



Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

2023-2026

This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 9 May 2023



Foreword

We are pleased to introduce the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's (SFRS) Gaelic Language Plan for 2023-2026.

The purpose of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 is to secure the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland. The SFRS is wholly supportive of measures that seek to establish Scotland as an inclusive society where local communities are resilient, prosperous and are able to maintain their local identity.

As a provider of first class public services, the SFRS sets out to meet the needs of all our communities in a manner that is responsive to local needs, effective in its outcomes and delivers best value. This means that we may approach things differently in some areas depending on local risk factors such as geography or demographic.

Importantly, the SFRS recognises that we are the communities we serve. As a national body this footprint gives us a privileged position to not simply serve Scotland's communities but to work alongside and with those communities.

In most areas of Scotland, the SFRS workforce is drawn directly from the local community, and this is especially the case in areas where Gaelic is commonly spoken and where our Retained and Volunteer personnel are most evident.

This is the SFRS's second Gaelic Language Plan and we look to build on the successes of our previous plan; to continue to engage with the public in its delivery and to support the priorities for maintaining Gaelic as a sustainable and vital part of Scottish culture.

Joint statement by Dr Kirsty Darwent, Chair of the Board and Chief Officer, Ross Haggart.

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1. INTRODUCTION

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) came into existence on 1 April 2013 replacing eight separate regional fire authorities. Responsible to the Scottish Government, the SFRS is overseen by a publicly 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 2022 with the following Strategic Outcomes defined within the Strategic Plan 2022-2025:

Outcome 1: Community safety and wellbeing improves as we deploy targeted initiatives to prevent emergencies and harm.

Outcome 2: Communities are safer and more resilient as we respond effectively to changing risks.

Outcome 3: We value and demonstrate innovation across all areas of our work.

Outcome 4: We respond to the impacts of climate change in Scotland and reduce our carbon emissions.

Outcome 5: We are a progressive organisation, use our resources responsibly and provide best value for money to the public.

Outcome 6: The experience of those who work for SFRS improves as we are the best employer we can be.

Outcome 7: Community safety and wellbeing improves as we work effectively with our partners.

The day-to-day delivery of our actions is the responsibility of our executive team comprising of the Chief Officer, two Deputy Chief Officers and six Directors who, together, provide strategic leadership to all our organisational functions. The executive team are responsible for an overall operating budget of £352.707 million per annum.

Source: [SFRS Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025](#)

Operating across Scotland the SFRS employs around 8,000 personnel including full-time, part time, on call 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 must 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 adults, 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

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

During our previous plan the SFRS produced its Home Fire Safety Booklet in Gaelic to complement the English version.

Working in partnership with a Gaelic speaker and trainer, we developed Gaelic Awareness Training for our employees. To date 507 employees have completed the training.

We have made this training available to other emergency services and local authorities. South Lanarkshire Council and a number of other Local Authorities are utilising the training to improve Gaelic knowledge and awareness within their own workforce.

We conducted a survey with our employees and currently 98 employees have self-identified as having some Gaelic language skills ranging from basic greetings to fluency in speech, reading and writing.

We have used our corporate social media accounts to promote a video in Gaelic in which two on call Firefighters discuss the importance of fire fighters in rural communities.

GAELIC IN SCOTLAND

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, the main stronghold of the language is the Western Isles. 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, including in areas where Gaelic may not be spoken by most of the population.

The SFRS is aware of the importance and relevance of Gaelic as a first language need of some communities as well as the importance of supporting Gaelic speakers in communities where the language is spoken by a minority.

In partnership with colleagues at Ainmean Àite na h-Alba, Bòrd na Gàidhlig has produced a map of Gaelic place-names from across Scotland, highlighting the widespread influence of the language.



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 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's second 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 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 NATIONAL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

This section sets out a clear link between the SFRS Gaelic language plan and the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service supports the aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 that "Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations."

We are committed to the achieving this aim by focussing our work, in the following three areas:

- 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

INTERNAL GAELIC CAPACITY AUDIT

During our first Gaelic Language Plan, we conducted a staff survey to ascertain the knowledge and skills our workforce had with regard to Gaelic. Currently we have several employees who

have self-identified as having some Gaelic language skills ranging from basic greetings to fluency in reading, writing and speaking Gaelic.

