

A NATIONAL GAELIC ARTS STRATEGY

2008 - 2012

Draft: 1st May 2007

The Gaelic Arts Strategic Development Forum (GASD)

Draft 2: A NATIONAL GAELIC ARTS STRATEGY 2008-12

BACKGROUND

In June 2006 the Scottish Arts Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Bòrd Na Gàidhlig met with Proiseact Nan Ealan (PNE) and the Gaelic Arts Strategic Development Forum (GASD). Given the significance of the Gaelic arts for Gaelic language development it was agreed that a National Gaelic Arts Strategy should be drafted to accompany the National Plan for Gaelic 2007-2012. PNE and GASD would draft the strategy paper in consultation with BNG, SAC and HIE who would endorse and collectively support it as key stakeholders in Gaelic arts development. The strategy would be tested at a Gaelic arts conference to be held at Easter of 2007 and fully implemented from 2008.

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Draft 2: A NATIONAL GAELIC ARTS STRATEGY. Nov 2006

CONTEXT

The English language term, “Highlands and Islands”, has no literal translation

in Gaelic. The Gaelic placename is “*an Gaidhealtachd*”, which translates as “the land of the Gaels” or “the Gaelic country.” The same word is also used as the collective term for the Gaels as a people, including the Gaelic diaspora. The term *Gaidhealtachd* can therefore have two very different meanings as 50% of Scotland’s landmass or 1% of the population depending on the context. The Gaelic cultural context is equally different from the Gaelic language context.

The Gaelic language is usually considered in the context of census figures that, in 2001, recorded the number of Gaelic language speakers in Scotland as 58,652 with a further 26,722 having some understanding of the language. This reflects the reality of language shift as a gradual process of growth or erosion along a spectrum ranging from fluency to just a few words.

In the context of Gaelic culture, however, this spectrum extends significantly further to include a far greater proportion of Scotland’s population who may not be Gaelic speakers but who, for whatever reason, identify with Gaelic as a cornerstone of Scottish cultural identity. Well over 50% of City of Glasgow residents, for example, have Scottish or Irish Gaelic in their family background. This wider community of cultural interest is a substantial electorate and the sleeping giant whose support will be a critical factor in the success of Gaelic language development.

In addition to their intrinsic creative, personal and cultural value the Gaelic arts are both interface and bridge between the Gaelic language community and the world. Within the Gaelic context the arts enhance Gaelic vitality, status and prestige in the home, the workplace, the schools, the community and the media. They are directly relevant to virtually all of the Action Areas in the National Plan for Gaelic. For the non-Gaelic world the Gaelic arts raise awareness and offer an inclusive and rewarding point of access to Gaelic culture through song, music, poetry, drama, dance, feisean, festivals, exhibitions, television and new media. The arts already function as powerful promoters of Gaelic language and culture but the key challenge is to research and fully develop the linkage between arts activity and language acquisition and usage.

Gaelic artists, the Gaelic arts community and this strategy are explicit in their commitment to the Gaelic language development role of the arts. The Gaelic arts have entertained, inspired and sustained the Gaelic language community for generations and played a key role in Gaelic language survival. The arts are now central to Gaelic language development.

This view is shared by the Gaelic community as confirmed by the major survey of 1,200 respondents in the Western Isles and Skye and Lochalsh conducted by Glasgow Caledonian University in 2006. The development of Gaelic arts activity is considered to be “essential” to the maintenance of the Gaelic language by 80% of respondents. 77% consider access to Gaelic arts activities to be a major motivation for young people to learn or develop their language skills and over 70% believe Gaelic arts and culture to be essential to the economic development their area. (Up from 59% in 1996) The survey

also confirms that the Gaelic arts are an opinion-changer with 33% of the respondents reporting the arts as motivating positive shifts in attitude toward Gaelic-medium education. The Gaelic community's uptake of arts experience is above the national average and growing and this high level of arts participation and engagement is socially inclusive. The key constraint is availability.

Over recent years the Gaelic arts have achieved a remarkable level of success across the artforms. The Feis movement continues to grow with 42 community-led Fèisean attracting 3,796 young people across Scotland in 2006 and 1,423 going on to participate in year-round feis activities. Fèisean Nan Gàidheal's Youth Music Initiative reaches another 5,000 school pupils creating a fertile seedbed for future Gaelic harvests. This flowering of Gaelic music talent and has already made a key contribution to the renaissance in Scottish traditional music.

