intend to achieve this and how activity in this area aligns with our five-year National Park Partnership Plan.

This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and was subject to a six-week public consultation, which took place between 25 January and 7 March 2024. Responses were collected via an online survey (available in both Gaelic and English), with phone, paper and email options also provided.

The consultation was promoted extensively both on- and offline across a range of channels. This included a bilingual media release and consultation landing page on our website, plus working with social media influencer Somhairle to produce tailored Instagram and TikTok content to engage a younger audience. We estimate that over 150 responses overlapped with this activity, and over 32,000 people watched the videos Somhairle created. The consultation was also shared with over 100 contacts within the new Gaelic Officers Network, which has led to multiple organisational responses and direct email correspondence around potential partnerships.

A total of 427 responses were received, out of which 31 (7.3%) were in Gaelic. This compares to a total of 36 total responses submitted to the public consultation for the Gaelic Language Plan 2018-22. 82% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the three strategic priorities outlined within the plan; 78% agreed or strongly agreed that the draft plan was easy to understand; and 76% agreed or strongly agreed that the plan 'helps safeguard and promote Gaelic language and culture'. The majority who did not agree did so because they do not believe organisations such as the Park Authority should prioritise Gaelic in their day-to-day work. A full breakdown of the consultation results can be found in our Gaelic Language Plan consultation report.



The structure of this plan is informed by the [National Gaelic Language Plan for Scotland](#), with specific aims and actions identified that help increase the learning and use of Gaelic in the National Park, as well as promoting a positive image of the language. It was submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for approval on 5 July 2024.

If you have any questions about this plan, or would like to receive a copy in an alternative format (including large print), please contact us via the various channels outlined below.

For hard copies, write to us or visit:

Cairngorms National Park Authority
14 The Square
Grantown-on-Spey
PH26 3HG

For telephone enquiries, call us: 01479 873 535

For online requests, email enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk

1.2 About the Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park was established in 2003. It is the UK's largest national park at 4,528 sq. km, covering parts of Aberdeenshire, Moray, Highland, Angus and Perth and Kinross. The Park is home to 18,000 residents and welcomes around two million visitors a year. Nearly half of the National Park is considered 'wild land', with one quarter of Scotland's native forest and a quarter of the rare and endangered species in the UK found here.

The National Park has four distinct aims as set out by Parliament:

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area.
- To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area.
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public.
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.



These aims are to be pursued collectively. However, if there is conflict between the first aim and any of the others, greater weight is given to the first aim (as set out in Section 9.6 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000). This helps ensure conservation of the natural and cultural heritage underpins the economic, social and recreation value of the Cairngorms National Park.

1.3 About the Park Authority

The Cairngorms National Park Authority was set up to ensure that the unique aspects of the Cairngorms – the natural environment, local communities and its culture – are cared for, sustained, and enhanced for current and future generations to enjoy. The Park Authority provides leadership to all those involved in the Cairngorms and works in partnership with a range of communities, businesses, non-government organisations and public sector partners to deliver practical solutions on the ground.

This work is coordinated through our five-year [National Park Partnership Plan](#), which sets out how all those with a responsibility for the National Park will work together to tackle critical issues that relate to its people, nature and places and ultimately address the climate and nature emergencies.

The Cairngorms National Park was established in March 2003 and the Park Authority became fully operational – taking on all its statutory powers – on 1 September 2003. We are designed to be an enabling organisation, promoting partnership-working and giving leadership to all those involved in the National Park. We do not duplicate the work of other organisations, such as the enterprise agencies or NatureScot, but ensure there is a joined-up approach to projects and initiatives that help to meet the four aims of the National Park.

Our statutory duties are planning and development, outdoor access and the production of a Local Development Plan and a National Park Partnership Plan for the Cairngorms National Park. Other areas of work such as economic development, managing for visitors, path signage and interpretation are delivered through partnership working, with over 100 organisations and groups represented in our Partnership Plan.



In education, we support five local authorities (Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, Moray, and Perth and Kinross) and Education Scotland to develop projects that will help them deliver the Curriculum for Excellence and continued professional development.

We also make clear commitments about what we (the Park Authority) will deliver as a corporate organisation in terms of the third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan, and will work and agree with partners Gaelic deliverables for the Cairngorms National Park.

The Park Authority has around 110 staff plus 19 board members. We are funded by the Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers appoint seven of our board members. Another seven board members are nominated to the board by the five councils in the National Park – Aberdeenshire (2), Angus (1), Highland (2), Moray (1), and Perth and Kinross (1) – and five are elected locally. Through our board, we are responsible to the Minister and so to the Scottish Parliament. The Park Authority has offices in Grantown-on-Spey and Ballater.

1.4 Gaelic within the National Park

The Cairngorms National Park has a rich history and culture of languages. Gaelic became the dominant language of the Cairngorms area over 1,000 years ago (superseding the Pictish language and culture) and because of this the majority of the current place names within the National Park are Gaelic in origin. However, by the 18th and 19th centuries, many people in the Cairngorms area were bilingual, speaking Scots as well as Gaelic. On the east side of the National Park, the local dialect of Doric is widely spoken in the community and adds to the culture and history of the area.

