



COMUNN NA GÀIDHLIG

Annual Report 2004-2005

Our Vision and Mission:

- To create opportunities for individuals and communities to use Gaelic in as many situations as possible.
- To develop and facilitate the use of Gaelic in partnership through education and lifelong learning, cultural enrichment and economic and social development.

"There are few responsibilities more absolute than those which flow from custodianship of a language and culture; especially when these exist to such an extent in only one country. If Gaelic dies in Scotland, it dies in the world. If it flourishes in Scotland, then it sends out a message of inspiration and optimism to others who face similar challenges and adversities. Therein lie both the challenge and the opportunity.

In my view, the Scottish identity as a whole is immeasurably enriched by its Gaelic dimension.

For those who wish to communicate through a minority language like Gaelic it must at times feel like an uphill task to maintain a spoken language to which there has sometimes been indifference and even hostility.

Against that background, the miracle is not that Gaelic is weak, but that it has survived at all – into an age when, I hope, enlightenment is the dominant theme."

HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay, at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Isle of Skye, 27th September 2004.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Highlands & Islands
ENTERPRISE



CHAIR'S MESSAGE 2004/05

This has been an historic year for Gaelic developments in many ways.

In September 2004 CnaG commemorated 20 years of active service to Gaelic and we took the opportunity, following our Annual General Meeting on 28 September, to gather together with friends, former and current members of staff, Board members and Chairmen who had contributed to the work of Comunn na Gàidhlig since 1984. We had a very pleasant and enjoyable evening and everyone enjoyed themselves. Ceiteag MacGregor – who had worked for CnaG for the first twelve years – was one of many who gave a personal reflection of those early years. Ceiteag's contribution, which was a fitting tribute to the work of those who had been involved in setting CnaG on its challenging mission, was so much enjoyed by everyone in attendance that we have published it in this year's Annual Report.

I would like to thank all those who have participated in the work of CnaG since 1984. All those involved have contributed significantly to Gaelic developments and it is appropriate that this year we see the fruits of our labours when Parliament approves the Gaelic Language Bill in April 2005. CnaG has campaigned tirelessly on behalf of the Gaelic community for legal status for the language as well as a number of other important campaigns such as Gaelic broadcasting and Gaelic Medium Education. We were delighted that a number of our amendments were accepted by the Parliament's Education Committee to strengthen the provisions of the Bill. Together with the Gaelic community we are now looking forward to the implementation of the Gaelic Language Act and the publication of the National Plan for Gaelic.

We took the opportunity to review our own role and structure as a Gaelic development agency. Reference Economic Consultants carried out this detailed review and I would like to thank the many people who contributed and gave their views to Tom Matthew and Euan MacKay. Their recommendations were reasonable and appropriate and the Board of Directors approved them in February 2005. Unfortunately, we still do not have the funding required to implement these recommendations but we will be continuing to discuss the matter with Highlands & Islands Enterprise, in particular, in the hope that we may be able to secure the necessary resources to implement the structure review.



20th Anniversary - September 2004

We are all aware that a Gaelic Act, Gaelic Medium Education, and Gaelic Plans will not secure the future of the language unless Gaelic is spoken naturally in the home, in the communities, in the shops and in the workplace as a language which people are proud to own and speak. It is at community level that we see our own challenges and we will need every help, support and advice to ensure that our language, our culture and our heritage goes from strength to strength so that the number of Gaelic speakers is substantially increased.

This has been another successful year for us in terms of meeting our overall objectives as can be seen from this Report. Our activities are funded mainly by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Highlands & Islands Enterprise and I would like to place on record our deep appreciation to both bodies for their support over the past year.

I would like to extend a special welcome to the new members of the Board who have joined us in the course of the year- Cllr Alex A MacDonald, Convener of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar; John MacLeod, representing An Comunn Gaidhealach; Ishbel MacLean representing Youth; and Derek Murray representing the Arts

As a new Board, we have already achieved a lot in the short period of time since the Board was reconstituted in December 2004 and I would like to thank them all for what they have done up until now. I would also like to thank the Chief Executive and staff for their diligence, enthusiasm and commitment to their work over the past year.

