

## Letters

Dear Editor

Don't ignore Gaelic

I have just discovered your excellent magazine "Interpret Scotland | A' Foillseachadh na h-Alba" - more by chance than anything else - and I found Issue 5 most interesting and stimulating, particularly as I am a Gaelic speaker who feels so often that the bodies with responsibility for interpretation in Scotland simply ignore our language.

John Charity's letter was as good a summary of the issues with regard to Gaelic interpretation as I have seen - this would be a better country if he were in charge of interpretation! Like him, I have taken my children to umpteen visitor facilities and, as Gaelic is our natural language, we are forever having to translate from English to discuss exhibits, signs etc, even when they represent the cultural heritage of our own country. It is pretty galling.

Not only that, but I know from my own experience in many foreign countries that it is delightful to see the local language exhibited even if I do not understand it myself - it often leads to fascinating conversations about the country's national or regional heritage and certainly enriches my experience as a visitor. This is surely the same for visitors to our own country. Gaelic says to them - "welcome to our unique and beautiful country of which we are proud."

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**Dear Editor**  
**Gaelic policy**

Congratulations to Caroline Tempest for an excellent article in the last edition. Given the current debate on The National Trust for Scotland Gaelic Policy (or lack of), and our decision to proceed with our own Gaelic policy for Culloden, it is also very well timed.

The recent delivery of signs at Culloden and the token element of Gaelic highlights the very points made by John Charity in his letter. I could not have put it better. We have struggled for years to overcome apathy and intolerance towards Gaelic, and need to follow the lead set by SNH.

Angus Jack, Regional Buildings Surveyor  
National Trust for Scotland  
Highlands and Islands

**Dear Editor**  
**Language policy**

The Scottish Tourist Guides Association is fully committed to interpretation for visitors in their own language. Amongst our members we can offer tours in 18 languages from Chinese Madarin to Swedish. All our language guides are fluent in the languages they offer and are subject to strict assessment before they are allowed to guide in the languages.

We also have guides fluent in Gaelic and run Gaelic for Guides courses as part of Continuous Professional Development so that our members can pronounce names and places correctly and give visitors a taste of Gaelic. We believe that it is vital for the industry to offer good language interpretation and we would like to see much better provision in visitor attractions as well as accommodation and catering outlets. Many of our guides also offer translation services which could be used much more by the industry.

Rosalind Newlands  
STGA Training Manager  
Edinburgh

**"I have a quotation for everything- it saves original thinking."**  
**Dorothy L. Sayers, 1893-1957, writer**