The Gaelic oral tradition, perhaps the oldest and richest in Europe, is being rediscovered through the Sgeulachdan/ Storytelling Project's inter-generational work and location-storytelling using global-satellite-positioning. The new £5m An Lanntair is part of a network of Hebridean arts centres such as Taigh Chearsabhagh, where contemporary arts practice sits easily alongside local historical activity. The National Mod remains one of Scotland's premier festivals and a stream of new Gaelic writing has emerged from the Gaelic Books Council's Ur Sgeul initiative. The Tosg and Meanbh-Chuileag theatre companies are taking drama into a growing number of schools and communities each year. The Colmcille initiative has opened up vital new links with Ireland and the Leabhar Mòr exhibition has toured to 40 locations in five countries with a further three years of international touring confirmed. The quality and impact of this creative output is confirmed by a wide range of national awards and the SAC Foundation Status attained by several Gaelic arts organisations in 2006.

Alongside the quality and creativity of the individual artist's contributions to this success have been three key structural factors.

The first has been the creation of a new ladder-of-opportunity for young people and artists in terms of Gaelic arts tuition and talent development from the feisean through to UHI and the RSAMD and Proiseact Nan Ealan's Fastrac courses.

Another success factor has been the gradual emergence of a new Gaelic cultural infrastructure. The organisations listed above - and others such as Gaelic Media Service, BBC Craoladh Nan Gaidheal, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and Ceolas - have provided new cultural support services for the Gaelic community and delivered the Gaelic arts to new audiences in new ways.

The third factor has been the new relationships forged both within and out-with the Gaelic arts sector and the synergy this can create. The GASD Forum has achieved a high level of consensus and collaboration between Gaelic arts organisations and strong partnerships have also been built up at national,

regional and local level with the Scottish Arts Council, Bòrd Na Gàidhlig, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Local Authorities.

The Gaelic arts are now an inclusive and rapidly developing growth sector in Scottish arts and culture. They are no longer pigeonholed but seen as both traditional and contemporary, rural and urban, community and commercial, relevant to young people and old, accessible to Gaels and non-Gaels and drawing new audiences at home and abroad. Gaelic arts and artists toured to at least a dozen countries in 2006 and these new international links are opening up new markets in terms of future touring, e-commerce and new media links with the Scottish diaspora. This new level of international networking has accessed European funding of more than €1 million towards PNE's St Kilda project and enables valuable lessons to be learnt from models of best practice and strategic developments elsewhere. A key example would be the Irish Arts Council's ambitious new Traditional Arts Policy which will take their traditional music budget from €900K in 2004 to €4.8 million by 2008.

Fresh opportunities will come on stream during the Highland 2007 Festival with the new Gaelic television service to be launched by Gaelic Media service and the BBC; the new community television service Hebrides TV; the UHI and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's new arts campus. Television, web and new media development are a particular priority for the Gaelic arts where there is a strong track record of successful cross-media collaboration with Gaelic Media Service, the BBC and MIT in Boston. This will create new openings for Gaelic arts and media synergy in parallel with the emergence of Creative Scotland and Tobar An Dualchais. It will also open up new forms of Gaelic arts and education linkage that will be mutually beneficial and reinforce the Gaelic cultural economy.

The conceptual framework for the National Gaelic Arts Strategy embraces all the artforms, both traditional and contemporary, and addresses the needs of Artists, Audiences, Infrastructure and Language Planning. For artists it proposes a ladder-of-opportunity that is rooted in the Gaelic community while reaching for the stars. For audiences it proposes affordable and inclusive access-for-all. It will reinforce the Gaelic cultural infrastructure and its aim is to and extend the Gaelic language support base through the Gaelic arts. It will do so through talent development, through developing new markets and services and by consolidating existing services. It will promote Gaelic as a uniquely Scottish resource that celebrates Scotland's identity, creativity and cultural diversity at local, national and international level.

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Proiseact Nan Ealan for the GASD Forum. November 2006

AIM FOR 2012

For the Gaelic arts to be recognised as a key tool of Gaelic language development and a key cultural resource in promoting Scottish identity, creativity and diversity.