Màiri Bremner
Chair



A REVIEW OF OUR MAIN ACTIVITIES IN 2004/05

A great deal of time was spent in 2004/05 preparing and presenting evidence, at various stages, to the Parliament's Education Committee and MSP's on the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill; participating in the review of our functions and structures undertaken by Reference Economic Consultants, as well as initiating a wide range of community projects.

We are delighted that the Gaelic Student Placement Scheme was further expanded in the Summer of 2004 when twenty three students were able to obtain employment for ten weeks with eighteen employers. For the first time we had two students working in the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh and one student at the Columba Centre in Islay. The remaining students were placed with organisations in Inverness, Glasgow, Skye, and in several communities within the Western Isles.

This Scheme is particularly beneficial, not just for the opportunities it gives students to obtain employment but also for the opportunities it gives employers. In addition to this, the Scheme creates economic opportunities in many communities where students would not have access to summer employment near their homes. Without this type of Scheme, many Gaelic speaking students would have to seek summer employment away from home.

We were also fortunate to have seen a successful first Graduate Placement Scheme launched in the Summer where six new graduates were able to secure employment for a year with six employers in the Western Isles. This Scheme received funding from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and the Highlands & Islands Special Programme (ESF). I am pleased to say that it looks likely that some of the graduates will be continuing their employment with their current employers at the end of the twelve month placement. We hope that it might be possible for us to obtain funding for the next financial year to enable us to manage another Graduate Placement Scheme to provide employment opportunities, this time for graduates throughout Scotland.

Despite our continued endeavours, along with other agencies, to progress the establishment of a Gaelic television digital channel, it is disappointing to report that very little progress has been made as regards additional government funding. Numerous discussions have been held between representatives of the UK Government and the Scottish Executive, the Gaelic Media Services, the BBC and the Scottish Media Group. After the strong recommendations which emanated from the Council of Europe in 2002 on Gaelic broadcasting it is frustrating that we need to continue to press the case for additional government funding for what everyone agrees is an essential development in Gaelic broadcasting.

As part of this campaign, a meeting of all the interested Gaelic bodies was held in Inverness on 3 March 2005 at which it was agreed that representations should be made to ensure that the forthcoming OFCOM Report on the Nations and the Regions accepted the case for an immediate decision on the Gaelic digital channel.

Following this meeting, CnaG facilitated a petition to enable views to be registered on-line and this petition, supported by up to 1000 names, was subsequently submitted to OFCOM as part of the consultation process.

We have been actively involved, in partnership with a number of other agencies in the Western Isles, in developing a Language Plan for the Western Isles area. A great deal of information has been gathered from the survey undertaken by Fosglan over the past twelve months and this information together with the views from the community meetings which were held throughout the Western Isles will help to prepare the plan, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2005.

On behalf of Bòrd na Gàidhlig, The Highland Council, and Inverness and Nairn Enterprise, we have appointed a part-time officer to develop and co-ordinate the Inverness and Nairn Gaelic Language and Culture Plan. This is a good example for other areas to consider, in advance of the obligations which may be imposed on public bodies under the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act. We have also given advice and practical assistance to the University of the Highlands and Islands Millennium Institute on its Gaelic Language Strategy. We hope that one of the main recommendations in this Strategy – the appointment of a Gaelic Development Officer based within the UHIMI – will be adopted over the next few months.

The final two rounds of this year's BT Gaelic Schools Debate was held in Edinburgh. The Semi-Final Round was held in James Gillespie's School and the following night the Final Round was held in the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood. All participating schools did extremely well and we congratulate the winning team from The Nicolson Institute and the team from Gairloch High School who did so well in the Final. Following the Final Round, a Reception and Ceilidh was held in Holyrood hosted by the Cross-Party Group on Gaelic and funded by CnaG.