Key Summary Findings from the Gaelic Language Capacity Audit are as follows:-

- 98 SFRS employees have some level of Gaelic skills
- 17 employees speak Gaelic daily with members of the public
- Four employees identified that on a monthly basis they speak Gaelic informally with colleagues whilst at work
- Five employees identified that within the workplace they speak Gaelic formally daily with their colleagues and manager

Full details relating to our Gaelic Language Capacity Audit can be found in Appendix One.

CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

The SFRS consulted publicly on our proposed second Gaelic Language Plan and considered representations made to it during the consultation process which ran for six weeks from 17 January 2022.

Stakeholders and partners were mailed and invited to give their views on the draft plan which was available in English and Gaelic on the SFRS website. A range of internal communications supported employees to comment and take part in the consultation and our social media platforms encouraged public engagement and participation.

Key Summary Findings from the public consultation are as follows:-

- 191 people responded to the consultation
- 45 SFRS employees responded to the consultation
- 6 organisations responded to the consultation

Details relating to our public consultation can be found in Appendix Two.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

We are committed to supporting the Gaelic language and through our commitments under Sections three and Section four of this Plan we will demonstrate our aims. While some aspects are small incremental increases and others are larger, the overall aim is simple, to ensure the sustainable future of the Gaelic language.

EQUAL RESPECT

Under the terms of the 2005 Act, Bòrd na Gàidhli has a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English

language, The Bòrd in turn expects that public authorities will demonstrate in their plans how the principle will be achieved and maintained in practice.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will ensure that where Gaelic is included as part of our activities and services, we will make certain they are of an equal standard and quality to those we provide in English.

ACTIVE OFFER

Where Gaelic services are available by us, we will make an active offer to our employees and the public so that Gaelic users are made aware of their existence and are 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 to know 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.

MAINSTREAMING

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will ensure that opportunities for the public and our employees to use Gaelic are normalised, in support of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 aim that Gaelic is used more often, by more people and in a wider range of situations.

3. PLAN COMMITMENTS

HIGH-LEVEL AIMS

We have worked closely with the Bòrd to co-produce a set of high-level aims, these high-level aims are strategic actions and closely link to the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23.

We are committed to ensuring that our Gaelic Language Plan is focussed on the three high level aims of:

- Increasing the use of Gaelic
- Increasing the learning of Gaelic
- Promoting a positive image of Gaelic

INCREASING THE USE OF GAELIC

High-level Aim	Work in collaboration with Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service on the implementation of our respective Gaelic Language Plans.
Desired Outcome	To share best practice and areas for improvement, as well as collaborate on projects that would have a mutual benefit to each organisation and the communities of Scotland.
Current Practice	Meetings take place regularly throughout the year, where a range of cross sector topics including Gaelic language is discussed.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify projects that would have a mutual benefit to all partners • Continue to meet on a regular basis • Update the Reform Collaboration Group on work that specifically relates to and includes Gaelic. This group focusses on larger projects that the three emergency services work on collectively
Target Date	For the duration of the plan
Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team

High-level Aim	Ensure that any national school resources are available bilingually.
Desired Outcome	Any corporate resources proposed for use in schools is available in Gaelic.
Current Practice	Work is underway to establish links with Education Authorities to deliver safety talks in Gaelic.

Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of this plan, all fire safety talks undertaken in Gaelic medium schools will be delivered in Gaelic • Continue to promote existing safety leaflets in Gaelic and develop and produce any future resources bilingually
Target Date	2026
Responsibility	Prevention and Protection Team

High-level Aim	Encourage Scottish Fire and Rescue staff who speak Gaelic to use it more often.
Desired Outcome	Speaking Gaelic in the workplace becomes normal practice for employees who speak Gaelic.
Current Practice	A small number of employees who speak Gaelic use and speak Gaelic with colleagues and managers in the workplace, however this is not currently formalised.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the results of the employee survey to ascertain the extent to which existing Gaelic speaking employees use Gaelic to communicate in the workplace • Work with Gaelic speaking employees to promote the language within the service • Actively promote amongst our employees the use of spoken Gaelic in areas where Gaelic is widely spoken • Create a Gaelic language Employee Network if desired by SFRS employees • Gaelic speaking employees will be signposted to the Cleachdi resources to normalise within their workplace
Target Date	2024 then ongoing
Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team/All Local Senior Officer (LSO) Areas