According to the 2011 census, 657 people aged three or over living in the National Park can speak, read and / or understand Gaelic (3.6% of the National Park's population and 0.8% of Scotland's total Gaelic population). 146 said they used Gaelic in the home (0.8% of the National Park's population and just under a quarter of Gaelic speakers in the area). The majority of these people live in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Information compiled by Bòrd na Gàidhlig for the 2021 - 2022 academic year found that there were 17 Gaelic Medium Education Early Learning Centres across the Highland region and one within Perth and Kinross (out of a total of 55 centres nationwide). Only one of these – Newtonmore – is located within the National Park boundary. 1,081 pupils are in Gaelic Medium Education primary schools in Highland, and 40 in Perth and



Kinross. No provision is currently available in Moray, Aberdeenshire or Angus. There were 13 Gaelic Medium Education secondary schools in the Highland region and one in Perth and Kinross, accounting for 445 and seven pupils respectively. Kingussie is the only school located within the National Park boundary.

There are a number of Gaelic companies and voluntary groups operating in or near to the National Park offering services in Gaelic language and culture (a number of which have been supported and / or part-funded by the Park Authority). Gaelic voluntary groups in the National Park include Sinne (Strathspey and Badenoch Gaelic Group), which provides learning and sharing events for Gaelic learners and fluent speakers, and Gàidhlig anns a' Phàirc, a Gaelic action group. A number of national groups are also active in the National Park, including Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Spòrs Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach.

1.5 Gaelic within the Park Authority and how we support partners

In August 2022, Lorna Slater MSP (Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity) launched the fourth Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27, setting out how all those with a responsibility for the National Park will work together to tackle critical issues that relate to its people, nature and places and ultimately address the climate and nature emergencies.

The Partnership Plan is divided into three sections – Nature, People and Place – and within the People section there is a specific objective (B8) around the Gaelic language and our statutory duty as a public body:

- Gaelic is part of the cultural and natural heritage of the National Park and has a vibrant part to play in its future. There is a need to support the continued use of Gaelic and maintain it as an active language and culture within the communities of the National Park.

Objective: Encourage greater use of Gaelic in the National Park.

Target: Increased opportunities for individuals and communities to engage with Gaelic language and culture.

This third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan explains how we propose achieving this objective and should be read in context with the vision, objectives and policies outlined



in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27. A related objective (C10 – cultural heritage) sets out our approach to community-led cultural heritage and makes specific reference to Scots / Doric.

In terms of direct delivery, the Park Authority and its partner the Cairngorms Trust have funded a number of Gaelic-specific projects over the years and has also run a number of Gaelic awareness courses for ranger services, board members, staff and partners. We conduct an annual equalities survey which includes five questions about Gaelic, the results of which can be found in our [annual Gaelic progress reports](#):

- How would you assess your ability to read Gaelic?
- How would you assess your ability to write Gaelic?
- How would you assess your ability to speak Gaelic?
- How would you assess your ability to understand Gaelic?
- Would you be interested in receiving training on using the Gaelic language?

We refreshed the National Park, Park Authority and VisitCairngorms brands in 2023 to give English and Gaelic equal prominence for the first time, and embedded the use of Gaelic within our new [brand guidelines](#). This includes ensuring all new brands created by or for the Park Authority follow these principles. This approach has been rolled out across our website, social media channels, publications and leaflets, signage, video assets and all corporate templates.

Online, we have translated over 20 key pages on our website into Gaelic and will prioritise this as part of our new website redevelopment project. We have created dedicated Gaelic assets celebrating the [sport of shinty](#) and encouraging businesses to [incorporate Gaelic into their interpretation activities](#), and have placed the Gaelic concept of Dùthchas at the heart of our £43 million [Cairngorms 2030 programme](#). A [poem commissioned for our 20th anniversary](#) also includes a specific Gaelic verse focusing on the concept.

On social media, we have focused on integrating Gaelic translations into a wide selection of our posts (over 50 per annum), making content more accessible to our audience and encouraging our followers to learn and engage with the language. We explicitly reference the value of Gaelic and the connection between the Cairngorms National Park and the language in terms of culture and heritage, and provide simple resources for our partners to do the same. We also work with our partners the Cairngorms Business Partnership and the local community to celebrate the cultural



heritage of the Badenoch area (including Gaelic) through the [Badenoch: The Storylands](#) website and app.

Offline, we use bilingual signage at Park Authority offices internally and externally, on ranger vehicles, and on railway signage throughout the National Park. Our [Gaelic Place Names leaflet](#) helps residents and visitors to appreciate which place names in the National Park have Gaelic language origins and what they mean. The publication has proved to be extremely popular and has had several reprints for distribution across the region. We also provide a Gaelic foreword in all our statutory and policy publications.

Gaelic is celebrated through the bilingual version of the brand identity throughout the National Park. It is used on various point of entry markers and on panoramas (both of which are produced and funded by the Park Authority). The panoramas are on display at ranger and visitor information centres, and those in communities also include a welcome and introduction in Gaelic. We provide advice and support to partners to encourage the increased use of Gaelic where this is relevant.

Staff guidance on using Gaelic in their everyday activities is included within our staff induction and Gaelic training is made available to staff who request it. Gaelic is included within the desirable criteria on all Park Authority job adverts and we have recruited a number of Gaelic interns over the past few years to take forward specific pieces of work celebrating the language and associated culture.

1.6 Gaelic in Scotland

Across Scotland, the total number of people aged three or over recorded as being able to speak read and / or understand Gaelic in the 2011 census was 87,056 (1.9% of the Scottish population). Of these, the total number of people who could speak Gaelic was 57,602 (1.1% of the Scottish population). Data from the 2022 census was unfortunately not available at the time of this plan being compiled.

