



Annual Report 1 April 2012

1. Introduction

It has been another very busy year for the Scots Language Centre. The organisation made a significant contribution to the development of the census information campaign in 2011 and this continued for some weeks into the new reporting year. We engaged in a lengthy period of auditing and restructuring the web site in 2011 and have continued with that project into 2012. We added many new features and content to the web site during the year and increased the range of items available on our associated online platforms. We provided an information gathering and distribution service, carried out online outreach, recorded a number of artists, writers and speakers, contributed to various publications, attended conferences and participated in CPD events for teachers.

More detailed information about these activities is outlined below.

2. Census 2011

Although the official census return date was 27 March the Centre continued to provide information to respondents for some weeks after that date had passed. Visits to our micro-site began to tail off towards the end of April. The site remains live and has been a useful tool for researchers and students.

3. Audit and restructuring SLC web site.

We were aware when we developed the census web site that many of its features could be incorporated into the Centre's existing site and during the year we have transferred many of these features to www.scotslanguage.com. This process began with the movement of material to the 'What is Scots?' section of our existing site enabling us to populate it with more accessible and attractive material than had previously been possible. We have also restructured the dialects section of the web site incorporating all of the recordings which were made for www.ayecan.com. We have restructured the education section of the site and are in the process of developing and restructuring the culture section. Our objectives have been to improve the quality of visitor experience, encourage repeat visits, improve accessibility and ensure that information is current and fresh. This ongoing restructuring project will be complete in the summer of 2012.

Through this project the Centre continues to take the lead in defining Scots and providing information about it. We have sought to enhance understanding of Scots by providing information about local forms of the language and linking these to cultural and historical resources. Restructuring the Dialect section of the website has also offered an opportunity to assess and standardise the site drawing content from a wide range of sources and contexts to build a rich culturally relevant representation of Scots language and culture across the country.

The successful restructuring of the Dialect sections has given the centre a solid framework which we are applying across the wider site audit allowing us to revise and highlight the wide breadth of quality audio, video and written material available within it.

The Centre has sought successfully to maintain its leading place in search engine rankings by regularly updating content and providing articles and features on a range of popular online platforms.

4. New features and material on the site

During this reporting period we added a range of new features to the web site. These were audio and video focussed in the main and included a year long series of podcasts on the history of Scotland which formed a free event at 'Previously - Scotland's Festival of History'; a feature on Scots language artists called 'Fae aw the Airts' intended to showcase Scots language creative activity; an online virtual poetry residency featuring Scots language poet, Rab Wilson, and a new audio blog feature which we hope to expand in the coming year. Additional material was added to the education section and we produced a set of teacher's notes to accompany our history series. We commissioned a number of articles on the subject of Scots place names as part of an ongoing discussion and debate feature on this subject. Contributors represented a wide range of academic and scholarly opinion and included Dr Alison Grant, James Robertson, Ian James Parsley and others well known in this field. This feature will continue to be developed over the coming year and will be the subject of a presentation at the next Scottish Place Name Society Conference in Oban in May 2012. Our annual programme of features was enhanced this year with many new text-based as well as audio and video recordings. Some highlights include interviews with the producer of Glesga Physics, a revision guide for students of Higher Physics, and Alasdair Allan MSP, the Minister for Scots.

Many new items were added to the site to celebrate Easter and Christmas and we developed new features on dialect, weddings and cultural events with a focus on delivering engaging content across multiple media channels capitalising on our audiences on Flickr, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter to reach a broader audience.

The number of videos produced by the Centre has increased threefold over the last year and innovative techniques for production including remote recording of contributors and illustrated video podcasts have allowed us to expand the range and volume of content generated.

5. Information gathering and distribution

The Centre continues to be the main collection and distribution point for information about Scots language and culture. We pro-actively collect information and distribute it through a range of networks including direct e-mail, social networking sites and at conferences and other events. The Centre is the largest online resource for information about Scots and continues to collect and develop the resources available from its various sites and platforms. We had a number of discussions through the year with the British Library and the National Library of Scotland about mechanisms for archiving the web site and material contained in it, particularly our archive of film and audio material. This is a unique service and will continue to develop in coming years.

6. News service, cultural features and image bank

The Centre provides an online regularly updated news service making it the principal source of information about events and activities in the Scots language world. The Centre's news service is one of the most popular sections of our web site . The Centre has sought through the year to increase the range of cultural material on its site and in January 2012 began a project aimed at improving the range and quality of the information it provides on Scots music and song. The Centre has developed a unique collection of images on the image sharing web site, flickr. This large collection records the many forms of Scots which can be encountered in the linguistic landscape and is of interest to speakers, researchers and casual browsers.