Aware of the difficulties which continue to exist in recruiting sufficient numbers of students to Gaelic teaching at both primary and secondary levels, we obtained funding from Bòrd na Gàidhlig to produce an updated and attractive version of the "Thig a Theagasg" booklet and posters. These will be distributed to pupils, students, parents and teachers at forthcoming careers events and open days as part of our Gaelic teaching recruitment campaign. It is encouraging to see the increasing number of courses that are now available giving students a wider choice of selecting courses which are more suited to their personal circumstances. We hope that in the next year we can get funding to offer students doing Gaelic teaching and other Gaelic courses assistance with course fees and expenses.

Two successful Gaelic events were held in Edinburgh. One event involved a schools' visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens and the other involved Gaelic speaking secondary pupils and Gaeilge pupils from Northern Ireland coming together under the name Ri Chèile where debates, competitions, sports, visits and other interesting activities took place. These events proved so successful that next year it is planned to have a similar Ri Chèile event in Armagh in Autumn 2005.

We funded a group of parents and pupils from Edinburgh who spent a week in Colonsay learning Gaelic with some of the islanders. We also assisted in the establishment of CLAS, the group set up to represent Gaelic teachers in the Secondary Schools.

In April, eleven teenagers went to Tiree for their Spring Camp and the Sradagan Summer Camp had 68 children in Portree. We have also been actively involved in preparing for a Iurosgoil gathering in Scotland in Summer 2005 for a group of children representing minority languages communities in Europe.

The Gaelic in the Community Scheme came to an end in February 2005 when HISP funding for the Scheme ceased. Although we had hoped to continue the Scheme at the same level, it was not possible for us to obtain the additional funding required. Consequently, our Grants Scheme will be operating at a much reduced level next year.

The outward bound courses have expanded considerably since they were launched over two years ago. A course was held for the current placements on the graduate placement scheme and one for senior pupils and teachers studying Geography through the medium of Gaelic in addition to the normal courses for Sradagan groups and secondary pupils. The recent appointment of a Gaelic speaking course leader at the Loch Eil Centre means that the level of support from CnaG staff for these courses will reduced. This has been an excellent example of where an initiative developed by CnaG has resulted in the Gaelic element of the project now being main-streamed into the work of the Loch Iall Centre.

In June 2004 we bade farewell to Kristine Kennedy who had worked with us for nearly twelve years - the last six as Director of Youth Services. Later in the year, in October 2004, Margaret Maciver who served as Education Officer with Comunn na Gàidhlig for ten years left to take up a post of Lecturer in the Celtic Department of Aberdeen University. In February 2005, Donella Campbell who was Gaelic in the Community Scheme Manager, left to take up a post in Health Education with the Western Isles Health Board. We wish them all every success in their new challenges and thank them for their significant contribution to the work of CnaG over the years.

We welcome Angela Macdonald Youth Development Officer, who is based in Glasgow; Coinneach Combe who is our graduate placement, based in Stornoway doing ITC work for CnaG and other Gaelic bodies and Angus Macleod in the Inverness office working on the Inverness and Nairn Gaelic Language and Culture Plan. We provided summer placement employment for four students during the summer of 2004. Donald Neil Macleod and Gwen MacQuarrie in Inverness, and Fiona Dunn and Karen Morrison in Glasgow and Stornoway respectively. We hope that the experience was an enjoyable and successful one for them all.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the staff who have contributed so much of their time and commitment in fulfilling the aims and objectives of CnaG for 2004/05. We look forward to the challenges which face us in 2005/06 with confidence and encouragement.

Donald Martin
Chief Executive



Address on CnaG's 20th Anniversary

by Ceiteag MacGregor who was CnaG's Administrator from 1985 to 1997

As we say in Gaelic, it is not every day the MacIntosh holds court - and certainly it is not every night that I address a company of people such as this. But this is undoubtedly a singular occasion as CnaG reaches its twenty year milestone.

It is a time when countless thoughts and memories come to mind, some of which I would like to share with you for a few minutes.

In the first instance, I often think about CnaG's logo - the bird, the ideal emblem for CnaG. This is no meek, reticent bird dozing on its nest. It is the traditional eagle of the Gaels, vigorous, courageous, confident. A bird with spirit, its wings outstretched to the sky, elevating Gaelic to the heights it merits.

