

AR STÒRAS GÀIDHLIG

Sgrùdadh-cùise: Sabhal Mòr Ostaig



Tha an rannsachadh o chionn ghoirid air luach na Gàidhlig mar so-mhaoin eaconamach is shòisealta, a' sealltainn dhuinn eisimpleirean air ciamar a bhios gnìomhachasan, iomairtean sòisealta, agus coimhearsnachdan a' cleachdadh Gàidhlig, agus de cho cudromach sa tha i ann an conaltradh, amasan sòisealta agus coimearsalta. Tha an sgrùdadh-cùise seo a' taisbeanadh ciamar a tha Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, An t-Eilean Sgitheanach a' cleachdadh Gaelic mar so-mhaoin.

Tha leasachadh Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) teagaisgeach a thaobh mar is urrainn do bhuidheann a bha air fhaicinn an toiseach mar ionad cultarail stèidhe ann an seann togalach – ann an sabhal mòr Ostaig – agus a bha ag amas air cùrsaichean goirid agus leabharlann a thabhann, air siubhal cho fada agus air fàs gu bhith an treas fhataiche as motha de dhaoine san Eilean Sgitheanach. Chaidh a stèidheachadh ann an 1973, agus chaidh na ciad cùrsaichean làn-ùine – HND ann an eòlas gnothachais is malairt – a thòiseachadh ann an 1983.

An-diugh, tha e air faicinn mar Ionad Nàiseanta airson cànan is cultar na Gàidhlig ann an Alba agus na phàirt de dh'Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd is nan Eilean, le Foghlam, Teagasg is Ionnsachadh aig bunait a' ghnòthachais, cho math ri rannsachadh, agus cultar, ealain agus leasachadh eaconamach. Tha timcheall air 125 luchd-obrach aig SMO air an làraich, a' mhòr-chuid dhiubh boireann, le teachd-a-steach air a thuairmse aig còrr is £3millean gach bliadhna anns an Eilean Sgitheanach fhèin. Tha e cuideachd aig teis-meadhain nam molaidhean gus baile a chruthachadh aig Cill Beag, faisg air a' cholaiste, le 75 dachaighean ùra gan togail, cho math ri ionad co-labhairt, goireasan spòrs agus gnòthaichean eile air an làraich. Tha an-dràsta 6 buidhnean eile ag obair air an làraich, companaidhean meadhanan Cànan, Sealladh is MG Alba nam measg.

Ged nach gabhadh leasachadh SMO agus a' bhuaidh a bh' aige air ceann a deas an Eilean Sgitheanaich a dhèanamh a-rithist ann an àite sam bith eile chun na h-aon ìre, tha feartan de chùisean aig SMO a tha ga dhèanamh teagaisgeach a thaobh a' cheist mu Ghàidhlig mar so-mhaoin eaconamach is sòisealta.

Tha e stèidhte ann an sgìre den Eilean Sgitheanach far an deach a' choimhearsnachd thraidiseanta Gàidhlig a fàgail air an iomall (mar a thachair sa h-uile sgìre) ach, air sgàth leasachadh na colaiste, a-nis tha bunait làidir de Ghàidhlig anns a' choimhearsnachd as fharsainge. 'S e a' cholaiste an treas fastaiche as motha air an Eilean, às dèidh a' Chomhairle agus an NHS, agus mar sin tha buaidh dhìreach chudromach air a bhith aige air obraichean. Co-cheangailte ri leasachadh SMO, tha leasachaidhean eile anns an sgìre ionadail – tha an àireamh-sluaigh ann an Slèite air dùblachadh bho 1971, bho 400 gu faisg air 900, agus an àireamh san sgoil an treas

uibhir – an sgoil ionadail le Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig agus ionad Bheurla na cois. Tha 70 pàiste air na leabhraichean aig ionad cùram-cloinne SMO, Fàs Mòr, a' saoradh phàrantan airson a dhol a chosnadh, agus a' dèanamh cinnteach à àrainneachd Gàidhlig dhan chloinn.