The Centre continues to webcast readings from the New Testament in Scots throughout the year with additional features at Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas. This unique service makes these high quality recordings available for free to visitors to the Centre's web site as well as the Church of Scotland and others.

7. Publications, Conferences and Lectures

The Centre developed a micro web site to support Scotspeak, a guide to Scots pronunciation aimed principally at actors, which was published in the summer of 2011 by Luath Press.

Michael Hance wrote articles for Scottish Review and Shetland Life.

Michael Hance gave presentations at the ASLS conference on Language at Edinburgh University in September 2011 and at a conference comparing Scotland and Belarus held at the University of Edinburgh in March 2012.

Michael Hance gave two lectures on Scots at the Royal Conservatoire in Glasgow in February 2011.

Katrina MacLeod attended and gave presentations to groups of teachers at CPD events in Glasgow, Stirling, Edinburgh and Ayr. This was an opportunity to inform practitioners about the Centre's website and other resources, particularly free downloadable materials and sound files.

Dr Dauvit Horsbroch has written and edited our year-long podcast, 'Scotland's Ain Kingly Hooses'. The series is available in 12 PDF texts designed for teachers and schools. Dauvit has recently begun work on editing, revising and converting much of the SLC's information into PDF text files. These will be available as free downloads on the Centre's web site. He has also translated into Scots a number of public documents related to language matters which are also available as PDF text downloads.

The Centre continues to administer the affairs of the W L Lorimer Memorial Trust and worked throughout the reporting period with it and Canongate on a project aimed at publishing a new edition of the New Testament in Scots. This is likely to come to fruition in May. Throughout the year the Centre provided the Trust with premises and accountancy and administrative services.

8. Online outreach

During the past three years the Centre has focussed particularly on the development of online audiences. These activities have mainly exploited existing, well used and trusted online platforms including, facebook, twitter, youtube and flickr. Our audiences have grown considerably during 2011-2012 with significant cross referral between these platforms and our own web site.

Our activities on various online platforms have included:

Youtube

22 videos uploaded to SLC channel - ranging from episodes of the podcast series 'Scotland's Ain Kingly Hooses' to Rab Wilson poetry readings, a Christmas poem reading and an interview with Colin Wilson. The channel has had over 4000 views and attracted 42 'likes' and 19 comments. Playlists of other channel's videos continue to be developed and the featured video feeding through to the SLC home page is changed every week. 'The Scots Language' video on the Katrina MacLeod channel has this year had over 21800 views with 72 'likes' and 176 comments.

Twitter

We have accumulated 1108 followers and have tweeted 503 times.

Facebook

Our facebook group has 821 members. During the year there have been many postings to the group by members and a number of lengthy discussion threads. The Centre is the main source of information on Scots on facebook, youtube and twitter.

The Centre has reached audiences of tens of thousands on facebook, twitter and youtube.

9. Enquiries service

Throughout the year the Centre receives enquiries from a range of online and offline sources. Where possible the Centre responds directly to enquirers or refers them on to other agencies, for example, Scottish Language Dictionaries or the Scottish Poetry Library. Enquiries may be quite complex, particularly those received from students and academics and can be time-consuming and resource intensive to answer.

The Language and Information Officer, Dr Dauvit Horsboch, is primarily responsible for managing this unique service. Enquiries may be categorised at a number of levels, ranging from general queries about the identity of the language, requests for translations into Scots, or help in locating particular sources. A significant number of enquiries come from people wishing to learn Scots and in this regard the Centre appears to have become the first port of call. Throughout the year we have received a steady stream of academic-related queries, both from within and outwith the UK. These include both students and academics, either looking for sources of information, linguistic advice, comparative studies, or direct participation by the SLC in projects. Through this the SLC has contributed to research projects at a number of academic centres. There has been during the year 2011-2012 a marked rise in enquiries from academics and students in other EU countries wishing to come to Scotland and visit the SLC or looking for support and advice from the SLC for fieldwork in Scotland.

10. Developing links with local authorities and others

The Centre has continued to build its relationship with Perth and Kinross Council and began discussions at the start of 2012 on its possible relocation to new premises in Perth. This excellent relationship is enhanced by the presence on our board of one elected member of Perth and Kinross Council.

The Centre and the National Library for Scotland continue to work together on a range of issues connected to Scots.