While the number of Gaelic speakers continued to decline overall since the previous census, the number of people able to speak and also read and write Gaelic again increased between 2001 and 2011, presumably reflecting a growth in Gaelic literacy and growing numbers of Gaelic learners. The number of young people under the age of 25 able to speak Gaelic also increased between 2001 and 2011.



The 2021 [Scottish Social Attitudes Survey](#) found that the proportion of people who 'can speak a word or two' of Gaelic has doubled over a 10-year period from 2012 to 2022 from 15% to 30%. Meanwhile a [survey of over 1,100 young people for Young Scot](#) found that 59% of young people who could not speak Gaelic were interested in learning the language, up 10% since 2020. Though these statistics are drawn from a much narrower sample than the census, they do indicate an upward trend in support for the Gaelic language.

There is no authoritative figure for the number of non-fluent adult learners; however, a study in 2016 for Bòrd na Gàidhlig estimated that there were 3,467 in Scotland. There are over 5,000 primary and secondary school children in Gaelic medium education nationally at present, with a further 1,000 children in Gaelic medium nurseries. Within English medium education, over 3,000 learners study Gaelic as a secondary subject each year between S1 and S6. Many children in English medium primary schools take part in Gaelic learning as Language 2 or Language 3 each year.

The move to home-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic had a huge impact on pupils whose families did not use Gaelic at home, albeit the #cleachdi at home initiative did provide additional support for non-curriculum activities. The closure of voluntary 0-3 early years' groups had a significant effect on families and their confidence in choosing Gaelic medium education for their children. The team at Bòrd na Gàidhlig worked with providers and groups to support online activities and the progression to outdoor face-to-face provision.

Lockdown did, though, see a phenomenal increase in online Gaelic learning, with Scottish Gaelic Duolingo reaching 1.8 million learners since it was launched in November 2019. Bòrd na Gàidhlig continues to support the once-in-a-generation development of the new [SpeakGaelic](#) provision for Gaelic learning.

This plan was developed before the publication of the [new National Gaelic Language Plan](#) by Bòrd na Gàidhlig; however, the previous 2018-2023 plan established clear targets for the number of Gaelic speakers over the next 35 years:

- 65,000 speakers and 4,000 children enrolled annually in Gaelic medium education by 2021.
- 75,000 speakers and 10,000 children in Gaelic medium education by 2031.
- 100,000 speakers and 50,000 children in Gaelic medium education by 2041.



Regardless of overall numbers of Gaelic speakers, it can be expected that the trends of increased literacy, increase in numbers of fluent learners and increase in Gaelic medium education will continue, leading to greater demand for services.

1.7 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 to the English language.

One of the key features of the 2005 Act is the provision enabling Bòrd na Gàidhlig to require a public authority to prepare a Gaelic language plan. This provision was designed to ensure that the public sector in Scotland plays its part in creating a sustainable future for Gaelic by raising the status and profile of the language and creating practical opportunities for its use.

This document is the third edition of the Cairngorms National Park Authority'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 Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared in accordance with statutory criteria set out in the Act and has regard to the National Gaelic Language Plan and the Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans.

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

We recognise 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.

1.8 The National Gaelic Language Plan

The Cairngorms National Park Authority supports the vision of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2023-28, which seeks to achieve: 'A measurable increase in the numbers of people speaking, learning, using and supporting Gaelic'. We are committed to the achieving this vision by focusing our work on three key areas, as agreed with Bòrd na Gàidhlig:

- **Increasing the use of Gaelic** within our organisation and encouraging more people to use Gaelic more often when they interact with us.
- **Increasing the opportunity for people to learn Gaelic** as part of our day-to-day operations.
- **Promoting a positive image of Gaelic** whenever we can as part of our day-to-day operations as an organisation, and encourage others within our network to do the same.

1.9 Internal Gaelic capacity audit

Details about the Park Authority's current work on Gaelic is summarised in section 1.4 above. The Park Authority conducts an annual audit of existing internal Gaelic capacity and the results were taken into consideration when developing commitments in this plan. The findings have also helped us work out how to establish, maintain or improve our practices in order to develop the use of the Gaelic language.

We recognise that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's and the National Park's heritage, identity and cultural life and we are already committed to a number of activities with staff, partners and the public which help to enhance Gaelic language and culture. Our offices show that commitment and raise awareness of Gaelic. Our welcome notice boards in the Grantown-on-Spey and Ballater offices use the bilingual logo and a Gaelic introduction, and all our meeting rooms feature English and Gaelic with equal prominence. Our leaflet rack for visitors uses the bilingual brand and includes a [Gaelic](#)



Place Names leaflet. Our ranger uniforms and vehicles feature English and Gaelic with equal prominence.

Our annual Gaelic capacity audit shows there are no staff who are fluent / moderate Gaelic speakers, albeit one person does identify as having a moderate ability to read the language. Six staff say they have 'some' and 32 'a little' ability to read Gaelic, with five saying that have 'some' ability to write Gaelic and eight 'some' ability to speak it. When Gaelic was offered as a training course in late 2023, 40 staff members (over 1/3rd of our staff body) signed up to four separate sessions, highlighting the widespread commitment to the language amongst our staff body.

The Park Authority funds and runs a number of projects, training courses and events which promote, develop and increase the Gaelic language and culture, both for staff and the public. We have offered Gaelic training through a variety of programmes in recent years, including our volunteer ranger project, staff and board training and ranger induction process. Gaelic resources have also been created for the ranger team, including a useful glossary of key terms.