INCREASING THE LEARNING OF GAELIC

High-level Aim	SFRS will promote the availability of externally provided Gaelic language training to colleagues and will further promote SFRS Gaelic language and culture awareness modules and resources.
Proposed Outcome	Increase general awareness of Gaelic across the organisation and actively encourage employees to learn Gaelic.
Current Practice	Employees interested in learning or improving their Gaelic language skills are signposted to several websites as directed by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Speak Gaelic Project to all employees • Annually promote Gaelic across the organisation • At least once a year promote existing Gaelic Awareness Training to all employees and actively encourage completion
Target Date	2024 and then ongoing

Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team
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High-level Aim	Develop the current Gaelic Language awareness modules that are available to staff.
Proposed Outcome	Increase the number of employees who have completed the training and develop the existing content.
Current Practice	The equality and diversity team monitor completion rates and utilise the staff weekly brief to promote the training and encourage completion.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan a programme of work to regularly promote the awareness modules Work in partnership with other public authorities to develop the existing module content
Target Date	2024 then ongoing
Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team

PROMOTING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF GAELIC

High-level Aim	Increase the Gaelic content on all online platforms, including social media and website.
Proposed Outcome	Promote existing content and develop further.
Current Practice	Some Gaelic content is currently available.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a guidance note which leads to an increase in the use of Gaelic on social media and the SFRS website
Target Date	2023 then ongoing
Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team/Corporate Communications Team

High-level Aim	As part of our engagement on local plans, we will seek the views of communities regarding the roll-out of bilingual Gaelic and English signage on SFRS premises and vehicles on a replacement basis, with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland.
Proposed Outcome	To have a clear understanding of how local communities want to see Gaelic represented within their community.
Current Practice	To change signage, on a replacement basis, in areas where Gaelic is widely spoken by the local community.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Service Development Areas and seek views from local communities Have dual signage in all areas of Scotland
Target Date	2024 and then ongoing
Responsibility	Asset Management Team

CORPORATE SERVICE AIMS

This is our second Gaelic Language Plan and since 2016 we have taken steps to support and promote Gaelic throughout the organisation.

We will continue to commit to promoting and support Gaelic and take active steps to support the aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan that Gaelic should be used more often, by more people and in more situations.

STATUS

Desired Outcome	Logo Render the writing that appears beside our crest in Gaelic and English, showing equal respect and update on all materials where this text appears.
Current Practice	SFRS crest is a legally protected herald, currently no Gaelic equivalent and no plans to review it.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amend brand guidelines to include the Gaelic 'Working Together for a Safer Scotland' logo• Issue revised copy of Brand Guidelines to all employees
Target Date	2023
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team and Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	Signage Prominent signage will include Gaelic and English as part of any renewal process.
Current Practice	Current policy is in place to have dual signage on a replacement basis in Eilean Siar, Highland and Argyll and Bute in recognition of the prominence of Gaelic.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All signage will be bilingual on a renewal basis
Target Date	Duration of the plan
Responsibility	Assest Management Team

COMMUNICATING WITH THE PUBLIC

Desired Outcome	Promotion Positive message that communication from the public in Gaelic is always welcome.
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Current Practice	We do not have a formal process in place, however correspondence in Gaelic from individuals, groups and communities would be responded to in Gaelic.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote bilingually on our website, that we welcome communications from members of the public in both English and Gaelic
Target Date	2023
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team/Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	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.
Current Practice	Any correspondence that is received in Gaelic is responded to in Gaelic.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor all correspondence received in Gaelic and report on this annually As part of our planned review of our comments, complaints and suggestion process and a review of our communications strategy, we will include how we manage communications in Gaelic
Target Date	Duration of the plan
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team/Corporate Administration Team (SPPC)

Desired Outcome	Reception and phone Where Gaelic speaking staff can provide this service, they are supported to do so, and the service is promoted to the public.
Current Practice	No formal practice is currently in place.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a formal process in Highland, Argyll and Bute and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar We will provide opportunities to our employees to deliver this service
Target Date	2024 and ongoing
Responsibility	Corporate Administration (SPPC)/Corporate Communications Team/All Service Delivery Areas

Desired Outcome	Public meetings Opportunities to hold public meetings bilingually or in Gaelic are regularly explored and promoted.
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Current Practice	In person public meetings will be held where change proposals will entail significant alterations to local service provision.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and support of the use of Gaelic at in-person public meetings in all areas of Scotland
Target Date	Duration of the plan
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team/All Service Delivery Areas

