



# Renfrewshire Council Gaelic Language Plan 2024 - 2029

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Bòrd na  
Gàidhlig



Renfrewshire  
Council



## FOREWARD

Renfrewshire Council is committed to supporting the development of Gaelic in our organisation and in our communities.

Our Gaelic Language Plan 2024-2029 highlights our aims for Gaelic over the next five years. We have learned from previous work, listened to our stakeholders, and considered opportunities to help us identify actions that we think will nurture and cultivate Gaelic in line with local need.

Gaelic is an integral part of our shared heritage and national identity, and we are proud of its rich cultural tradition. We will support our communities to celebrate this and realise the benefits that embracing Gaelic presents. Doing so will help us safeguard the future of Gaelic in Renfrewshire as a language that is visible, utilised, and respected.

**Janie O'Neill**  
**Director of Children's Services**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Description of Renfrewshire Council

Renfrewshire Council is a medium sized local authority based in the west of Scotland serving a population of approximately 184,000. The Council is responsible for providing a range of public services including education, social care, housing, roads and recycling. The Council covers an area of 270 square kilometres, with a mixture of thriving towns, vibrant villages, and rural settlements. The area boasts healthy business and commercial activity, with ongoing enhancements to local infrastructure to support advanced manufacturing. The area also benefits from rich built and cultural heritage, with an attractive offer of notable landmarks and open spaces that support a strong tourism industry.

Renfrewshire Council Headquarters is based in Paisley, Renfrewshire's largest town. The Council has approximately 8500 employees and is one of the biggest employers in the area.

Renfrewshire Council has 43 councillors across 12 multi-member wards, with each ward containing either 3 or 4 elected members.

More information on Renfrewshire Council and the area is services can be found on [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)

## Council priorities

Renfrewshire Council's priorities are published in its Council Plan. The current Plan covers the period 2022-2027, and identifies the following five strategic outcomes:

- We will encourage kind and connected communities where citizens take pride in the **place** they live
- We will support a strong and flexible local **economy**
- We want Renfrewshire to be a **fair** place, where people feel safe, supported and empowered
- We will work towards a **greener** future
- As an organisation, we will be driven by our **values**, to be fair, helpful, collaborative and value learning.

Cutting across all of this is our wish for all of Renfrewshire's children to have loving, happy lives where everyone can enjoy the same opportunities and where wellbeing is nurtured.

## Gaelic within Renfrewshire Council

The most up to date insight regarding Gaelic language skills in Renfrewshire's communities remains the 2011 Census. The Census reveals Renfrewshire has a small number of residents with Gaelic skills, with the number of people who understand, speak, read, or write Gaelic decreasing in recent years, from 1837 in 2001 to 1586 in 2011. There are two exceptions to this trend, relating to those who "speak, read and write Gaelic" and "speak but do not read or write Gaelic", rising by two and sixteen people respectively. Renfrewshire has a small Gaelic community, but we are committed to providing sustainable support and learning opportunities matched to their needs and aspirations. The results from the 2022 Census will provide an opportunity to review these figures and understand the impact of recent work to enhance Gaelic provision.

The Council and our partners are successful in delivering cultural events programmes, collaborating with groups and organisations to raise the profile of Renfrewshire and our visitor offer. Where possible, we have sought to include Gaelic provision, such as the inclusion of Gaelic music in our regular Spree music festival. We also support groups who seek to further Gaelic language locally, using their expertise and knowledge to provide authentic learning and development experiences.

During October 2023, the Royal National Mòd, took place in Paisley. The eight-day national festival was organised by An Comunn Gàidhealach, supported by Renfrewshire Council, featured a range of competitive disciplines, including Gaelic song, poetry, literature, drama, instrumental, Highland dancing and sport. In addition to this, the Mòd fringe events included activities for children and families, at venues around the town centre. We will continue to build on the success of the festival.

Renfrewshire Council is committed to providing Gaelic education opportunities for our residents and those who wish to undertake this in future. Gaelic Medium Primary Education is available, allowing pupils starting primary 1 to access local provision within a dedicated establishment. Additionally, a number of Renfrewshire pupils undertake Gaelic Medium Education (GME) at schools in neighbouring authorities. Demand for provision in neighbouring authorities will likely decrease over time as Renfrewshire's provision becomes established. GME follows the same "Curriculum for Excellence" as other Scottish schools, with the difference being that teaching is undertaken in the Gaelic language. GME is a form of immersion education, with Gaelic the sole language of learning, teaching and assessment in the first three years of primary school. From P4 to P7, immersion education continues with the introduction of English. From P4 onwards,

following the introduction of English, Gaelic remains the predominant language of the classroom.