Staff are offered further Gaelic training and learning opportunities through the appraisal system and we continue to encourage and offer these opportunities as they arise. Gaelic language guidance has been provided for all staff, including how to handle enquiries received in Gaelic to help staff use and feel confident in Gaelic. To date we have dealt with two Gaelic enquiries which were responded to within our regular response times.

Our recruitment and selection policy states: 'Knowledge / experience of the National Park's traditional languages like Gaelic should be a desirable criterion where it will make an effective contribution to the National Park Partnership Plan's aims. Where a certain level of Gaelic skills is part of the job description, the post should be advertised bilingually.'

To date, six jobs have been advertised with Gaelic as a desirable criterion; however, there were no applicants who met this criteria. No jobs were advertised as essential as no job description met this requirement. Gaelic monitoring on job application forms has been in place since May 2015. To date no job application forms have been received in Gaelic.

We monitor and evaluate all our Gaelic activities, including Gaelic and bilingual corporate materials and signage, publications, web content, support materials,



educational resources, events, media and social media, and educational projects such as the John Muir Award (which is offered in Gaelic).

The Cairngorms Trust has supported a variety of Gaelic projects over recent years, including two Youth Local Action Group grants to Fèis Spè and Gaelic culture and spoken word support via Badenoch: The Storylands. Additional activity in this area is included in our annual progress report sent to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, [published on our website](#).



2. Key principles

2.1 Equal respect

Under the terms of the 2005 Act, Bòrd na Gàidhlig works with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland, commanding equal respect to the English language, and the Bòrd in turn expects that public authorities will demonstrate in their plans how the principle will be achieved and maintained in practice.

The Park Authority will ensure that, where Gaelic is included as part of our operations and services, these services will be of an equal standard and quality as those that we provide in English.

2.2 Active offer

The Park Authority will make an active offer of our Gaelic services to our employees, partners and the public. This will ensure that, where Gaelic services are made available by us, Gaelic users will be made aware of their existence and will be actively encouraged to use them. This will take the responsibility away from the individual to ask for the service and will give Gaelic users the confidence that their needs will be met if that is their choice. We will ensure that our Gaelic language services are as accessible as our English language services.

2.3 Normalising

The Park Authority will ensure that opportunities for the public and our staff to use Gaelic are normalised, in support of the National Gaelic Language Plan's aims.



3. Plan commitments

3.1 Strategic priorities

Following discussions between the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the following set of strategic priorities were agreed for the third edition of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan:

i. Increasing the use of Gaelic

- Work in partnership with local authorities and other organisations in the National Park area to provide more opportunities for young people to use Gaelic.
- Encourage use of the Cleachdi initiative by staff and visitors.
- Ensure that any Park Authority responses or evidence provided in land reform consultations include references to using Gaelic.

ii. Increasing the learning of Gaelic

- Increase existing Gaelic educational resources. Create all new Park Authority educational resources in both Gaelic and English.
- Create Gaelic resources, based on the National Park's natural and cultural heritage, aimed at different levels of Gaelic proficiencies, in the wider community.

iii. Promoting a positive image of Gaelic

- Use partner agreements and other grant mechanisms with the Cairngorms Business Partnership, Growbiz, Countryside Learning Scotland and others to ensure Gaelic is reflected in work to promote business collaboration and in the development of green and rural skills.
- Conserve, enhance and promote the Gaelic language and cultural heritage of the Park Authority area for the benefit of residents and visitors.



Objective 1 – increasing the use of Gaelic

Strategic priority: To encourage and enable more people in the Cairngorms National Park to use Gaelic more often and in a wider range of situations.

We recognise that the status of a language is affected by its use in the daily environment and the extent to which it is valued and perceived to be valued by those institutions which play an important role in our daily lives. The Park Authority believes 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.

Current position: According to the 2011 census, 657 people aged three or over living in the National Park can speak, read and / or understand Gaelic, the majority living in Badenoch and Strathspey.

We work with the five local authorities that cover the Cairngorms National Park (Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, Moray, and Perth and Kinross) to identify areas where the third edition of our Gaelic Language Plan can contribute to priorities set out in community planning partnerships, single outcome agreements and their own Gaelic language plans. Through our Badenoch: The Storylands programme we have celebrated Gaelic language and culture, including through the groundbreaking [Storylands Sessions](#) series. See latest [Gaelic Language Plan progress reports](#) for more information.

Actions / timing: **a) Work in partnership with local authorities and other organisations in the National Park area to provide more opportunities for young people to use Gaelic.**
Resource creation each year of this plan, where specific needs are



identified by partners and / or the Park Authority

b) Encourage use of the Cleachdi initiative by staff and visitors.

Specific promotion of the initiative tied to Gaelic Week each year

c) Ensure that any Park Authority responses or evidence provided in land reform consultations include references to using Gaelic.

Park Authority response to include references to using Gaelic when New Land Reform Bill is open for consultation (expected in 2024)

d) Work with Highlands and Islands Enterprise to promote a suite of case studies and resources for partner organisations, local businesses and educational bodies to use and benefit from.

Link to assets incorporated into new National Park website in 2024; promotion on an annual basis and as and when new assets created

e) Provide, through interaction with the Cairngorms Trust, funding for projects that support Gaelic cultural heritage and / or educate or build skills towards preserving and enhancing Gaelic heritage.