I admire the vision of the worthy pair whose idea it was, namely CnaG's first Company Secretary, Duncan MacQuarrie and the first Chairman, the late highly respected Donald John Mackay.

When CnaG was established in September 1984 it did not immediately acquire an office. But temporary office facilities were made available, when required, initially in the offices of the Harris Tweed Association of which CnaG's Chairman was Chief Executive and then in the offices of An Comunn Gaidhealach in Abertarf House.

Several months later Highland Regional Council offered CnaG Room 14 in Cauldeen School to serve as an office until a suitable office could be found. And that was how, when I was introduced to CnaG's "office" in April 1985 it was not really an office at all but a classroom.

We were a small work force - the Director, John Angus Mackay and two part-time clerical assistants, Jessie Maclean and I. Facilities were few. The school tables served as desks. We had one telephone between the three of us and the day the Director walked in with a second handset was a red letter day indeed!

Within a few months the work force was augmented by the appointment of a Projects Officer, Donald Saunders and an Education Officer, Donald John Macleod. That was an interesting and inspiring summer, particularly in view of the conference held at Sabhal Mòr "Towards a National Policy for Gaelic".

We flitted from Cauldeen School when a suitable office comprising three rooms was found on Academy Street. Three rooms! Desks and brand new equipment! We were over the moon - CnaG was well and truly launched!

Soon we were joined by CNSA and CLI also had its office in the same building for some time.

After an assessment of all the main Gaelic organisations, CnaG, CNSA and CLI moved into the building on Church Street where An Comunn Gaidhealach had its offices. The resulting proximity greatly enhanced inter-relations and co-operation. This was CnaG's last flitting until we moved to its present address at Mitchell's Lane.

I look on the flittings as a mark of CnaG's progress over the years. As aims and objectives multiplied, staff had to increase accordingly. And so larger and better equipped offices became necessary.

Since the office team provided a back-up service for the Board of Directors, the Departmental Directors and Development Officers, we felt we were a part of the on-going developments. When everything ran smoothly we were in our element but when problems arose - all too frequently - we sank into the Slough of Despond!

I suppose this is why CnaG staff, at all levels, always enjoyed a close affinity, a situation which in no small way encouraged our work.

In the twelve years I spent in CnaG's service I witnessed many initiatives coming to fruition. I saw many changes. But one thing never changed and I hope it never will. It was always CnaG's practice to treat everyone at every level with fairness and courtesy. And that is no mean testimonial for any organisation.

My wish tonight is that CnaG's green bird will go from strength to strength, that it will soar on wings like eagles, that it will run and not grow weary, that it will walk and not be faint.





Community and Culture

"Helping communities to develop and strengthen the use of Gaelic"

- Managed the Highlands & Islands Gaelic in the Community Scheme, involving the approval of 113 projects – 22 in the Western Isles; 21 in Argyll & Bute and 70 in the Highland area, resulting in a total of £262,000.00 being awarded in grants.
- Completed a comprehensive evaluation of the Scheme and organised a seminar with Local Enterprise Companies, Local Authorities, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Bòrd na Gàidhlig to discuss the evaluation.
- Managed the Summer 2004 Gaelic Students' Placement Scheme for 23 students and 18 employers and the 1 year Gaelic Graduate Placement Scheme for 6 places in the Western Isles, with ESF and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar funding.
- Made representations to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport on the Review of the BBC's Royal Charter and to OFCOM on Gaelic broadcasting.
- Provided funding for a range of cultural and cultural tourism events and activities throughout Scotland, including Ceòlas, Hebridean Celtic Festival, Highland Festival, Ceòl na Mara, Ceòl nan Loch, Fèis nan Òran and the Glasgow West End Festival.
- Participated in LEADER+ Local Advisory Groups, Western Isles Skye and Lochalsh, North West Highlands and Western Isles Community Economic Development Scheme and gave advice on applications for funding under these Schemes.
- Represented CnaG on the Board of Directors of Pròiseact nan Ealan, Fèisean nan Gaidheal, Ionad Ìle, An Lòchran, An Gaidheal Ùr, Studio Alba, Western Isles Gaelic Forum and the Àrd Chomhairle of An Comunn Gaidhealach.