Gaelic is used for all learning and teaching in the first 2 years of primary school (Bunsgoil), with English being introduced for reading and writing from primary 3 onwards. In the secondary school (Àrd sgoil), Gaelic is used for the teaching and learning of as many subjects as possible.

## **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 Renfrewshire Council's 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.

Renfrewshire Council'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**

Renfrewshire Council supports the main aim of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2028 to increase the use and learning of Gaelic.

We are committed to the achieving this aim by focussing our work on these three priorities:

- 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

Renfrewshire Council will continue to review available data to understand the Gaelic skills that exist within the authority. Where appropriate we will supplement this with our own capacity audits to identify local need and refine our proposed activity. This information will supplement this Plan and be publicly available.

## Consultation on the draft Gaelic Language Plan

In accordance with the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 the Council conducted a seven-week consultation of the draft Gaelic Language Plan between August and September 2022. Key activity included:

- Notification of consultation on Council's website
- Gaelic and English versions of draft Plan provided to all Renfrewshire's libraries
- Awareness raising through Council's social media channels and local partners
- Public engagement event, and
- Local press releases

A total of 121 responses were received during the consultation period. Consultation feedback highlighted the potential to enhance communication and awareness of the Council's statutory responsibilities stemming from the 2005 Act. The aims and actions outlined in the Plan demonstrate our efforts to raise the local status, profile and use of Gaelic to meet these responsibilities.

Respondents also highlighted the need to demonstrate the pursuit of the Plan's aims will not detract from other service provision. This is an important consideration, and attention will be focused on using resources effectively and timeously to ensure planned activity adds value to a broad range of outcomes.

There is also scope for the Council to enhance monitoring and performance reporting over the Plan's life, and this will be progressed through the establishment of a new monitoring oversight group. A key deliverable will be increased progress reporting to ensure our communities have more opportunities to review our achievements.

## 2. KEY PRINCIPLES

Renfrewshire Council's Gaelic Language Plan is underpinned by five key principles of equal respect, active offer, mainstreaming, third parties and corporate parenting. The following section identifies our commitment to these principles and how they are applied throughout the Plan and our associated activities.

### Equal respect

Under the terms of the 2005 Act, Bòrd na Gàidhlig works with a view to securing the status of the Gaelic language as an official language of Scotland commanding equal respect to the English language and the Bòrd in turn expects that public authorities will demonstrate in their plans how the principle will be achieved and maintained in practice.

Renfrewshire Council will ensure that where Gaelic is included as part of our operations and services, we will ensure they are of an equal standard and quality as those that we provide in English.

### Active offer

Renfrewshire Council will make an active offer of our Gaelic services to our employees and the public. By this we mean that the Council's Gaelic services are prominent and accessible to Gaelic users who in turn are actively encouraged to use them.

This approach 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

Renfrewshire Council will ensure that opportunities for the public and our staff to use Gaelic are normalised, in support of the National Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2028 aim to increase the use and learning of Gaelic.



## Third parties

Where appropriate, Renfrewshire Council will seek support from Arm's Length Executive Organisations and other contractors help with the delivery of the public authority Gaelic Language Plan.

## Corporate parenting

Renfrewshire Council fulfils its duties as a Corporate Parent and will continue to ensure that care experienced children and young people and care leavers receive support and guidance aligned to their language and communication needs, including Gaelic users.

### 3. PLAN COMMITMENTS

#### High-level aims

Renfrewshire Council's high-level aims were co-produced with the support of Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

The high-level aims identify strategic actions, closely linked to the National Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2028. They are framed around the three National Gaelic Language Plan headings of:

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

The commitments outlined below form a key part of formal assessment and are used as a basis to measure performance and impact.

#### Increasing the use of Gaelic

High-level Aim	Actively promote the use of Gaelic in communication between the public and the Council and within the community.
Proposed Outcome	Our Gaelic community are aware of the scope of the Council's Gaelic provision and understand how to access/engage in this.
Current Practice	Provision is in place for interpretation and translation services for non-English speaking clients.
Actions Required	Take a proactive approach to promoting relevant Gaelic content in a way that is easily accessible to our communities.
Target Date	March 2029.