TARGET FOR 2011 CENSUS

11% increase of those in Scotland with some Gaelic knowledge as an

indication of increasing national contact with, and interest in, Gaelic. (Up from 1.8% at 2001 Census to 2% in 2011)

Gaelic Arts Strategy

ACTION AREA 1.

ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT

The new ladder-of-opportunity for young people and artists in terms of Gaelic arts tuition - from the feisean through to UHI, the RSAMD and Proiseact Nan Ealan's Fastrac courses – has been a critical factor in recent Gaelic arts development.

It has opened up access to skills development from entry to professional levels and created a virtuous cycle with former feis students returning as feis tutors and teaching in schools as well as developing professional careers. The dual challenge here will be to broaden the talent development opportunities at the access base of the ladder while also addressing the missing professional development and arts-promotional rungs at the top. This will require stronger linkage between the Gaelic arts and education sectors and support for the professional artists who are the spokespersons and standard-bearers for Gaelic culture. These two areas are inter-active and mutually reinforcing as education provides artist employment and generates future audiences while successful artists provide Gaelic role models for young aspiring artists. The continuing supply of Gaelic arts talent combined with high quality Gaelic arts production is essential if we are to meet the growing demand for Gaelic arts experiences, media content, products and resources.

Key Tasks

Extend the existing ladder-of-opportunity to bridge the critical path of artist's skills development steps from community to commercial. ie

- Initial stimulus
- Early tuition
- Personal development
- Lifelong learning
- Advanced tuition
- Professional development
- Commercial development
- Standard bearers

Priorities

Initial stimulus: Increase the availability of fun and educational arts products, media content and resources for children, parents, playgroups, schools and feisean.

Early tuition: Increase access to formal Gaelic arts education within the primary and secondary school curriculum.

Increase access to inspiring Gaelic arts experience through the creation of a Gaelic Arts in Education Service for schools. This would commission children's drama, songwriting, storytelling, film animation, new media initiatives and other projects for GME schools and playgroups; facilitate in-service and other training courses and take Gaelic awareness-raising projects into non-GME schools across Scotland.

Increase access to informal tuition through the Feis movement and the extension of Fèisean Nan Gàidheal's programme of year-round tuition.

Increase access to tuition through local Mods and festivals.

Ensure a Gaelic arts dimension to youth tuition schemes such as the Youth Music Initiative, building on the work done by Fèisean Nan Gàidheal in Highland and East Lothian Schools.

Increase access to Gaelic arts skills training for teachers, playgroup leaders and community workers through training colleges and in-service courses.

Personal development: Foster the personal and cultural confidence of young people through the creation of a National Gaelic Youth Theatre and residential summer school.

Foster the personal creative development of young people through provision of after-school arts tuition sessions, facilities and rehearsal space in their home community.

Develop new media arts initiatives for young people.

Develop a programme of Artists' Residencies for writers, musicians, theatre artists, new media artists and others in schools and communities.

Lifelong learning:

Develop a Gaelic Community Arts Support Service that supports community workers and organisations engaging with Gaelic arts activity.

Develop a Gaelic Arts Summer School Strategy that extends the community summer school model pioneered by Ceolas into new locations and subjects such as Gaelic language, oral tradition, literature, drama, history, archaeology, natural heritage etc.

Develop summer school and external study provision by UHI and other colleges and universities.

Foster inter-generational contact and oral tradition-bearing through community storytelling initiatives and implement the recommendations of the 2005 Storytelling conference by progressing Proiseact Na Sgeulachdan into a National Gaelic Storytelling Centre in linkage with the Scottish Storytelling Centre.

Implement the SAC/ Bord Na Gaidhlig strategy for Gaelic Community Drama Development currently under discussion.

Advanced tuition:

Develop advanced tuition through support for Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's new arts campus, Lews Castle College's Gaelic and Music course and the RSAMD Scottish Music degree.

Develop new forms of support for Gaelic writers and build on the success of the Gaelic Books Council's Ur Sgeul initiative.

Encourage the UHI network and other colleges and universities to create new Gaelic arts courses and ensure a Gaelic dimension to existing courses where appropriate.

Professional development: Implement the recommendations of the Uil Ciuil Gaelic music conference report.