Regular funding rounds throughout the five years of the plan

f) Incorporate Gaelic into the funding considerations for the community-managed climate grant scheme as part of Cairngorms 2030.

Exact amounts will vary as this is a co-designed scheme, but Gaelic will be included as a desirable criteria in the final scheme. Funding due to come on stream from late 2024 / early 2025

Objective 2 – increasing the learning of Gaelic

Strategic priority: To work in collaboration with key partners and providers to increase the learning of Gaelic across all five local authority areas in the Cairngorms National Park.

We recognise that the sustainable future of Gaelic requires increasing the number of people able to speak the language. We are



also aware of the importance of education, training and lifelong learning to achieve this goal and – whilst the Park Authority does not have direct control over the majority of education delivery within the National Park – we are committed to working with partners across public, private and third sectors to play our part.

Current position: Direct primary, secondary and tertiary education sits outside the Park Authority's remit; however, we are able to support with a range of public engagement programmes and events, plus create resources and materials where required. See latest [Gaelic Language Plan progress reports](#) for more information.

Actions / timing: **a) Increase existing Gaelic educational resources. Create all new Park Authority educational resources in both Gaelic and English.** Review of existing resources complete by end 2024, programme of updates / new material creation from 2025 (three created over the plan period)

b) Create Gaelic resources, based on the National Park's natural and cultural heritage, aimed at different levels of Gaelic proficiencies, in the wider community.

Three Gaelic resources created over the plan period

c) Provide Gaelic language and culture training for community representatives within the National Park.

Language and cultural heritage training offered on a biannual basis as part of the new cultural heritage network from 2025

d) Weave Gaelic language elements into promotion of major National Park events and activities.

Gaelic incorporated in programme of community roadshow events delivered through Cairngorms 2030 – between 10 and 15 per annum

e) Incorporate Gaelic into resources that help explain the nature and climate crisis as part of our Cairngorms 2030 climate learning



and education project.

Dedicated resource created incorporating Gaelic by the end of 2025

f) Work in partnership with the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority education team to continue to promote the [Literary Landscapes](#) resource online.

Asset to be transferred to new National Park website and updated in 2025-26

g) Work collaboratively with Scottish Government Outdoor Learning Group (SGOLG) to create Gaelic-specific outputs.

One Gaelic-specific output during five years of the plan

h) Engage with Gaelic speaking education groups operating in the National Park and support a wider network of practitioners through our new cultural heritage network.

Initial contact made within year one of this plan, cultural heritage network to be developed in 2025-26

i) Promote our Gaelic John Muir Award resources via Newtonmore Primary School and other interested schools.

Redesigned John Muir Award due to launch in 2025

Objective 3 – promoting a positive image of Gaelic

Strategic priority: To promote a positive image of Gaelic across the Cairngorms National Park and encourage partners to do the same.

The promotion of a positive image of Gaelic is critical to strengthening the appeal and status of Gaelic in Scotland and abroad, something which is emphasised within the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23. We will ensure that Gaelic is valued and that its contribution to the social, cultural and economic life of the National Park (and nation as a whole) is recognised, both within Park Authority outputs and those of our partners.



Clear synergies exist here with objectives 1 and 2 in terms of increasing the use and learning of Gaelic, but we recognise that the Park Authority and its partners have a specific role to play in celebrating Gaelic language, culture and heritage, as well as raising awareness with residents, visitors and other stakeholders within a Cairngorms context.

Current position: The Park Authority promotes a positive image of Gaelic through a range of dedicated resources on our website (including the interactive [Shinty Trail](#) and [Heritage Interpretation Toolkit](#)), publications such as our [Gaelic Place Names leaflet](#), and regular Gaelic content on social media.

We also offer biannual Gaelic language training to staff and have created a key terms and phrases resource for rangers across the National Park to draw on as part of their day-to-day activities. We encourage partners to take advantage of existing resources and provide support for them to develop their own. See latest [Gaelic Language Plan progress reports](#) for more information.

Actions / timing: **a) Use partnership agreements and other grant mechanisms with key partners to ensure Gaelic is reflected in work to promote business collaboration and in the development of green and rural skills.**

Partnership agreements and grant awards updated on an annual / bi-annual basis, aligned to partner reporting; Gaelic to be added as a standard item within grant templates, with clear requirements established based on level of funding, aims and outcomes

b) Conserve, enhance and promote the Gaelic language and cultural heritage of the National Park for the benefit of residents and visitors.

Annual programme of communications and engagement activity, progress reported to Bòrd na Gàidhlig each year. Specific focus on cultural heritage in materials, including the creation of a new Gaelic



place names trail / itinerary by 2025 and a project to capture the lived experience of longstanding community members

c) Work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and other relevant partners (eg Creative Scotland) to embed Gaelic arts and culture within the community arts and culture project as part of Cairngorms 2030.

Project will be led by the artists themselves but we will engage Gaelic creatives in this process and explore a Gaelic community arts brief as part of the project. Aim to produce at least one new Gaelic resource over the five-year programme

d) Ensure our partnership projects continue to celebrate Gaelic language and culture within a Cairngorms context, eg Badenoch: The Storylands, Cairngorms 2030 etc.

Annual programme of communications and engagement activity, progress reported to Bòrd na Gàidhlig each year. Aim to produce at least one new Gaelic resource over the five-year programme

e) Work with VisitScotland and partners to deliver the new Gaelic Tourism Strategy, specifically ensuring that Gaelic is an integral part of Scotland's tourism offer.