We continue to work closely with the Scottish Government in providing advice and information on Scots policy issues and have begun discussions with the

government on the development of a project aimed at recognising achievement in Scots.

We work closely with Scottish Language Dictionaries on a range of matters relating to Scots. In the past year we have promoted information about Scots words, begun discussions with the National Burns Birthplace Museum on collaborative working and worked with Luath Press on the publication of Scotspeak.

The Centre has an excellent working relationship with Luath Press and hosted an event at last year's Edinburgh International Book Festival aimed at highlighting the work of a number of Scots language poets and singers.

SLC continues to provide secretariat services to the Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Scots.

SLC was an active member of the Literature Forum for Scotland during this reporting period and Michael Hance represented the Forum in talks with members of various political parties ahead of last year's Scottish Parliament elections.

11. Working with the Scottish Government

The Centre maintains close relations with the Scottish Government and forms a leading part in the state's Scots language infrastructure. The Centre provided assistance and advice to the Scottish government on a range of matters connected to Scots.

The Centre attended meetings with the Minister for Scots, broadcast a short interview with him on its web site and met on a number of occasions with civil servants at the Scottish government to discuss a range of issues connected to the language.

Staff at the Centre provided content for the Minister for Languages Christmas activity on twitter.

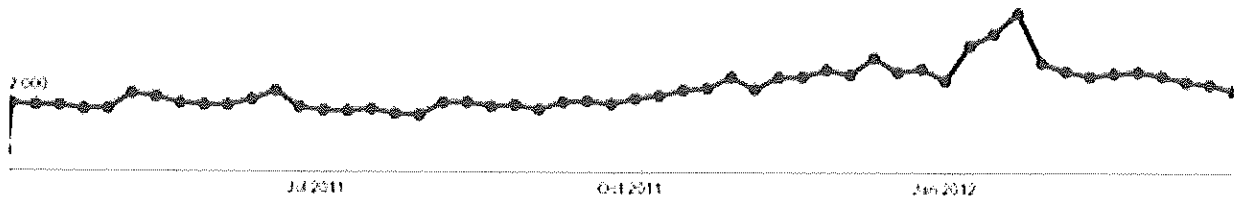
Michael Hance
Director
30 April 2012

Appendix 1

Overall site traffic 1/4/2011 - 31/3/2012

135,702 visitors of which;

- 25% visit the site on a regular basis
- 57% of visitors originate from the UK
- Average duration of a visit is 2:03 minutes



Comparison of overall audience exposure during 1/4/2010 - 31/3/2011 and 1/4/2011 - 31/3/2012

	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	increase %
Core site	106,244	135,702	22%
Facebook	72,000	138,000	48%
Twitter	50,200	201,118	75%
Youtube	1096	2,988	63%
Flickr	12,143	24,140	50%
	241,683	501,948	52%

Report from Scots Language Centre

1 April 2013 - 31 March 2014

The Scots Language Centre has had another busy year. Details of our activities and projects are outlined below

Governance

The Centre's Council met on four occasions during the year. The Council met twice in Edinburgh and twice in Perth. The Centre held an annual general meeting in Perth in August.

Scots Toun Award

The Centre was given responsibility for developing the proposal to establish a Scots Toun Award. The proposal was contained in the report of the Ministerial Working Group on Scots. The Scottish Government gave SLC a grant of £15000 to administer the project and make the awards.

A web site was established to provide information about the award, and application forms and award information was developed. The award was promoted online. The administrative and development process was managed from within SLC. The award will be made in the summer of 2014.

Census

The Scots Language Centre welcomed the data on Scots language use which was released in the autumn of 2013. The Centre provided analysis of the figures and commissioned articles and other material from a range of academic and other sources which was made available to the public online.

The Centre engaged in discussions with the NRS and SG about the manner in which the data was interpreted.

Visit to Shetland

Staff from the Centre undertook a three day visit to Shetland and attended a range of events there. These included meetings with Bruce Eunson, the then Shetland Dialect Officer, members of Shetland ForWirds and staff at Voe Primary School. Staff also attended a dialect concert in Lerwick.

Scots Language Co-ordinators

The Centre assisted with distributing information online about the Scots Language Co-ordinator posts. This was done on the Centre's web sites and our platforms on social media sites including facebook and twitter. Michael Hance has held a series of telephone meetings with Bruce Eunson who was appointed to the post of Scots Language Co-ordinator in February 2014.

Previously

SLC Director, Michael Hance, participated in an event at the Previously Festival in Edinburgh in November 2013.