#### Increasing the learning of Gaelic

High-level aim	We will continue to encourage participation in Gaelic learning at all levels, from early years through to adult education with a view to increasing uptake.
Proposed Outcome	Gaelic learning opportunities are actively promoted to our communities and information made available to assist those who wish to participate.
Current Practice	Individual stakeholders are responsible for promoting discrete activities.
Actions Required	Enhance reach and awareness of learning opportunities through enhanced collaboration, signposting, and information sharing.  Undertake an audit of current Gaelic provision as an L3. L3 is a

	<p>second different language introduced from second level/P5 onwards.</p> <p>Following completion of the audit a development plan should be implemented to increase the number of schools providing Gaelic as an L3.</p> <p>Teachers who express an interest in Gaelic learning will receive appropriate training.</p> <p>Explore the opportunities for Gaelic early years and secondary provision.</p>
Target Date	March 2029.

High-level aim	Undertake the duty under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 to promote and support, as appropriate, the potential for Gaelic medium and Gaelic learner education to Renfrewshire Council residents.
Proposed Outcome	Families are fully informed of their choices and opportunities in respect of Gaelic medium and Gaelic learner education.
Current Practice	Gaelic Medium Education is communicated to parents and carers via the P1 registration process and Council website.
Actions Required	Engage with families and evaluate the accessibility and usefulness of GME communications, incorporating feedback where appropriate to enhance this process.
Target Date	March 2026.

High-level aim	We will continue to make all parents aware of their right to request Gaelic Medium Education for their child.
Proposed Outcome	All parents/carers are fully informed of their right to request Gaelic Medium Education, the options available to them and the process for doing so.
Current Practice	(Process for registering for provision outwith authority) Families can request that the Council review the need for Gaelic Medium Primary Education provision.
Actions Required	Engage with parents/carers to measure the extent of their awareness and identify actions to enhance this.
Target Date	March 2026.

High-level aim	Continue to work with partners to provide Gaelic Learners Education at primary and secondary level with a view to increasing uptake.
Proposed Outcome	Demand for Gaelic Learners Education is measured, and proportionate opportunities are identified, relative to available capacity and resources.
Current Practice	No Gaelic Learners Education currently offered.
Actions Required	Engage with schools and early learning establishments to assess demand and work with partners to identify all relevant opportunities.
Target Date	March 2026.

## Promoting a positive image of Gaelic

High-level aim	As a legacy of the Royal National Mòd 2023 in Paisley, promote further opportunities to learn and use Gaelic in the area.
Proposed Outcome	Increased awareness of Gaelic language and culture.
Current Practice	<p>The Gaelic Unit at West Primary is promoted through the council's annual communication plan.</p> <p>Gaelic programming is included in the council's events programme.</p> <p>Funding is provided through the council's cultural grants programme to support Fèis Phàislig.</p>
Actions Required	<p>Promote handy phrases in Gaelic through Renfrewshire's visitor website Paisley.is and on the council website.</p> <p>Continue to promote and support Fèis Phàislig activity and schools engagement programme.</p> <p>Provide a platform for Renfrewshire's trad musicians through the council's event programme.</p> <p>We will continue to support the Gaelic choir and work with Fèis Phàislig to promote Gaelic music opportunities to our young people.</p> <p>Continue to incorporate opportunities to learn and use Gaelic within the council's event programming.</p>
Target Date	Ongoing.

## Corporate service aims

The following Corporate Service Aims are determined by Bòrd na Gàidhlig and must form part of Renfrewshire's Gaelic Language Plan.

These aims also form a key role in monitoring and review, with the Council required to demonstrate incremental progress over time with a view to achieving the desired outcomes.

### Status

Desired Outcome	<b>Logo and brand</b> Aim to render the corporate logo and branding in both Gaelic and English at the first opportunity and as part of any renewal process.
Current Practice	Renfrewshire Council does not currently have a Gaelic logo and/or branding.
Actions Required	Develop a Gaelic logo and branding and at the point of any renewal we will create a fully bilingual logo showing equal respect to both Gaelic and English.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

Desired Outcome	<b>Signage</b> Prominent signage will include Gaelic and English as part of any renewal process.
Current Practice	Renfrewshire Council does not routinely consider the benefits of Gaelic signage.
Actions Required	As part of any renewal process, we will render prominent signage, particularly at Renfrewshire House, bilingual showing equal respect to Gaelic and English.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