Develop the Fastrac and Siol Gu Barr: Arts and Media Training models of intensive, high quality courses in arts industry business skills, media skills, arts promotion and publicity for professional artists.

Explore new approaches to high-level professional development for Gaelic musicians and build new links with the international music industry.

Commercial development: Develop new approaches in relation to the commercial development and promotion of Gaelic music as recommended by Uil Ciuil.

Develop e-commerce and new media services targeting a worldwide market for Gaelic arts products.

Address the complex issue of intellectual property rights and tradition with a view to ensuring the maximum benefit for Gaelic artists and future Gaelic arts development.

Develop the market for bi-lingual and multi-lingual graphic design and enhance graduate skills in this field through the colleges of art and design.

Standard bearers:

Create ambitious, high quality, flagship productions in a variety of artforms and media for regional, national and international touring.

Establish a Gaelic Arts Production company that commissions and/or generates such projects on a sustainable basis.

Develop key Gaelic arts events and festivals - such as the National Mod, the Hebridean Celtic Festival and Blas - with a view to extending existing audiences and building new national and international audiences through new programming provision and enhanced marketing and promotion.

Promote strong Gaelic arts representation at key national and international arts events and festivals.

Ensure the appointment of Gaelic speakers to the main cultural bodies in Scotland and encourage

the Scottish Executive to advertise such posts as Gaelic desirable.

Acknowledge, and act in support of, those individual Gaelic artists whose creative achievement has made them cultural ambassadors for Gaelic and Scotland.

Providers & Facilitators include:

The GASD Forum
Proiseact Nan Ealan
Fèisean Nan Gaidheal
Comhairle Nan Leabharaichean
An Comunn Gaidhealach
The National Mod
Tosg
Meanbh-Chuileag
Ceolas
Storlann
Proiseact Na Sgeulachdan
Tobar An Dualchais
UHI Sabhal Mòr Ostaig
UHI Lews Castle College
RSAMD
Gaelic Media Service
The BBC
Colmcille

Primary Players include:

SAC/ Creative Scotland
Bòrd Na Gaidhlig
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Local Authorities
The Scottish Education Dept
The British Council
National events and festivals

ACTION AREA 2.

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Key Tasks

Research and develop new audiences and markets for the Gaelic arts and Gaelic arts products in terms of stage, page, screen and new media. ie

Home
Local
Regional
National
International

Priorities

Implement the GASD Audience Development Strategy and establish a sustainable National Gaelic Audience Development Service in support of arts and cultural activity at local, national and international level.

Support a programme of continuing Research into the nature, needs and aspirations of existing and potential Gaelic arts audiences in rural and urban locations.

Establish a National Gaelic Arts Database service that provides potential audiences with increased access to event information through a variety of new media such as the web, e-mail and mobile phone text.

Build upon the foundation established by the GASD Audience Development Strategy through new initiatives for specific arts sectors and target audiences.

Extend the audience for the Gaelic arts through developing new arts and broadcasting initiatives for television and radio.

Extend the audience for the Gaelic arts through developing a strategy for web, e-commerce and new media initiatives that opens up access to the Gaelic arts for a worldwide audience and market.

Create new visitor audiences through further development of the Location Storytelling initiative using global-satellite-positioning to provide on-site access to local history, oral tradition, song and music.

Create new visitor experiences through further arts and media collaboration with Distance Lab and Research Hebrides.

Develop and service the growing market for Heritage arts education.

Develop the emerging Gaelic arts audience in Ireland through the Colmcille initiative.

Develop overseas audiences and markets through support for key touring initiatives such as the Leabhar Mòr and the best of Gaelic arts representation at key national and international events and festivals.

Ensure Gaelic arts and language representation in key national initiatives promoted by the Scottish Executive and its agencies. Examples include the Year of Homecoming 2009, the London Olympics and, if successful, the Glasgow bid for the Commonwealth Games.

Research and develop new ways in which international Gaelic arts touring could promote Sabhal Mòr, Lews Castle, Ceolas , Festivals and others who attract overseas students to their courses and events.

Develop new initiatives that support, promote, enhance and extend the visibility and usage of the Gaelic language in relation to Gaelic arts events and products.

Create and implement strategic plans for the development of specific artforms such as drama, literature and visual arts and perhaps a central strategic agency supporting all aspects of Gaelic drama could develop a holistic approach in linkage with the National Theatre for Scotland.

