

Gaelic Policy

Scope of this policy

This policy sets out the Scottish Wildlife Trust's approach to the use of Scottish Gaelic.

Policy Headline

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Background

Gaelic is one of Scotland's native languages and is at the core of much of Scottish culture. Historically the language was in wide usage across most areas of Scotland. There are now approximately 60,000 Gaelic speakers in Scotland; Government policy is to actively promote and support the learning of Gaelic. Around half of Scotland's Gaelic speakers live in the traditional core areas of the North and West; the others live in the main cities, particularly Glasgow where more than 10,000 speak the language¹. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act established the Bòrd na Gàidhlig as a statutory body which aims to "secure the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language."

Policy Statement

1. SWT seeks to support government policy to promote Gaelic as an important part of Scotland's heritage through its application to relevant areas of SWT's operations. This will ensure that SWT adopts an inclusive and consistent approach to communications and as a national organisation, plays its part in promoting the language. The use of Gaelic will also optimise communications with communities and individuals who understand and use the language.

SWT Priorities for Action

SWT will:

2. Assess the relevance of Gaelic to SWT wildlife reserves and surrounding communities as part of individual reserve management plans. Actions will include signage & interpretation literature in Gaelic and English, and this will normally be considered in Gaelic speaking areas. Gaelic place names will be used to promote the historical links between the cultural and natural heritage of an area.
3. Make available educational material in Gaelic, subject to the provision of necessary resources.
4. Consult with relevant Gaelic organisations over the use of the language and over the successful implementation of this policy. We will abide by the Gaelic orthographic

¹ <http://www.gaelic-scotland.co.uk/Current-status.html>

conventions² and seek advice from appropriate sources such as Gaelic speaking members of Council and staff and public bodies³.

5. Strive to respond to Gaelic correspondence in Gaelic.
6. Encourage Gaelic speaking members of Council, staff and Members to promote our work through interviews with the Gaelic media. Bilingual press releases will whenever practicable be issued when there is a significant relevance of the subject to the Gaelic community and for promotions at specific events such as the Annual Gaelic Mod.
7. Endeavour to ensure consistency in its use of Gaelic.
8. Ensure that staff working in Gaelic speaking areas, or locations with Gaelic place names are briefed on appropriate Gaelic pronunciation.
9. Encourage members of staff who wish to learn Gaelic. When it is in the interests of SWT's operations attendance on an accredited Gaelic course may be regarded as training and development.
10. Phase in the inclusion of the name and logo of SWT in Gaelic on official letterheads, websites and other relevant media wherever practical. Completion of this is a longer term aim and must await any review of the SWT logo.
11. Explore funding opportunities with Gaelic language promotion organisations with a view to securing resources to support the actions in this policy.
12. Produce this policy in Gaelic and English.

Policy approved by Council Jan 2006

² <http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/gaidhlig>

³ Bodies include Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Comunn na Gàidhlig, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (Gaelic Committee), and the An Comunn Gàidhealach