Strategy and Promotion

"Working together to promote and develop the Gaelic language and culture"

- Gave evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Education Committee and made four written submissions as part of the consultative process on the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill.
- Made representations to the Scottish Executive and the UK Government on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.
- Completed a comprehensive review of the role, functions and structure of Comunn na Gàidhlig.
- Serviced 8 Meetings of the Scottish Parliament's Cross Party Group on Gaelic and organised one Annual Event for MSP's in conjunction with the final round of the BT Gaelic Schools Debate.
- Updated CnaG web-site and provide IT support to Cli-Gàidhlig, An Comunn Gaidhealach, Mòd nan Eilean Siar and An Gaidheal Ùr.



- Produced 6 leaflets and guidelines on Gaelic issues, 2004 Gaelic Christmas card and a 2005 Gaelic calendar.
- Represented Comunn na Gàidhlig on the European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages at four meetings.
- Participated in the Meetings, at Ministerial level, to discuss responses on the Gaelic Language Bill.
- Participated in the preparation of the Community Language Plan for the Western Isles and in the management of the implementation of the Inverness and Nairn Gaelic Language and Culture Plan.
- Assisted in the preparation of a Gaelic policy for the Hebridean Celtic Festival, the Western Isles Health Board and the UHIMI's Gaelic Language Strategy.



- Provided financial assistance towards the Literacy Competitions in the 101th Royal National Mod and provided editorial material on Gaelic developments for 4 national publications.
- Provided financial assistance for 7 Bilingual Signage applications throughout Scotland.
- Organised a public meeting in Inverness on 28 September 2004 to publish the activities of CnaG for 2003/04.

Education & Skills

"Promoting Gaelic education and skills at all levels"

- Organised 5 Outward Bound Courses through the medium of Gaelic for students, pupils and graduates at the Loch Eil Outward Bound Centre.
- In partnership with the National Trust for Scotland, participated in arrangements to provide a higher profile for Gaelic in the proposed Culloden development.
- Attended 6 Careers Conventions and events.
- Attended Meetings to lobby key players involved in teacher training to develop and enhance teacher recruitment initiatives and launched the new "Thig a Theagaisg" posters and booklet.
- Attended meetings and events throughout Scotland in support of the work of Comann nam Pàrant and made a submission to the Scottish Executive on the Gaelic Language Bill and Early Years Education.
- Prepared Gaelic diaries for primary and secondary schools.
- Produced Gaelic School Wall Planner 2005.
- Supported College and University students through work experience, financial assistance and information services.
- Continued co-operation with Local Authorities throughout Scotland through a variety of projects and initiatives.
- Serviced and participated in the establishment of CLAS, the Gaelic Secondary Teachers' Group.
- Participated in the organisation of joint Gaeilge/Gàidhlig visit to Edinburgh by representatives from the Irish and Scots Gaelic communities, involving 10 pupils and 5 schools.
- Participated in the pre-school Home Visiting Schemes in the Western Isles and Highland areas.
- Assisted in the arrangements for the 2004 BT Gaelic Schools Debate involving 16 secondary schools throughout Scotland.

Youth Services

"Creating opportunities for young people to use and enjoy Gaelic"

- Undertook 2 Sradagan Summer camps for 68 children and 1 Camp in Tìree for 11 teenagers. .
- Supported TOSG Christmas Panto for Sradagan groups and Gaelic Medium Units at 23 venues throughout Scotland.
- Arranged 10 Training Sessions for Sradagan Club Leaders.
- Held meetings on the arrangements for the proposed Iurosgoil 2005, to be held in Fort William in July 2005.
- Produced 4 issues of the newsletter "An t-Sradag".





- Arranged 10 Club/Inter-club activities/events.
- Updated web-site for Sradagan.
- Extended policy on Disclosure Scotland for Child Protection and provided training on revised Child Protection policies.
- Continued to liaise with Comann nam Pàrant (Nàiseanta).
- Representing CnaG on the Sorley MacLean Trust and the Community Learning and Development Review Group.





FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2004/05

| RECEIPTS | £'000 |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Highlands & Islands Enterprise | 325 |
| Bòrd na Gàidhlig | 334 |
| Local Authorities | 27 |
| LECs | 14 |
| Other income and receipts | 9 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | 709 |

| PAYMENTS | £'000 |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Strategy and Promotion | 61 |
| Education, Skills and Youth | 82 |
| Community and Culture | 88 |
| Project and Support Costs | 416 |
| Other Projects | 62 |
| TOTAL PAYMENTS | 709 |

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY PROJECTS 2004/05

| Area | Gaelic in the Community Scheme | Other |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| The Western Isles | £55,612 | £8840 |
| Caithness and Sutherland | £46,348 | - |
| Argyll and Bute | £41,863 | £711 |
| Inverness and Nairn | £36,698 | £6200 |
| Lochaber | £29,893 | £1500 |
| Ross and Cromarty | £21,563 | £1000 |
| Skye | £19,577 | £3900 |
| Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey | £11,053 | - |
| Glasgow | - | £800 |
| Edinburgh | - | £1200 |
| Total | £262,607 | £24,151 |



Comunn na Gàidhlig (CnaG) is a Gaelic Development Agency established in 1984 following recommendations made in the HIDB Report *Cor na Gàidhlig* (1982). Most Gaelic revival interest groups were represented on CnaG's Board of Directors, including HIE, Local Authorities and An Comunn Gaidhealach, making it the main forum through which the Gaelic community reflects its views. CnaG's remit, role and structure has been reviewed over the past year, to take account of developments resulting from the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005.

CnaG's overall strategy and policy is directed by the Board of Directors. For the period up to 10 December 2004, the composition of the Board was as follows:

CNAG Board of Directors 2004-2005 (*Executive Group)

Corporate Members

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Mrs Màiri Bremner (Chair)* | |
| Mr Boyd Robertson (Vice-Chair)* | Board of Celtic Studies |
| Cllr Hamish Fraser | Highland Council |
| Cllr Norman A MacDonald | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar |
| Mrs Iona McHale | Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta (from April 2004) |
| Dr Farquhar Macintosh CBE | Chair, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig Trustees |
| Mr Angus MacDonald | An Comunn Gaidhealach |
| Dr Alasdair Mearns | Chair, Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich |
| Mr John M MacLeod | Scottish Crofting Foundation |
| Miss Ishbel M MacLennan | Editor, Craoladh nan Gaidheal |
| Ms Catriona MacIntyre | Chair, Fèisean nan Gaidheal |
| Mr Iain Campbell* | Highlands & Islands Enterprise |
| Mr Richard Watson | Chair CLI Gàidhlig |

Co-opted Members

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr Donald MacDonald* | Àros Visitor Centre, Skye |
| Mr Rob Dunbar* | University of Glasgow |

A re-constituted Board was established in December 2004 with the following membership:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mrs Mairi Bremner, South Uist | Chair, Community Interests |
| Mr Donald MacDonald, Skye | Vice-Chair, Business Interests |
| Mr Iain Campbell, Inverness | Highlands & Islands Enterprise |
| Mr John Macleod, Edinburgh | An Comunn Gaidhealach |
| Cllr Hamish Fraser, Skye | The Highland Council |
| Cllr Alex A MacDonald, Lewis | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar |
| Ms Iseabail MacLean, Barra | Youth Interests |
| Mr Derek Murray, Glasgow | Arts Interests |

Senior Staff

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Mr Donald Martin* | Chief Executive & Company Secretary |
| Miss Margaret MacIver (until Sept 2004) | Education |
| Ms Kristine Kennedy (until June 2004) | Youth Services & Publicity |

Comunn na Gàidhlig
5 Mitchell's Lane
Inverness IV2 3HQ
Tel: 01463 234138 Fax: 01463 237470
oifis@cnag.org.uk
www.cnag.org.uk