Providers & Facilitators include:

The GASD Forum
Proiseact Nan Ealan
Fèisean Nan Gaidgeal
Comhairle Nan Leabharaichean
An Comunn Gaidhealach
The National Mod
Tosg
Meanbh-Chuileag
Proiseact Na Sgeulachdan

Tobar An Dualchais
Gaelic Media Service
The BBC
The Independent Gaelic Media sector
Hebrides TV
Distance Lab
Research Hebrides
Colmcille

Primary Players include:

SAC/ Creative Scotland
Bòrd Na Gàidhlig
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Local Authorities
The University of the Highlands & Islands
The British Council
Event Scotland
National events and festivals

ACTION AREA 3.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

The gradual emergence of a new Gaelic cultural infrastructure has provided new support services for the Gaelic community and delivered the Gaelic arts to new audiences in new ways. This has made a major contribution to the cultural economy of the Highlands and Islands in terms of job creation, inward investment, creative industries development and tourism as well as enriching the quality of life in the area. The Westbrook report shows that Fèisean Nan Gaidheal has created 58 FTE posts and that this number could rise to 89 by 2009. The GASD Audience Development initiative is engaged in the groundwork required for the Gaelic arts to be strategically marketed and promoted at local, national and international level but this embryonic infrastructure will require further consolidation if the Gaelic arts are to achieve their audience potential.

Key Tasks

Invest in, and build upon, the existing cultural infrastructure to pilot and establish new services that are efficient, effective and sustainable. The aim is to deliver new support systems to artists and audiences that will reinforce, inspire and motivate the Gaelic language community, open up new audiences and further develop the Gaelic cultural economy.

The first critical success factor in achieving the aims of this strategy will be the degree of cross-sector collaboration, synergy and clarity of roles that can be secured between the key agencies, facilitators and providers involved in Gaelic arts, education, media, heritage, tourism, community and economic development. The second factor will be the level of funding investment that can be secured from not only Gaelic sources but mainstream arts, cultural and other private and public sector budgets.

The ethos should be one of evidence-led, action-research that identifies needs, clarifies what works and enables the creation of new and sustainable services.

Dimensions: Local/ Regional/ National/ International

Skills: Basic/ Advanced/ Personal/ Professional/ Commercial

Drivers:

- Home and community initiatives
- Schools and arts centres
- Fèisean and Residencies
- Advanced education and training providers
- Artists, arts organisations and service providers
- Arts developers
- Local authorities and partnerships
- National agencies and partnerships
- Commercial and industry partnerships
- As yet unknowns

Priorities Develop a Gaelic Community Arts support service through strategic partnership between local authorities, communities and arts developers and arts organisations.

Develop a Gaelic Arts in Education Service through strategic partnership between local authorities, Stòrlann, advanced education and training providers and Gaelic arts developers and arts organisations.

Further develop and build upon, the success of Gaelic arts and media synergy through new strategic partnerships between the Gaelic Media Service, the BBC, Hebrides TV and Gaelic arts developers and arts organisations.

Develop new applications for the Gaelic Arts and New Media through strategic partnership with HIE's Distance Lab, Research Hebrides and Sabhal Mòr Ostaig's new arts campus.

Develop the inter-action between the Heritage, Tourism

and Gaelic arts sectors through strategic partnerships and pilot initiatives with particular reference to heritage arts education, new media and opening up new forms of natural and cultural landscape interpretation.

Develop new Gaelic arts and industry partnerships with particular reference to the commercial music industry, issues of Intellectual Property Rights and identifying new income streams for future Gaelic arts development.

Develop a Gaelic Arts Production company that commissions and/or generates ambitious, high quality, flagship productions in a variety of artforms and media for regional, national and international touring on a sustainable basis.

Further develop the networking capacity of the Gaelic arts through collaboration with national and international agencies, arts organisations and institutions and the creation of a National Gaelic Arts Database.