## Communicating with the public

Desired Outcome	<b>Promotion</b> Positive message that communication from the public in Gaelic is always welcome.
Current Practice	Current practice meets above outcome.
Actions Required	Increase the visibility of the use of Gaelic language when communicating with the council.  Positive messaging will be included on our website to encourage communication from the public in Gaelic.  Create an annual promotion plan for Gaelic Medium Education (GME).
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

Desired Outcome	<b>Written Communication</b> 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	Current practice meets above outcome.
Actions Required	Our current policy is to accept and reply in Gaelic to communications received in Gaelic.  We will continue with the present policy but also increase promotion and awareness of measures to ensure this and other Gaelic corporate aims are better understood across all Services.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

Desired Outcome	<b>Reception and phone</b> Where Gaelic speaking staff can provide this service, they are supported to do so, and the service is promoted to the public.
Current Practice	Gaelic speaking staff are supported to provide this service to the public.
Actions Required	Staff will be aware that the Council will support relevant training/development opportunities to support Gaelic greetings.

Target Date	Annually.
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Desired Outcome	<b>Public meetings</b> Opportunities to hold public meetings bilingually or in Gaelic are regularly explored and promoted.
Current Practice	Equality and diversity principles adopted and representations relating to bilingual meetings appraised on a case-by-case basis.
Actions Required	Actively promote the option to hold public meetings bilingually or in Gaelic where they are likely to be particularly relevant to the Gaelic community.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

## Information

Desired Outcome	<b>News releases</b> High profile news releases and all news releases related to Gaelic are circulated in both Gaelic and English.
Current Practice	Previous content about Gaelic in schools has gone out in English.
Actions Required	Going forward, all content about Gaelic in schools will be in Gaelic and English.
Target Date	Ongoing.

Desired Outcome	<b>Social Media</b> Gaelic content distributed regularly through social media, guided by the level of actual and potential users.
Current Practice	Previous content about Gaelic in schools has gone out in English. All posts regarding the Royal National Mòd included Gaelic.
Actions Required	Going forward, all content about Gaelic in schools will be in Gaelic and English.  Information relating to Gaelic in schools will be posted bilingually with the aim to publishing at least 3 bilingual posts annually.
Target Date	On going and annual.

Desired Outcome	<b>Website</b> Gaelic content should be available on the public authority's website, with emphasis given to the pages with the highest potential reach.
Current Practice	Current webpage about Gaelic in schools is available in English.
Actions Required	Refresh the information on the Gaelic in schools page and make it available in both Gaelic and English.
Target Date	Ongoing.

Desired Outcome	<b>Corporate Publications</b> Produced in Gaelic and English, with priority given to those with the highest potential reach.
Current Practice	Documents are made available in alternative languages when requested.
Actions Required	We will identify, with policy colleagues, corporate publications, such as the Council Plan that would be suitable for Gaelic language editions, either in full or summary form.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

Desired Outcome	<b>Exhibitions</b> 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	Current practice meets above outcome.
Actions Required	We will produce guidelines for the use of Gaelic in exhibitions where Gaelic is a prominent subject matter.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.



## Staff

Desired Outcome	<b>Internal audit</b> Conduct an internal audit of Gaelic skills and training needs through the life of each plan.
Current Practice	Organisational development managed corporately. Staff training needs coordinated at a team/service level, which includes Gaelic skills training where relevant to role.
Actions Required	Within the first 2 years of the plan undertake an internal audit information at organisational and team/staff level where relevant to role. Utilise other available insight where it relates to Renfrewshire's staff.
Target Date	March 2026.

Desired Outcome	<b>Induction</b> Knowledge of the public authority's Gaelic Language Plan included in new staff inductions.
Current Practice	Staff induction materials made available through digital learning platforms include information on the Gaelic Language Plan.
Actions Required	Ensure materials point to the Gaelic Language Plan.
Target Date	Continue with current practice.

Desired Outcome	<b>Language training</b> Gaelic language skills training and development offered to staff, particularly in relation to implementing the public authority's Gaelic Language Plan.
Current Practice	No training and development currently offered to staff.
Actions Required	Training and development opportunities will be offered to staff in accordance with the outcome of skills audit. Ad hoc requests will be supported where this is relevant to role.
Target Date	December 2026.