INFORMATION

Desired Outcome	News releases High profile news releases and all news releases related to Gaelic are circulated in both Gaelic and English.
Current Practice	We issue news releases related to Gaelic language matters in both Gaelic and English.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to issue news related to Gaelic, in both Gaelic and English Produce and distribute in Gaelic and English high profile new releases that affect Gaelic speaking communities
Target Date	Ongoing
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team/Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	Social media Gaelic content distributed regularly through social media, guided by the level of actual and potential users.
Current Practice	Local areas distribute Gaelic messages on their own social media feeds.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish 30 posts each year that are bilingual or in Gaelic only, across social media platforms
Target Date	2023 and thereafter ongoing
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team/Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	Website Gaelic content should be available on the public authority's website, with emphasis given to the pages with the highest potential reach.
Current Practice	We have Gaelic content on our website
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the presence of Gaelic on our website
Target Date	Ongoing

Responsibility	Service Delivery (Community Safety Team)/Public Involvement and Consultation Team/Equality and Diversity Team
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Desired Outcome	Corporate publications Produced in Gaelic and English, with priority given to those with the highest potential reach.
Current Practice	Gaelic Language Plan is produced in both Gaelic and English.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement local area action plans across Scotland, available in Gaelic • Ensure high level strategic documents that are likely to have an impact on Gaelic communities across Scotland are published in both Gaelic and English • Review national campaigns and consider supporting these campaigns in both Gaelic and English
Target Date	2025 and ongoing
Responsibility	Corporate Communications Team/All Service Delivery Areas

Desired Outcome	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.
Current Practice	No public exhibitions currently take place bilingually or in Gaelic
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for external funding to create a self-guided tour leaflet in Gaelic at the National Fire Museum • Implement audio-transcription for all permanent exhibits
Target Date	2024 and thereafter duration of the plan
Responsibility	Service Delivery - Community Engagement Team

STAFF

Desired Outcome	Internal audit Conduct an internal audit of Gaelic skills and training needs through the life of each plan.
Current Practice	We undertook an employee survey in 2019.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an employee audit of Gaelic language and skills
Target Date	2023
Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	Induction Knowledge of the public authority's Gaelic language plan included in new staff inductions.
Current Practice	There has been little or no awareness of our Gaelic commitments in our induction process for employees
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include detail of our Gaelic commitments in the induction process • Gaelic Awareness Training modules will be included in the induction process
Target Date	2024
Responsibility	HRPOD Directorate and Training, Safety and Assurance Team

Desired Outcome	Language training Gaelic language skills training and development offered to staff, particularly in relation to implementing the public authority's Gaelic language plan.
Current Practice	Employees are currently signposted to websites and organisations recommended by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use internal communications to raise awareness of Gaelic skills training
Target Date	Duration of the plan
Responsibility	Equality and Diversity Team/Corporate Communications Team

Desired Outcome	Awareness training Gaelic awareness training offered to staff, with priority given to directors, board members, councillors and staff dealing directly with the public.
Current Practice	Gaelic Language Awareness training is in place and available to all employees who wish to undertake this.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include completion of the Gaelic Awareness Training modules at Induction for these specific groups of employees
Target Date	2024
Responsibility	HRPOD Directorate/Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	Recruitment 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.
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Current Practice	Gaelic is currently not listed as an essential or desirable skill in job descriptions.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaelic is listed as a desirable skill for posts within Argyle and Bute, Highlands, Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar this will include On Call and Volunteer Duty System Review the appointment process for all roles to determine whether Gaelic could be included as an essential skill
Target Date	2024
Responsibility	HR0D Directorate/Equality and Diversity Team

Desired Outcome	Recruitment Bilingual or Gaelic only job adverts for all posts where Gaelic is an essential skill.
Current Practice	No posts have been identified that requires Gaelic to be an essential skill.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where Gaelic has been identified as an essential or desirable skill, job adverts will be published in both English and Gaelic.
Target Date	2023-2024
Responsibility	HRPOD Directorate/Equality and Diversity Team

GAELIC LANGUAGE CORPUS

Desired Outcome	Gaelic Orthographic Conventions The most recent Gaelic Orthographic Conventions will be followed in relation to all written materials produced by the public authority.
Current Practice	We have regard for the latest orthographic conventions.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain existing practice to only use translating services that meet the latest orthographic conventions
Target Date	Duration of the plan
Responsibility	All Directorates