Cho math ris an obair le Foghlam Adhartach, tha a' cholaiste air a faicinn mar so-mhaoin coimhearsnachd, leis a' chomann ealain ionadail a' cur air dòigh 45 tachartasan sa bhliadhna, le 90% dhiubh stèidhte sa cholaiste. Tha an fhèis ionadail, Fèis an Eilein, a' tachairt aig an aon àm ri cùrsaichean goirid na Colaiste, leis a' bhuih gu bheil àiteachan-fuirich luma làn airson an ùine seo. Taobh a-muigh an t-sèasain, tha muinntir an àite an seo.

Tha mòran bhuaidhean sòisealta aig obair na colaiste – tha e a' tàladh luchd-ealain dhan sgìre, tha prògram Luchd-ealain air Mhuinntireas ann, agus tha meudachadh air a bhith ann an ceanglan fad-ùine le ealain na h-Alba, leithid aon den luchd-obrach a' nochdadh air prògram Gàidhlig mu leabhraichean air Radio nan Gàidheal. San fharsaingeachd, tha daoine a-nis a' tighinn dhan sgìre, ag aithneachadh gur e goireas sònraichte a th' ann an SMO, le Gàidhlig aig a' chridhe.

Tha e air meudachadh abharachadh a thaobh cothroman cosnaidh sa Ghàidhlig – air goireasan an làraich, tha daoine ag obair aig am biodh duilgheadas obair fhaighinn san àbhaist. Tha am pàigheadh nas fheàrr na gheibheadh tu ann an taigh-òsta ionadail, agus tha e a' tabhann cothrom do dhaoine a rugadh 's a thogadh san Eilean Sgitheanach tilleadh dhachaigh, agus an dòigh-beatha is an àrainneachd na tharraing dhaibh. Tha an dòchas gun tèid 75 taighean ùra an togail, le 25% dhiubh aig pris ruigsinneach, thairis air an ath 20 bliadhna taobh a-staigh pròiseact

Chill Beag, a' ciallachadh gum bi an aon bhuaidh aige 's a bh' aig fàs fearainn Eilean Iarmain ann an sgìre eile de Shlèite. Tha e mar amas àrainneachd tharraingeach ionadail a chruthachadh a bhios a' tabhann dìogh-beatha sheasmhach, a bhios na thàladh do theaghlach, agus a chumas daoine le mòran sgìlean taobh a-staigh an Eilean Sgitheanaich.

Tha dùil ann, san àm ri teachd, gun tèid leudachadh air an obair leis na meadhanan a th' air a làimhseachadh le buidhnean leithid 'Young Films' is Sealladh anns an stiùdiathan Fàs ann an Ionad Meadhanan SMO, còmhla ri leasachaidhean timcheall air an iomairt "Connect G", a tha, am measg rudan eile, ag amas air turasachd Gàidhlig a bhrosnachadh, àrd-dhùilean ann an roinn na meadhanan sa Ghàidhlig àrdachadh, agus an dòigh-obrach as fheàrr a shealltainn, a' cleachdadh na Gàidhlig gus iomairtean coimhearsnachd a neartachadh.

Tha lèirsinn Sabhal Mòr Ostaig gu domhainn stèidhte sa Ghàidhlig – tha gach neach-obrach sgoilearach a' bruidhinn na Ghàidhlig cho math ri 85% den luchd-obrach taice (leis a' chòrr ag ionnsachadh na Ghàidhlig). Tha cùrsaichean air an libhrigeadh tro mheadhan na Ghàidhlig, agus tha fòcas ann a bhith a' ceangal na h-obrach a thaobh na meadhanan, a tha a' fàs nas cudromaiche, ris an rannsachadh a tha a' leantainn is a' fàs nas doimhne, cho math ri teagasg air dualchas is cultar na Ghàidhlig, gus ginealach ùr de cheumnaich aig a bheil Gàidhlig a chur air adhart, aig a bheil fiosrachadh mun cuid dualchais agus aig a bheil na comasan seo a chur an cèill le cànan is modhan-obrach an latha an-diugh is a-màireach.