Providers & Facilitators

The GASD Forum
Proiseact Nan Ealan
Local Authorities
Storlann
Tobar An Dualchais
Comunn Eachdraidh
Meanbh-Chuileag
Gaelic Media Service
TheBBC
Hebrides TV
Distance Lab
Research Hebrides
Colmcille

Primary Players include

SAC/ Creative Scotland
Bòrd Na Gàidhlig
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Local Authorities
The Scottish Education Dept
University of the Highlands & Islands
VisitScotland
The National Trust
Historic Scotland

Scottish Natural Heritage
The Forestry Commission
The RSPB
The British Council
Event Scotland
National events and festivals
The arts and music industry

ACTION AREA 4.

CLARIFY THE LOCUS OF THE GAELIC ARTS – AND THE ROLE OF GAELIC ARTS SERVICE DEVELOPERS AND PROVIDERS - IN THE NATIONAL GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN

For previous generations the Gaelic language was politically invisible with no role in Scottish public life beyond the church. It thrived, however, in the domestic and the community context where it is now weakening under the pressures of a rapidly changing, media-driven world. The National Gaelic Plan ensures a new public presence for the language but a new and more co-ordinated approach to local community arts, cultural and language development support is also required if Gaelic is to be secured as the language of the home and community.

The Gaelic arts have a key role to play in the Gaelic Language Planning Framework in terms of learning, using, celebrating and developing Gaelic language, arts, culture and community.

The proposed Gaelic Arts Strategy will reinforce all of Bord Na Gaidhlig's Action Areas in terms of Gaelic vitality, status, education, culture and communications with the essential added value of creativity and renewal.

The Gaelic arts make an essential practical contribution to virtually all of the domains identified in the National Plan for Gaelic including home, community, prestige, awareness, resources, lifelong learning, heritage, recreation and communications across print, broadcasting, and media.

The Gaelic language gains are evidenced by the Sproull/ Chalmers 2006 research (highlighted above) and by the RSAMD's 2005 report on the impact of the Feis movement where 76% of Feis participants reported that the Feis had a positive or strong positive influence on their motivation to learn Gaelic.

The Gaelic arts sector is already actively and positively engaged with Bord Na Gaidhlig's declared Priorities in terms of public sector bodies such as key Local Authorities, the HIE/ LEC Network and SAC. This engagement is at various levels from the strategic to the operational. Strategic examples include the Western Isles Gaelic Language Plan, Glasgow City Council's Gaelic Arts Strategy the Highland 2007 Festival Concordat, HIE's Distance

Lab and the SAC's Gaelic Arts Strategy. Operational examples include collaborations on local Feisean, Mods, Sgeulachdan, arts centres, tourism initiatives, schools work and multiple other local Gaelic arts activities.

The National Gaelic Plan will increase the need for such networking and partnerships. Given their lead role in education and community development the key Local Authorities of Western Isles, Highland, Argyll and Bute and the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh will have an important role to play in winning the hearts and minds of young people. The Gaelic arts offer valuable support services for Local Authorities seeking to address their new Gaelic language responsibilities and a strategic approach should be developed that clarifies roles and builds new relationships.

The National Gaelic Arts Strategy is compatible with the local, national and international agendas of these and other public agencies.

Key Tasks

Inputs Investment in Gaelic talent development in relation to artists and artistic development and the acquisition of personal, professional and commercial skills.

Investment in capacity-building for Gaelic arts organisations and the services they provide.

Outputs Dividends in relation to Gaelic arts audiences, the promotion of Scottish arts and culture and Gaelic language reinforcement at local, regional, national and international levels.

Method Research and develop new ways in which the Gaelic arts can support and promote the benefits of Gaelic Medium Education.

Research and develop new ways in which the Gaelic arts can support and promote Gaelic language learning.

Research and develop new ways in which the Gaelic arts can support and promote Gaelic language usage.

Build new partnerships, networks and synergies both within the Gaelic community and with the wider world. This will be achieved through development of the existing arts and cultural infrastructure and the creation of new support services for the agencies prioritised by Bord Na Gaidhlig and the National Plan for Gaelic.

Priorities The Gaelic arts offer a key tool for achieving the aims of the

National Gaelic Plan through a Gaelic presence and profile at a wide range of local, regional, national and international events.

The key creative challenge is to research and fully develop the linkage between involvement in Gaelic arts activity and Gaelic language acquisition and usage so as to increase the numbers of Gaelic speakers, learners and supporters. This should be the subject of a pioneering, close-grain research, development and evaluation strategy that explores the dynamics of Gaelic arts and language interaction, identifies models of good practice and creates sustainable support services that maximise the language gain.

