

COMUNN NA GÀIDHLIG



Annual Report 2007/2008

Creating opportunities for Gaelic

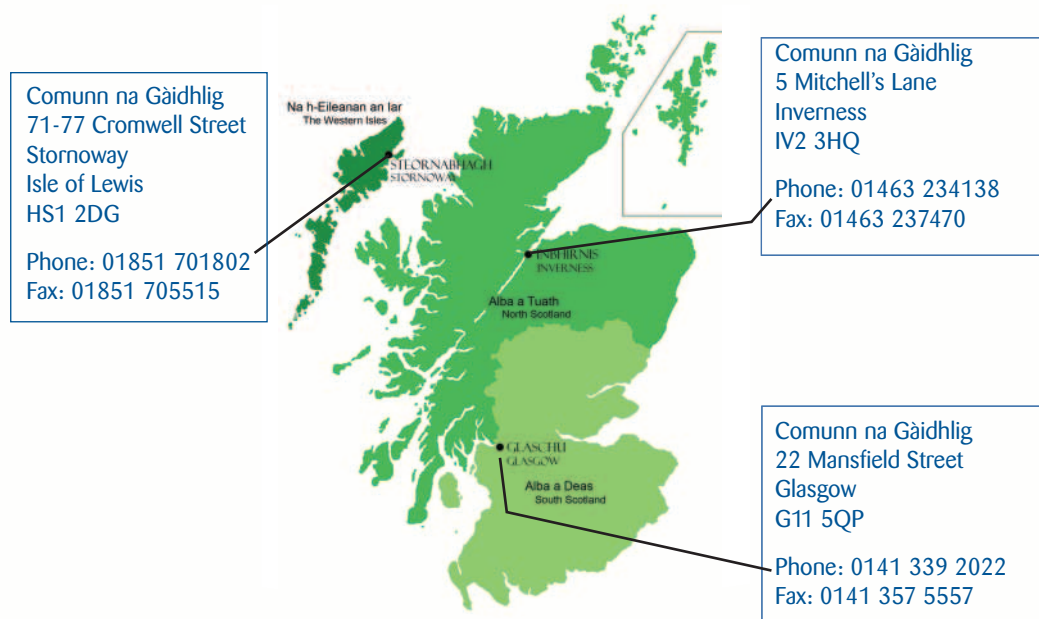


Area Teams

Comunn na Gàidhlig (CnaG) was established in 1984 as a co-ordinating Gaelic Development Agency. Operating at local, regional and national levels, CnaG has a Board of Directors which includes representatives from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland Council and An Comunn Gaidhealach. The Board also has Directors representing the Community, the Arts and Youth. A representative from Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) attends Board meetings as an observer.

CnaG is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and the day to day responsibility and execution of policy rests with the Chief Executive, who is also the Secretary of the Company. The Chief Executive is Archie Maclean who is based in Inverness.

CnaG has three operational areas - Western Isles, Scotland North and Scotland South and have offices in Inverness (Head office), Stornoway, Portree and Glasgow.



What we do

- CnaG's operations fall under two headings:
- Services
- Development

CnaG Services

Advice

CnaG attends career fairs all over Scotland to give advice on Gaelic careers.

Information

CnaG is involved in publishing diaries for schools, Gaelic calendars, newsletters and information leaflets.

Campaigns

CnaG makes representations to government and Europe.

Representation

CnaG is represented on bodies such as Stòrlann, Ionad Chalum Chille Ìle, the Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on Gaelic and the Gaelic Place-Name Partnership.

Chairman's Report

The past year has been a successful one for Comunn na Gàidhlig, delivering many projects across a wide range of areas, promoting the development of Gaelic. Activities focused mainly on communities, working alongside parents, young people and local businesses. Although we enjoyed a successful year, it is obvious that there is still much to be done at community level to ensure that Gaelic speakers are afforded every opportunity to exercise their right to use their own language in all situations.

We are grateful for the financial support we received from the funding agencies, in particular, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, but also local councils and enterprise companies. We are aware of the major changes which some of these organisations have gone through over the past year and we are grateful for their continued support.

It is gratifying that the private sector has shown interest in supporting Gaelic projects. BT Scotland continues its support for the National Schools Debate. Scottish Widows gave support for a Gaelic Youth Enterprise scheme for high school pupils and also provided support for a garden to be built at Bun Sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis. Also, CalMac provides support for the "Gàidhlig air a' Bhàta" scheme. Those companies are excellent examples to others who may wish to follow in their footsteps.