New Gaelic Tourism Strategy published in February 2024. Gaelic deliverables included in grant agreement with destination marketing partner the Cairngorms Business Partnership. Gaelic incorporated into all partnership marketing campaigns

f) The Park Authority uses and shares relevant market research data to increase recognition of the value that visitors place on Gaelic language and heritage within the National Park, eg through our network of 200+ brand charter holders.

Six-monthly newsletters to brand charter holders: new research findings shared as and when they are available, including from partners like Historic Environment Scotland and VisitScotland



3.2 Corporate service aims

In addition to the three strategic priorities, the Bòrd also set the following corporate service aims for the Park Authority:

iv. Status

- Logo and brand – render the corporate logo and branding in both Gaelic and English at the first opportunity and as part of any renewal process. The logo should demonstrate equal prominence for both languages.
- Signage – signage will include Gaelic and English as part of any renewal process.

v. Communicating with the public

- Promotion – positive messages that communication from the public in Gaelic is always welcome are regularly repeated.
- Written communication – written communication in Gaelic is always accepted (post, email and social media) and replies will be provided in Gaelic in accordance with the general policy.
- Reception and phone – where Gaelic speaking staff are capable of providing this service, they are supported to do so and the service is promoted to the public. If there are not staff available to deliver this service, capacity will be built through training and recruitment.
- Public meetings – opportunities to hold public meetings bilingually or in Gaelic are regularly explored and promoted. In those geographical locations in which the percentages or numbers of Gaelic speakers is greater, working towards this will be expected as standard.

vi. Information

- News releases – high-profile news releases and all news releases related to Gaelic are circulated in both Gaelic and English.
- Social media – Gaelic content distributed regularly through social media, working towards fully bilingual social media.



- Website – Gaelic content available on the Park Authority's website, with emphasis given to the pages with the highest potential reach; working towards fully bilingual website. In those geographical locations in which the percentages or numbers of Gaelic speakers is greater in the community, this will be expected as standard.
- Corporate publications – produced in Gaelic and English, with priority given to those with the highest potential reach and impact.
- Language – a process is in place to ensure that the quality and accessibility of Gaelic language in all corporate information is high.
- Exhibitions – opportunities to deliver public exhibitions bilingually or in Gaelic should be explored on a regular basis, with priority given to those with the highest potential impact.

vii. Staff

- Internal audit – conduct an internal audit of Gaelic skills and training needs through the life of each edition of the plan.
- Induction – knowledge of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan and training opportunities are embedded in new staff inductions.
- Language training – Gaelic language skills training and development are delivered to staff, particularly in relation to implementing the third edition of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan.
- Using Gaelic – staff are encouraged to use Gaelic in their work wherever possible.
- Awareness training – Gaelic awareness training is delivered, with priority given to senior staff, other key decision-makers and staff dealing directly with the public.
- Recruitment – Gaelic language skills are recognised and respected within the recruitment process throughout the Park Authority. Gaelic named as an essential and / or desirable skill in job descriptions in order to deliver the Gaelic Language Plan and in accordance with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig recruitment advice. Bilingual or Gaelic only job adverts for all posts where Gaelic is an essential skill.

viii. Gaelic language corpus



- Gaelic orthographic conventions – the most recent Gaelic orthographic conventions will be followed in relation to all written materials produced by the Park Authority.
- Place names – Gaelic place name advice from Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba is sought and used.

Objective 4 – status

Desired outcome: All National Park branding should include both Gaelic and English and demonstrate equal prominence for both languages.

Current position: The suite of National Park brands was refreshed in 2023, with Gaelic and English given equal prominence for the first time (see page 25 of our [brand guidelines](#)). As part of this process new dual language logos were created for the Park Authority, VisitCairngorms (operated by the Cairngorms Business Partnership) and the Cairngorms Nature Festival. A process was also set out for the Park Authority and its partners to create new brand identities, incorporating Gaelic on all occasions (see page 39 of the guidelines).

Actions / timing: **a) Render the corporate logo and branding in both Gaelic and English at the first opportunity and as part of any renewal process. The logo should demonstrate equal prominence for both languages.**

Logo demonstrates equal prominence for both languages and all new brand identities created by or for the Park Authority will do the same – see process outlined in our [new brand guidelines](#), including advice for partners and brand charter holders

b) Signage and interpretation will include Gaelic and English as part of any renewal process.

Standard practice for all Park Authority materials, plus advice offered to partners and other stakeholders, eg community groups



Objective 5 – communicating with the public

Desired outcome: Gaelic communication (written, face-to-face, online and over the phone) should be encouraged by the Park Authority.

Current position: Whilst we have relatively few Gaelic speakers across our staff and board cohort, clear processes exist for members of the public to contact us in Gaelic and for the Park Authority to respond in good time (utilising the services of reputable translation services). Key pages on the National Park website have been translated into Gaelic and this will be further prioritised as part of our website redevelopment process in 2024-25.

Actions / timing: **a) Promotion – positive messages that communication from the public in Gaelic is always welcome are regularly repeated.**

Processes in place to support Gaelic language enquiries via letter, email, phone or face-to-face. Key sections of our website translated into Gaelic, with more to follow as part of new website redevelopment process

b) Written communication – written communication in Gaelic is always accepted (post, email and social media) and replies will be provided in Gaelic in accordance with the general policy.

As above

c) Reception and phone – where Gaelic speaking staff are capable of providing this service, they are supported to do so and the service is promoted to the public. If there are not staff available to deliver this service, capacity will be built through training and recruitment.