Desired Outcome	<b>Awareness training</b> Gaelic awareness training offered to staff, with priority given to directors, board members, councillors and staff dealing directly with the public.
Current Practice	No current offer of awareness training.
Actions Required	Consider the use of existing training modules via iLearn in collaboration with Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
Target Date	December 2026.

Desired Outcome	<b>Recruitment</b> Recognising and respecting Gaelic skills within the recruitment process throughout the public authority.
Current Practice	Currently supported on a case-by-case basis.
Actions Required	This will form part of the review of the recruitment policy which will be completed by end of 2025.
Target Date	By the end of 2025.

Desired Outcome	<b>Recruitment</b> Gaelic named as an essential and / or desirable skill in job descriptions to deliver the Gaelic Language Plan and in accordance with the Bòrd na Gàidhlig recruitment advice.
Current Practice	Responsibility to deliver Gaelic Language Plan sits with staff across the Council.
Actions Required	Annually review establishment of Gaelic officer post and consider any potential funding opportunities with other local authorities.
Target Date	Annually.

Desired Outcome	<b>Recruitment</b> Bilingual or Gaelic only job adverts for all posts where Gaelic is an essential skill.
Current Practice	Current practice meets above outcome. Our recruitment teams and colleagues across the Council have access to translations services.
Actions Required	This will be considered as part of the review of the recruitment policy mentioned above.
Target Date	Ongoing and review to be concluded by the end of 2025.

## Gaelic Language corpus

Desired Outcome	<b>Gaelic Orthographic Conventions</b> The most recent Gaelic Orthographic Conventions will be followed in relation to all written materials produced by the public authority.
Current Practice	Gaelic materials produced by Renfrewshire Council utilise the most recent Gaelic Orthographic Conventions.
Actions Required	Publish the most recent version of the Gaelic Orthographic Conventions - <a href="https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45356.html">https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45356.html</a> - and include guidance on the Gaelic for Renfrewshire Council - Comhairle Shiorrachd Rinn Friù.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

Desired Outcome	<b>Placenames</b> Gaelic place name advice from Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba is sought and used.
Current Practice	Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba consulted as appropriate.
Actions Required	Continue to consult Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba to ensure we maintain our confidence in the use of the Gaelic forms of placenames.
Target Date	Ongoing, with review in advance of the statutory monitoring report.

## 4. PUBLICATION

### Publishing and publicising the plan

This section outlines the steps Renfrewshire Council will take to publish and publicise the Plan to internal and external stakeholders. This will increase awareness of the Plan and the commitments found within it.

#### Internal

The Plan will be published on Renfrewshire Council's website. It will complement a collection of other key strategic documents, reinforcing the Plan's profile and importance. Internal communication channels will be used to highlight the availability of the Plan and raise the profile of key priorities and planned activity.

#### External

Renfrewshire Council's Gaelic Language Plan will be published in Gaelic and in English on our website. In addition, we will:

- publicise the plan through a variety of social media platforms
- distribute copies to partner organisations, explaining their role in the delivery of the plan
- distribute copies of the plan to key stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors
- distribute copies of the plan to relevant Gaelic organisations and other interested bodies
- make hard copies available on request

## 5. RESOURCING THE PLAN

The costs associated with resourcing this plan will be mainstreamed within existing Council budgets. Funding opportunities will be explored where they align to the key activity outlined in the Plan. Stakeholders will be invited to add value through collaborative activity.

## 6. MONITORING THE PLAN

The Council has established Gaelic Language Plan Oversight Group to support the delivery, monitoring and evaluation of this Plan.

The group will meet twice yearly to review progress against actions and produce an annual progress report to Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The first report will be issued 12 months after the Plan's approval.

The group will make annual progress reports available online to ensure our communities can review our progress.

## **7. THE GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN IN THE PUBLIC AUTHORITY**

### **Overall responsibility for the plan**

Head of Policy and Partnerships.

### **Day-to-day responsibility for the plan**

Strategy, Policy and Insight Manager.

### **Arm's length organisations and third parties**

Renfrewshire Council will share the Plan with OneRen and utilise expertise in relation to cultural and leisure-based activity, and where this may complement the Plan's commitments. The Council will be mindful of the potential benefits that may be secured via its commissioning processes and explore these where relevant.



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## **Chief Executive's Service**

Renfrewshire Council  
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This plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and was approved by Bòrd na Gàidhlig on 28 March 2024.

[www.renfrewshire.gov.uk](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk)



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