This year, we welcomed a new Government to Holyrood and also a new Minister with responsibility for Gaelic, Linda Fabiani MSP. We have met with the Minister, to provide her with information, and we look forward to working closely with her and the Government to help deliver on the aims and aspirations of the National Plan for Gaelic.

I would like to thank Donald Martin for his excellent work to CnaG over the years. Donald retired in May 2007 after ten years with CnaG, initially as Director of Community Development and more recently as Chief Executive from 2003 to 2007. We offer him best of wishes for the future, in the knowledge that he will not be idle for long.

We welcomed Archie MacLean as Chief Executive, replacing Donald, and also Calum Iain MacLeod to the Stornoway office as Development Manager. Calum Iain's appointment completes the final part of the new structure that was proposed in the review of the company, carried out in 2005.

Over the year we bade farewell to three members of staff, Anne MacRitchie, Doreen MacLean and Louise MacLean and we welcomed Caroline Morrison to the Stornoway office.

Also, I would like to record my personal thanks to the Board of Directors who served during 2007/08, for their continuing support and interest. This year we lost the services of John Blair who was replaced by John Morrison as representative of An Comunn Gaidhealach. We also welcomed to the Board Mairi MacInnes, as representative of the Arts, and Kenneth MacIver as the representative of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

With a new Board and recent staffing appointments we look forward to many innovative and interesting developments in the furtherance of Gaelic over the coming year, building on the successes of the past year.

Donald Macdonald
Chair



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The Year's Review 2007/2008

CnaG has enjoyed another successful year and our main projects are as follows.

New Digital Service

In 2007/8 we welcomed the new BBC/Gaelic Media Service partnership, which was set up to establish a new Gaelic digital service. CnaG is firmly of the opinion that the service should be available on Freeview and we lobbied for suitable funding to be made available to the consortium at the outset sufficient for its setup and for its future growth. We congratulate those involved in establishing the new service.



Gaelic Medium Education

In co-operation with Comann nam Pàrant, a lot of work has been done to motivate parents in different areas. A new booklet, *Fios is Freagairt*, which provides information on Gaelic Medium Education from pre-school to high school level and beyond, was published and circulated to parents throughout Scotland.

Support was given in various areas where there was a demand from parents for a Gaelic school. It is apparent there are many benefits arising from a Gaelic school as opposed to a Gaelic unit within a school. It is also apparent from the increasing numbers of pupils entering the Inverness and Glasgow schools that Gaelic Schools are appealing to parents.

There are currently ongoing campaigns for Gaelic schools in Barra, Portree and Fort William. Consultation meetings were held in the Western Isles to hear the views of parents on how Gaelic Medium Education could be further developed in the islands.

Research visit to Wales

In March, a number of CnaG staff, along with Bòrd na Gàidhlig staff members, undertook a visit to Wales to learn about the Welsh language initiatives – *Mentrua Iaith*. The trip was arranged in conjunction with Bòrd na Gàidhlig following discussions on new and innovative ways of development at community level. It is apparent that the *Mentrua Iaith* are successful and that there was much to be learnt from their experience of working at community level. We hope to work closely with our Welsh colleagues to develop our knowledge and experience to enable us to replicate good practice from Wales in our own communities.

Student Schemes

The increase in the number of children choosing Gaelic Medium Education makes it apparent that more and more demands will be made on the schemes which CnaG currently organises for students and that more resources will be required if they are to continue successfully. Once again, The Student Work Placement Scheme, Cleachd I, The Student Support Scheme and the Graduate Placement Scheme were all very successful.

Public Speaking and Debating Competitions

CnaG is involved in two annual competitions that encourage and develop public speaking and debating skills amongst schoolchildren – *Ri Chèile* and the BT Scotland National Schools' Debate.

In October 2007, pupils from various parts of Ireland and Scotland visited Rath Cairn, Co. Meath in Eire to take part in the international public speaking competition, *Ri Chèile*. A pupil from Michael's College, An Lorgain, took the top prize with a pupil from Tain Royal Academy taking the first prize for Scotland.

The Final of the BT Scotland National Debate was held at the Scottish Parliament with Linclate School taking the trophy, beating Portree High School in the final. Sixteen teams took part in the competition and the initial rounds were held in Bun Sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis. This was the tenth year of the competition.