As above. Few Gaelic speaking staff at present but processes exist (through reputable translation services) and Gaelic language training provided on an ongoing basis

d) Public meetings – opportunities to hold public meetings



bilingually or in Gaelic are regularly explored and promoted. In those geographical locations in which the percentages or numbers of Gaelic speakers is greater, working towards this will be expected as standard.

Gaelic welcome included in major public events, with option of Gaelic translation provided for board and planning meetings

Objective 6 – information

Desired outcome: Gaelic is considered as part of the Park Authority's core communications output, from news releases to website and social media content, publications and key events / exhibitions.

Current position: All news releases relating to Gaelic issued in both Gaelic and English, as with high profile news releases with relevance to Gaelic. Regular social media, website and print content produced with Gaelic elements. See latest [Gaelic Language Plan progress reports](#) for more information.

Actions / timing: **a) News releases – high-profile news releases and all news releases related to Gaelic are circulated in both Gaelic and English.** All news releases relating to Gaelic issued in both Gaelic and English, as with high profile news releases with relevance to Gaelic. Two general (not Gaelic-specific) news releases per annum to be translated into Gaelic

b) Social media – Gaelic content distributed regularly through social media, working towards fully bilingual social media. Gaelic incorporated in social media content on a regular (at least monthly) basis

c) Website – Gaelic content available on the National Park website, with emphasis given to the pages with the highest potential reach; working towards fully bilingual website. In those geographical locations in which the percentages or numbers of



Gaelic speakers is greater in the community, this will be expected as standard.

Key pages of the existing National Park website translated into Gaelic; further work to be progressed in 2024-25 as part of our website redevelopment project

d) Corporate publications – produced in Gaelic and English, with priority given to those with the highest potential reach and impact.

Forewords to all corporate publications translated into Gaelic, with full translation available for all publications on request. Third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan provided in both English and Gaelic

e) Language – a process is in place to ensure that the quality and accessibility of Gaelic language in all corporate information is high.

Clear process in place via the Park Authority's Communications team, utilising the services of reputable Gaelic translation services

f) Exhibitions – opportunities to deliver public exhibitions bilingually or in Gaelic should be explored on a regular basis, with priority given to those with the highest potential impact.

The Park Authority does not directly organise many public exhibitions; however, where we do so we commit to exploring the appropriate use of Gaelic

Objective 7 – staff

Desired outcome: Gaelic will be embedded at various stages of the recruitment, induction and professional development process, with an annual staff skills audit taking place to gauge levels of Gaelic proficiency within the staff body.

Current position: Gaelic forms part of our annual staff skills survey and is reported on via our annual [Gaelic Language Plan progress reports](#). Processes are in place to weave Gaelic into various aspects of the recruitment,



induction and professional development processes.

Actions / timing: **a) Internal audit – conduct an internal audit of Gaelic skills and training needs through the life of each edition of the plan.**

Audit conducted annually and reported as part of our [Gaelic Language Plan progress reports](#)

b) Induction – knowledge of the third edition of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan and training opportunities are embedded in new staff inductions.

Gaelic awareness forms part of the staff induction process

c) Language training – Gaelic language skills training and development are delivered to staff, particularly in relation to implementing the third edition of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan.

Biannual Gaelic language and cultural heritage training provided to staff – most recently completed by 40 colleagues in Q4 of 2023.

Training designed to build on learnings from previous sessions

d) Awareness training – Gaelic awareness training is delivered, with priority given to senior staff, other key decision-makers and staff dealing directly with the public.

As above – cultural heritage and language elements covered within the same training package

e) Using Gaelic – staff are encouraged to use Gaelic in their work wherever possible.

Support offered via the Communications team to access professional Gaelic translation services, plus simple guides available eg to the ranger team including key words and phrases

f) Recruitment – Gaelic language skills are recognised and respected within the recruitment process throughout the Park Authority. Gaelic named as an essential and / or desirable skill in



job descriptions in order to deliver the Gaelic Language Plan and in accordance with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig recruitment advice. Bilingual or Gaelic only job adverts for all posts where Gaelic is an essential skill.

Gaelic is included as an essential skill wherever appropriate and as a desirable skill on the majority of job adverts

Objective 8 – Gaelic language corpus

Desired outcome: The most recent Gaelic orthographic conventions will be followed in relation to all written materials produced by the Park Authority.

Current position: Established processes in place to ensure conventions are followed and a dedicated [Gaelic Place Names leaflet](#) has been created. Guidance sought and implemented from Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba where required.

Actions / timing: **a)** Gaelic orthographic conventions – the most recent Gaelic orthographic conventions will be followed in relation to all written materials produced by the Park Authority.

As above

b) Place names – Gaelic place name advice from Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba is sought and used.

As above



4. Links to the national performance framework

The Park Authority is committed to achieving the objectives and performance framework outcomes established by the Scottish Government. The list below identifies the performance outcomes that our Gaelic Language Plan development areas will assist within the [National Performance Framework](#) launched by the First Minister in 2018.

- **Children** – We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our potential
- **Communities** – We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- **Culture** – We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely
- **Economy** – We have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy
- **Education** – We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- **Environment** – We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment



5. Links to local and regional frameworks

5.1 Local government priorities

We will work with the five local authorities that cover the Cairngorms National Park: Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, Moray, and Perth and Kinross, to identify opportunities for the third edition of our Gaelic Language Plan to contribute to priorities set out in Community Planning Partnerships, Single Outcome Agreements and their own Gaelic language plans.