Air fhoillseachadh le Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean.

Airson an aithisg uile agus foillseachaidhean eile, thigear gu www.hie.co.uk/gaelic

Airson tuilleadh fiosrachaidh air Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, thigear gu www.smo.uhi.ac.uk

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Today it is the National Centre for Gaelic language and culture in Scotland and part of the University of the Highlands and Islands with its core business Education, Teaching and Learning plus research, together with culture, arts and economic development. SMO has approximately 125 staff on campus, the majority of whom are female, with an estimated income impact of over £3million per annum on Skye itself. It is also currently at the heart of proposals to create a village at Kilbeg adjacent to the College, with the construction of 75 new houses, in addition to a conference centre, sports facilities and other elements of development. SMO currently has 6 other organisations active on campus, including the media companies Canan, Sealladh and MG Alba.

Although the development of SMO and its impact particularly on the South of Skye is not something that can be replicated elsewhere in detail, there are aspects that make the SMO experience an instructive one in respect of the issue of Gaelic acting as an economic and social asset.

– the population of Sleat having doubled since 1971, from 450 to almost 900, with the school population having trebled – the local school is a Gaelic Medium School with an English unit attached. SMO's childcare facility Fas Mòr has 70 children on its books now, freeing up parents for employment, and ensuring a Gaelic language environment for the children.

As well as its Higher Education function, the college is seen as a community asset, with the local arts association running 45 events during the year, 90% of which are staged in the college. The local Fèis an Eilein takes place at the same time as the College short courses, resulting in accommodation being totally full for this period. Off-season, it is a hub for locals.

The work of the college has many social impacts – it attracts artists to the area, there is an Artists in Residence programme, and there has been a growth in longer term links to Scotland's arts, such as a member of staff hosting the Radio nan Gàidheal Gaelic books programme. In general, people are now coming to the area, recognizing that SMO is a special facility, with Gaelic at its heart.

It has increased Gaelic related job opportunities – on the facilities side, people are employed there who would otherwise struggle. It pays better than local hotels, and it provides an opportunity to return for people previously born and brought up in Skye, who continue to be attracted to the lifestyle and the environment. The prospect of building 75 houses, 25% of which will be affordable

houses, over the next 20 years within the Kilbeg project will allow it to make the type of impact previously created by the growth of Eilean Iarmain estate elsewhere in Sleat. The aim is to create a highly attractive local environment that will offer sustainable living standards, attract families to, and retain highly skilled people within Skye.

Future prospects include an extension of the media work undertaken by organisations such as Young Films and Sealladh in the Fas studios in the SMO Media Centre, together with developments around the 'Connect G' initiative, which amongst other things aims to promote Gaelic tourism, raise ambition in the Gaelic media sector, and show best practice in using Gaelic to enhance community enterprise.

Sabhail Mòr Ostaig's vision is one which is profoundly Gaelic – all academic staff speak Gaelic as do 85% of the support staff (with the remainder currently learning the language). Courses are all delivered through Gaelic, and there is a focus on linking their increasingly important media work to their continuing and deepening research and teaching of Gaelic heritage and culture, to provide a new generation of Gaelic speaking graduates, informed of their heritage and able to communicate this in the language and methods of today and tomorrow.

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For more information on Sabhal Mòr Ostaig visit www.smo.uhi.ac.uk

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The recent research into the economic and social value of Gaelic as an asset, highlights some key examples of how businesses, social enterprises and communities are using Gaelic, and its significance, in fulfilling their communication, commercial and social objectives. This case study demonstrates how Sabhal Mòr Ostaig use Gaelic as an asset.

The development of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (SMO) is instructive in terms of how an organisation is originally seen as a cultural centre based on derelict property – the big barn of Ostaig - and aimed at enabling short courses and a library, has taken wings and grown into Skye's third largest employer. Originating in 1973, the first full time courses – an HND in Business studies and commerce took place in 1983.



Case study: Sabhal Mòr Ostaig

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