Archie MacLean

Chief Executive



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Achievements and Performance – 2007/08

Strategy and Promotion

“Working together to promote and develop the Gaelic language and culture”.

- Represented CnaG at 150 meetings with different organisations representing
- Support and advice on policy and Gaelic plans given to local authorities and other public bodies.
- Serviced Cross Party Group on Gaelic meetings in The Scottish Parliament
- Organised the Cross Party Group on Gaelic Annual Event.
- Representations to the BBC Trust and OFCOM on Gaelic broadcasting.
- Study visit to Wales to learn about Mentrau Iaith.
- Four issues of Cur is Fàs.
- Regional leaflets on Badenoch & Strathspey and Loch Ness.
- Maps of Fort William and Inverness.
- 2008 Calendar and Wallplanner.
- Web-sites, LochaberGaelic.org, ArgyllGaelic.org, SpeyGaelic.org and InvernessGaelic.org.
- Highland 2007 events, (The World Cup, The Wilderness Arc, Fort William Film Festival.)
- Simultaneous translation.
- Diaries for Gaelic Secondary and Primary Schools.
- Six pages in local press on Gaelic issues.
- Funding for Literary competitions at Royal National Mod and Lewis Mod.
- Attended conference on Heritage and the Environment at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig.

Education and Skills

“Promoting Gaelic Education and skills at all levels”.

- Careers Events throughout Scotland.
- Students’ Support Scheme.
- Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta) Annual General Meeting.
- Comann nam Pàrant web-site www.parant.org and information leaflet.
- Meetings with parents throughout Scotland.
- Campaign for Gaelic Medium Education in Ullapool and Fort William
- Open Days in primary schools throughout Scotland.
- Conference for parents in Argyll.
- Support materials for Home Visiting Scheme.
- Family Learning Week in Lewis.
- Meetings of the National Gaelic Education Group.
- Small grants scheme for local Comann nam Parant group.
- New booklet on Gaelic Medium Education, Fios is Freagairt.
- BT Gaelic Schools Debate 2007.
- Ri Chèile.
- Educational event in Edinburgh in April 2007, 200 pupils.
- Stòrlann and Bòrd na Gàidhlig Conference for new teachers.
- Trip by student teachers from Brittany.



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Youth

“Creating opportunities for young people to use and enjoy Gaelic”.

- Outward Bound Courses held at Loch Eil.
- National football tournament.
- Sports activities for children.
- Child protection training for groups throughout Scotland.
- Teenagers camp, Tiree.
- Sradagan camp, Portree.
- Group from Urdd in Wales visited Sradagan in Oban.
- Support for Sradagan groups.
- First Aid training for Sradagan groups.
- Training for Sradagan group leaders.
- Scottish Widows sponsored garden at Bun Sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis.
- Workshops at the Mod in conjunction with Fèisean nan Gàidheal.
- Latha Mòr na Gàidhlig, Aviemore.

Community Development

“Helping communities to develop and strengthen the use of Gaelic”.

- Gaelic On board.
- Attended community events.
- Bilingual Signage Scheme.
- Promoted bilingual signage information packs.
- Grants to Community Groups.
- Student Placement Scheme and Cleachd I.
- Graduate Placement Scheme.

CnaG Board of Directors 2006/07

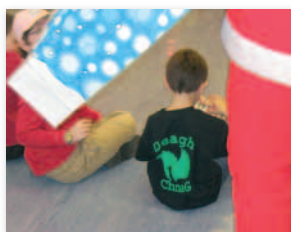
Mr. Donald Macdonald, Skye
Dr. Seumas Grant, Rothiemurchus
Mr. John Morrison, Dundee
Cllr. Hamish Fraser, Skye
Cllr. Kenneth MacIver, Lewis
Ms. Iseabail Maclean, Barra
Mrs. Mary MacInnes, South Uist
Ms. Maggie Mackay, Lewis

Chair, Business Interests
Highlands & Islands Enterprise
An Comunn Gaidhealach
The Highland Council
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
Youth Interests
Arts Interests
Community Interests

Senior Staff

Mr. Archie Maclean
Mr. Calum Iain Macleod
Mr. Donald Morris, Inverness
Mrs. Sheena Maclean, Glasgow
Mrs. Fay McDiarmid, Skye
Mrs. Maggie Wentworth, Gairloch

Company Secretary & Chief Executive
Director of Development
Area Manager, Inverness
Area Manager, Glasgow
Youth Projects Manager
Parental Officer



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