

2020 VISION: SECURING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR GAELIC

**Bòrd na Gàidhlig launches its planning process for Gaelic
(Issued on behalf of Bòrd na Gàidhlig)**

The period to the year 2020 will be crucial for securing the future sustainability of the Gaelic language and culture.

This was the strong message issued today by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the Scottish Executive's new Gaelic development agency, at their first National Conference in Nairn, which focussed on the theme of language planning. Delegates were told that for Gaelic to flourish the rate of language attainment requires to be increased and its usage extended. Speakers stressed the importance of focused and strategic planning which links effectively with community requirements

The conference urged delegates to consider the importance of their own role in language promotion and developments. Bòrd na Gàidhlig further established its emphasis on youth involvement in Gaelic language development by providing a platform for two young Gaels who gave personal perspectives on how they would wish Gaelic to stand in 2020.

Peter Peacock MSP, Minister for Education and Young People participated in the conference. He said: "Bòrd na Gàidhlig's first national conference is another milestone in the future development of Gaelic and I welcome the focus of this conference on language planning for Gaelic.

"Bòrd na Gàidhlig represents a new partnership between Government and the Gaelic community and I am confident this partnership will strengthen the place of Gaelic in Scotland. My vision for the future is to see Gaelic passed on within families, promoted in schools and widely used in communities."

Bòrd na Gàidhlig chairman, Duncan Ferguson commented: "We are at a crucial time for our language and culture with the draft Gaelic Language Bill due to be introduced to Parliament, we cannot afford to waste this opportunity. Whilst we have come some way in our first year, we have numerous challenges yet to overcome and we believe this conference will help to kick-start more creative thinking about how Gaelic should look in 2020."

“As demonstrated by research carried out by MRUK for Bord na Gaidhlig and the BBC last year, there is great optimism and support for Gaelic across Scotland. We must take advantage of this, and plan a future in which Gaelic is a self-sustaining community language.”

Bòrd na Gàidhlig announced a new partnership with the Scottish Arts Council which will enable the piloting of new initiatives relating to Gaelic arts and heritage. A first year fund of £225,000, for the initiative, will be administered by Gaelic Arts Strategic Development group (GASD) on behalf of the Bòrd and SAC. GASD is made up of senior officers and board members of Gaelic bodies with SAC revenue client status.

The Bòrd also detailed a total investment of £2.3 million, which it made available for Gaelic development in its first year of operation. This sum included 81 one-off Gaelic projects across Scotland which shared £882,540 of assistance from the Bòrd, with £1,450,600 being awarded as an annual grant to a further 13 organisations and initiatives. A full list of Bòrd na Gàidhlig support follows below.

Mr Ferguson added: “The management and administration of Scottish Executive grants for Gaelic is an important part of our work, and we have been delighted to invest in projects that will make the language and culture a vibrant part of contemporary Scotland. The diversity and geographical spread of the projects offer us encouragement for the future of Gaelic.”

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For further information, contact John MacNeil, KDMedia on 0131 624 9840 / 07778 798 398. Images from today are available free of charge by contacting the above number.

Notes to Editors

Bòrd na Gàidhlig was established in April 2003 by the Scottish Executive to ensure a sustainable future for the Gaelic language and culture in Scotland.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig has been created to develop and maintain a strategic plan for the development of the Gaelic language in Scotland. The national plan for Gaelic will set out the Bòrd's aims, objectives, priorities and targets.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig activities include: drawing up national plans for Gaelic; promotion of the language; taking a national lead; co-ordination and implementation; working with other public bodies; monitoring and evaluating its contribution and that of the bodies it supports.

More information on Bord na Gaidhlig can be obtained by logging onto www.bord-na-gaidhlig.org.uk