Desired Outcome	Place-names Gaelic place name advice from Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba is sought and used.
Current Practice	We work closely with Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba to ensure that correct details and advice is acquired.
Actions Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor to ensure consistency and make any changes if recommended to do so by Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba
Target Date	Duration of the plan
Responsibility	Asset Management Team/Corporate Communications Team/Equality and Diversity Team/All Service Delivery Areas

4. LINKS TO THE NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Our Gaelic Language Plan is seen as contributing towards the following outcomes of the National Performance Framework:-

- Children and Young People grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential

The plan aims to promote the Gaelic medium and afford it equal respect. For Gaelic speaking communities this translates to respect for their culture, heritage and community.

- Live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe

Our plan sets out an ambitious programme of actions that we believe contribute to the aims of the National Framework.

5. LINKS TO LOCAL AND REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Our Gaelic Language Plan focuses on better serving the Gaelic speaking communities of Scotland. It also affords an opportunity for Gaelic speaking employees to contribute to our Gaelic Language Plan.

This correlates to the delivery of the following Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Strategic Outcomes:-

- Our collaborative and targeted prevention and protection activities improve community safety and wellbeing and support sustainable economic growth.
- We are a great place to work where our people are safe, supported and empowered to deliver high performing innovative services.

6. PUBLICATION

PUBLISHING AND PUBLICISING THE PLAN

This is our second Gaelic Language Plan and it will remain in force for a period of three years from the date it is approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Commitments in this plan will enhance and clarify the assurances detailed in our first plan.

INTERNAL

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will use our internal communication methods to advise all our employees and internal stakeholders about our second Gaelic Language Plan.

EXTERNAL

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Gaelic Language Plan will be published in Gaelic and in English on our website. In addition, we will: -

- issue a bilingual press release announcing the plan
- publicise the plan through a variety of social media platforms
- Inform our employees and stakeholders about our plan and how they can access it through internal communication methods and our website
- distribute copies of the plan to relevant Gaelic organisations and other interested bodies and advise them on how to access our plan
- make hard copies available on request

7. RESOURCING THE PLAN

Most activities outlined in this plan will be, or have already been, incorporated and resourced through our existing budgets.

External funding may be sought for individual projects that help us to promote Gaelic, raise awareness and embed Gaelic into our day-to-day activities.

8. MONITORING THE PLAN

We will monitor the implementation of this plan by providing regular updates to our Senior Leadership Team and by completing an annual return to Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

9. THE GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN IN THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY

OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLAN

The Equality and Diversity Manager has overall responsibility for the preparation, delivery and monitoring of the Scottish Fire and Rescue's Gaelic Language Plan. They can be contacted as follows: -

Elaine Gerrard
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager
People and Organisational Development
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Westburn Drive
Cambuslang
G72 7NA

07979 931 454
Elaine.Gerrard@firescotland.gov.uk

DAY-TO-DAY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PLAN

The Equality and Diversity Manager has day-to-day responsibility for the delivery and monitoring of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's Gaelic Language Plan. Queries regarding the day-to-day operation of the plan should be addressed to:

Maggie Archibald
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor
SDA West HQ
99 Bothwell Road
Hamilton
ML3 0EA

07423 323 058
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Gaelic Language Plan Implementation and Monitoring Group

We currently do not have capacity to establish a Gaelic Language Implementation and Monitoring Group, however we will use already established internal working groups and directorate annual operating plans to track progress against our Gaelic Language Plan commitments.

Engaging with Staff

We will conduct an employee audit during our second Gaelic Language Plan. Employees will be updated on a yearly basis, using our internal communication methods regarding our duties in relation to the plan, its implementation, monitoring and of progress made.

ARM's Length Organisations and Third Parties

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will ensure that our emergency service and other public service partners are made aware of our second Gaelic Language Plan through community planning partnerships and the Emergency Service Collaboration Group.

APPENDIX 1 – INTERNAL GAELIC CAPACITY AUDIT

We conducted an internal Gaelic capacity audit with our employees in 2019 and 98 (20.5% of the total number of employees who completed the survey) self-identified as having some Gaelic language skills. These ranged from basic greetings to being fluent in speech, reading and writing. The detailed findings of the report are listed below.