The key political challenge will be to secure the financial and human resources to fully implement and deliver this Strategy. It is proposed that Bord Na Gaidhlig, and the other stakeholders in Gaelic arts development, consider its implications and potential benefits in terms of achieving their policy aims. 2007-08 should be seen as the transitional year in which they agree a level of partnership and investment that will enable the Gaelic Arts Strategy to successfully support the National Plan for Gaelic 2008-2012.

Primary Players include:

The Scottish Executive
Bord Na Gaidhlig
The GASD Forum
Proiseact Nan Ealan
SAC/ Creative Scotland
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
Local Authorities
Event Scotland
National Agencies
Gaelic Media Service
The BBC

A NATIONAL GAELIC ARTS STRATEGY: TIMELINE 2006 – 2008

Spring 06: BNG consult Gaelic organisations re the first outline of the draft

National Gaelic Plan. Consensus among Gaelic arts stakeholders is that the Arts and Culture dimension is weak and requires significant reinforcement.

- May 06: PNE Board, SAC and HIE agree the need for a strong National Gaelic Arts Strategy that can be supported by all Gaelic arts stakeholders as a part of the National Gaelic Plan 2007-2012.
- June 06 SAC call a meeting attended by Senior Officers and Board Members of BNG, HIE, PNE and GASD. All agree to support such a strategy and that it be drafted by PNE and GASD.
- Sept 06: GASD Forum agrees an outline structure for a National Gaelic Arts Strategy and all Forum members are invited to contribute their proposals re content.
- October 06: PNE prepares a draft National Gaelic Arts Plan.
- 16 Nov 06: GASD Forum meets to debate and agree the draft Plan, finalise the launch of the GCU Survey Report and agree the venue and date for the Gaelic Arts Conference in Spring 2007.
- 20 Nov 06: GASD submits the draft Plan to BNG, SAC, HIE and key Local Authorities for feedback.
- 27 Nov 06: HIE Chairman, Willie Roe, launches the GCU Survey Report in Inverness.
- Dec/Jan 07: PNE consults with BNG, SAC, HIE and key Local Authorities re agreement on the draft Gaelic Arts Strategy. A key issue will be clarifying its status and ensuring the compatibility and convergence of Gaelic Arts and Language Plans at local, regional and national levels. Another will be to clarify the budget implications for the transitional year 2007-08.
- Dec/Jan 07: Appoint a Conference Facilitator for the Gaelic Arts Conference.
- February 07: Second draft, incorporating feedback, to be agreed by the GASD Forum who will also clarify the presentation of the National Gaelic Arts Strategy and the GCU Survey to the Gaelic arts conference.
- March 07: Major Gaelic Arts Conference held by PNE/GASD
- Spring 07: Finalise the National Gaelic Arts Strategy in the light of the conference feedback and confirm the support of key stakeholders for the period 2008-2012.
- Summer 07: Publish the Gaelic Arts Conference Report and the National Gaelic Arts Strategy.

Autumn 07: Consult key stakeholders regarding strategy implementation and budget plans for 2008-2011.

Winter 07-08: Draft detailed plans for strategy implementation.

2008-2012: Implementation of the National Gaelic Arts Strategy in convergence with the National Gaelic Plan

A NATIONAL GAELIC ARTS STRATEGY 2008-12- REFERENCES

Bord Na Gaidhlig
Scottish Arts Council
Highlands & Islands Enterprise

National Gaelic Language Plan (2006)
Gaelic Arts Strategy (2004)
Strengthening Communities

Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar
Highland Council

Western Isles Cultural Plan (2006)
Gaelic Plan

An Lochran & Glasgow City	Gaelic Arts Strategy (2006)
GASD Forum 07)	Gaelic Arts Development Programme(2005-
Proiseact Nan Ealan Feisean Nan Gaidheal	Gaelic Arts Development Plan (2006-08) Annual report (2006)
Glasgow Caledonia University Dr Anne Lorne Gillies for PNE SCE for PNE (2000)	Gaelic Arts Survey of WI and S&L (2006) Gaelic Music Conference Report (2006) Gaelic Music &theScottishMusicIndustry

Plus other as yet unpublished sources