5.2 Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan priorities

The [Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27](#) sets out how all those with a responsibility for the National Park will work together to tackle critical issues that relate to its people, nature and places and ultimately address the climate and nature emergencies.

The Partnership Plan is divided into three sections – Nature, People and Place – and within the People section there is a specific objective (B8) around the Gaelic language and our statutory duty as a public body:

- Gaelic is part of the cultural and natural heritage of the National Park and has a vibrant part to play in its future. There is a need to support the continued use of Gaelic and maintain it as an active language and culture within the communities of the National Park.

Objective: Encourage greater use of Gaelic in the National Park.

Target: Increased opportunities for individuals and communities to engage with Gaelic language and culture.

This third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan explains how we and our partners propose achieving this objective. It also makes a significant contribution to the delivery of other objectives within the Partnership Plan, specifically:

- [B1 – Working-age population](#)



- [B2 – Wellbeing economy](#)
- [B4 – Skills and training](#)
- [B5 – Community assets and land](#)
- [B10 – A Park for All](#)
- [B11 – Volunteering and outdoor learning](#)
- [C5 – Visitors to the National Park](#)
- [C9 – High-quality visitor experience](#)
- [C10 – Cultural heritage](#)



6. Publication, resourcing and monitoring

6.1 Publishing and publicising the Gaelic Language Plan

Following a six-week period of public consultation, the Park Authority considered 427 comments and suggestions from a range of stakeholders and made all the necessary changes required before publishing the final document (see the accompanying Gaelic Language Plan consultation report for more information).

Internally, the third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan was shared with our board for sign off on 28 June 2024 and has been made available for all staff to view and ask questions about. We will continue to publish [annual progress reports](#) and ensure these are fed into by – and made accessible to – all staff and board members.

Externally, we will issue a bilingual press release announcing the new plan, make it available via our website and promote it via our newsletters, publications (eg *Cairn* residents' magazine) and social media channels. We will also distribute copies to arms-length organisations and other third-party organisations where appropriate, explaining their role in the delivery of the plan, as well as to relevant Gaelic organisations and other interested bodies. Copies will be made available on request to all other stakeholders, too.

We will distribute links to the plan to non-departmental public bodies and agencies, agents and contractors, and share it with Partnership Plan partner organisations, Gaelic organisations and other interested bodies.

6.2 Resourcing the plan

Activities covered within this third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan will be covered as part of our annual Corporate Plan budgetary process, which is subject to review by the Park Authority board and published on our website.

6.3 Monitoring the plan



As in previous iterations of the Gaelic Language Plan, we will produce annual progress reports – [published on our website](#) – that chart our delivery of the objectives outlined in this document.

All Gaelic enquiries received will be logged and responded to. Our annual Gaelic skills audit will keep track of the existing language skills of our staff and board members, and help identify any individual training requests. This will in turn inform future organisational training and development requirements. We will also monitor our Gaelic media and social media activity.



7. Embedding the plan within the Park Authority

7.1 Overall responsibility for the plan

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for preparation, delivery and monitoring of the third edition of the Cairngorms National Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan. They can be contacted as follows:

Grant Moir
Chief Executive
Cairngorms National Park Authority
14 The Square
Grantown-on-Spey
PH26 3HG

Telephone: 01479 873 535
Email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk

7.2 Day-to-day responsibility for the plan

The Head of Communications and Engagement has day-to-day responsibility for the delivery and monitoring of the third edition of the Park Authority's Gaelic Language Plan. Queries regarding the day-to-day operation of the plan should be addressed to:

Olly Davies
Head of Communications and Engagement
Cairngorms National Park Authority
14 The Square
Grantown-on-Spey
PH26 3HG

Telephone: 01479 873 535
Email: enquiries@cairngorms.co.uk



7.3 Gaelic Language plan implementation and monitoring group

The group designated to regularly monitor the implementation of the plan within the Park Authority is the Organisational Management Group. It is made up of heads of service covering Cairngorms 2030, Communications and Engagement, Conservation, Finance, HR and Organisational Development, Land Management, Planning and Rural Development, and Visitor Services and Active Travel.

7.4 Engaging with staff

All staff receive an annual update on progress made against our Gaelic Language Plan. All staff were also invited to contribute to the Gaelic Language Plan consultation process. The Park Authority does not have a dedicated Gaelic Language Officer; instead, the delivery of the third edition of the Gaelic Language Plan is embedded in staff work plans across the organisation.

In addition, as part of both this Gaelic Language Plan and our Young Person's Guarantee scheme, we offer a Gaelic speaker a four-month internship every year (budget permitting) which allows us to benefit from the expertise of a Gaelic student whilst giving them an opportunity to develop their own communications and engagement skills.

7.5 Arm's length organisations and third parties

We proactively provide advice and support for businesses and community groups within the National Park to make use of Gaelic within their own operations, including via specific partner agreements and our dedicated brand charter scheme. Gaelic materials are published regularly on our website and social media channels and we will continue to share these with our network as and when they are developed.

7.6 Internal Gaelic skills audit

Results of our annual Gaelic skills audit are included within our [Gaelic progress reports](#), available via the National Park website. This includes the number of employees who speak, read, write or understand Gaelic and the level of their language skills. It also



covered the number of employees understanding Gaelic language skills training, as well as the number of job roles advertised with Gaelic as an essential or desirable skill.

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