Number of employees who are able to understand spoken Gaelic:

I can understand simple greetings when someone is speaking slowly and clearly	I can pick up the general meaning of simple conversations if someone is speaking slowly and clearly	I can understand most normal, daily conversations if someone is speaking slowly and clearly	I can understand fluent Gaelic speakers talking about everyday subjects at normal speed	I would be able to understand fluent Gaelic speakers in meetings talking about specialised subjects connected to my work
48	21	13	6	10

Number of employees who have Gaelic speaking ability:

I can exchange simple greetings in Gaelic	I can take part in basic conversations about everyday subjects if I fill the gaps in my Gaelic with some English words	I can take part in daily conversations on most subjects if I take my time	I can comfortably take part in daily conversations with fluent Gaelic speakers at normal speed	I would be able to comfortably discuss specialist subjects connected to my work in meetings with fluent Gaelic speakers
46	23	6	4	7

Number of employees who have Gaelic reading ability:

I can understand a few words on signs or notices particularly if there is a diagram or picture to help with the meaning.	I can understand basic Gaelic books with the help of pictures	I can understand simple Gaelic books with the help of a dictionary	I can understand and comfortably read more advanced books or articles aimed at adult readers	I would be able to understand technical writing in Gaelic on specialised subjects connected to my work
50	16	23	6	3

Number of employees who have Gaelic writing ability:

I can write a simple greeting	I can write a few simple sentences in an email to a friend with the help of a dictionary	I can write a complicated email to a friend with the help of a dictionary	I can write about most everyday subjects without difficulty (letters, reports, emails)	I would be able to write a report in Gaelic on specialised subjects connected to my work, without difficulty
20	28	2	2	2

Number of employees who speak Gaelic with members of the public and how often:

Daily	Monthly	Yearly
17	9	13

How often do members of the public initiate conversations with our employees in Gaelic:

Hourly	Daily	Monthly	Yearly
2	15	10	15

How often do our employees initiate conversations with members of the public in Gaelic:

Hourly	Daily	Monthly	Yearly
2	10	11	8

- Of the 478 (20.5%) employees who completed the survey, four (0.83%) employees are currently learning Gaelic.
- Two of these employees work in the City of Glasgow Area, one works in East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute area and the other works in the City of Aberdeen area.
- 22 (4.6%) employees said that they have Gaelic and are happy with their level of fluency now.
- 198 (41.4%) employees would like to learn Gaelic or improve their Gaelic but have not yet had the opportunity. These employees work in the following departments/areas:-

Department/Location	Number of Employees
Finance and Contractual Services	16
People and Organisational Development	22
Prevention and Protection	12
Response and Resilience	22
Strategic Planning, Performance and Communications	16
Service Delivery Area – East	24
Service Delivery Area – North	35
Service Delivery Area - West	51

- There are currently no posts within the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service that identify Gaelic as being a desirable or essential job skill.
- There are currently no formal services or internal processes conducted through the medium of Gaelic.

APPENDIX 2 – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service completed a six-week consultation process on our proposed second Gaelic Language Plan which commenced on 17 January 2022 and ended on 27 February 2022. Where necessary, we have acted upon recommendations made. An overview of the results of the consultation are included within this plan. A more detailed report about the consultation results can be found [Here](#)

Key results are as follows: -

- 191 responses were received
- Of those 191 responses, 45 were received from SFRS employees
- Six organisations completed the consultation, four of which were from the Dumfries and Galloway Area
- 68 respondents agree that we have chosen the correct high level aim. Some of those respondents advise us to work more collaboratively with Police Scotland and the Scottish Ambulance Service on projects that will have mutual benefit
- 67 Respondents believe we have chosen the correct Corporate Service Aims

- 74 respondents believe the detailed actions within the plan will help us achieve our aims
- 57 respondents believe that SFRS buildings should have signage in both Gaelic and English
- 59 respondents believe that SFRS vehicles should be branded in both Gaelic and English
- 57 respondents believe that SFRS uniforms should be branded in both Gaelic and English
- 53 respondents believe that our Gaelic Language Plan should focus on all areas of Scotland to ensure we are playing our part in normalising Gaelic
- Some respondents would like to see the SFRS take a more forward thinking and proactive approach similar to Police Scotland and Scottish Ambulance Service and create an environment where Gaelic can thrive



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SFRS Gaelic Language Plan 2023 – 2026

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