Visit to Keith

Staff visited Keith to discuss community plans to develop Scots language activities in the town.

Burns Museum

In the summer of 2013 SLC began discussions with staff at the Burns Birthplace Museum on the subject of developing provision for Scots language activities and projects based at the museum in Alloway.

Oor Wullie project

SLC has been part of an ongoing project developed by D C Thomson, the National Library of Scotland, the Burns Birthplace Museum and Scottish Language Dictionaries to produce Scots language learning materials based on the Sunday Post strip cartoons.

Scots Language Radio

SLC received a grant of £16000 from Creative Scotland to develop a regular Scots language based radio style podcast. This project began in September 2013. SLC is working in association with former BBC broadcaster, Frieda Morrison, and traditional arts specialist, Steve Byrne, in developing the podcast project. Three editions of SLR had been produced by the end of March 2014.

Enhancing visitor experience on the SLC web site

Overall there has been an across the board gain in the performance of the site compared to the previous years.

The number of visitors to the site has increased and engagement levels were raised across all measurement indicators with a higher number of page views per user and longer visit durations compared to last year.

The site traffic followed the same pattern as previous years with a large spike at the start of the year, a quieter winter spell with a pick up of traffic in mid spring.

Compared to last year's figures the total number of visitors was up by 12% with page views up by 15%, the average number of pages viewed by visitors

was 3.42, an improvement 5% on last year and most significantly the duration of user visits was up by almost 18% on last year's figures.

There are two main drivers in the traffic to www.scotslanguage.com These are search engine referrals coming from users searching for Scots language related terms and site referrals where users follow links from other websites.

2014 has seen a period of expansion and new services for ScotsLanguage.com with the successful launch of a monthly Scots Language radio show, revisions to the structure and content of the site to better serve core audiences and a series of successful editorial editions which have grown audiences on the core site and social platforms.

The most visited part of the SLC web site is the section called, 'What is Scots?'. An overhaul of this section was completed in the late winter of 2013-14 and is aimed at enhancing visitor experience by improving navigability, increasing the number of audio recordings and making the overall layout more user friendly.

The poetry section – which is the third most visited feature on the SLC web site – was also reconfigured this year to improve visitor experience. Our newly appointed poetry editor, Sally Evans, has sought to enhance visitor experience by providing interpretative material to accompany her monthly poetry choices. Sally has also developed the first in a series of features aimed at providing visitors to the site with a range of poems suitable to use as readings at weddings, funerals and naming events. The feature on wedding poetry is now the second most visited part of the site.

A remodelling of the site took place in spring 2013 aimed at improving navigability on the site for visitors accessing it via mobile devices.

Administering the W L Lorimer Memorial Trust

SLC continues to administer the Lorimer Trust and provides weekly readings from the New Testament in Scots on its web site and on a specially established facebook page. These are enhanced at Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter with a series of readings appropriate for these Christian festivals. The Centre promotes the book versions of the New Testament in Scots online.

Online Outreach

Social media activity

Over the first two years' of the centre's activity on social media networks, we saw a slow but steady increase in the number of participants with a core engaged group and wider casual audience. As the size of our subscriber base has reached a critical mass during the last 12 months the return on activity while always sustainable has greatly improved.

Twitter

The Twitter account @scotslanguage has 2167 followers and demonstrates a high level of engagement with posts frequently quoted and re-tweeted especially around the popular 'Word of the week' feature.

Facebook

The Centre's main activity on Facebook is the Scots Language Centre group which now has over 2700 users with around 5-6 new members joining on a daily basis. The group has developed a self-sustaining core group of active participants which with support and guidance from SLC staff is offering an entertaining, engaging community in which Scots language use is discussed and debated.

In addition to the core Facebook Group we have also launched a dedicated Scots Language Radio page which is proving a key channel for engaging listeners with producers of the show.

The Centre also administers a facebook group dedicated to the New Testament in Scots.

YouTube

The Scots Language Youtube channel in addition to providing the video content served on the main www.scotslanguage.com site also provides exposure for the centre and Scots Language in the wider context of YouTube communities.

The volume of content published by the SLC ranging from interviews and poetry to song and drama includes over 100 videos showcasing original content in Scots.

Over the period covered in this report the centre achieved 5,220 views totaling over 140 hours of viewing demonstrating a high level of engagement in the material (which is mostly short form and viewed in its entirety)

Flickr

The Centre's growing flickr account presently contains almost 1000 images of Scots in the 'linguistic landscape'. This collection represents a unique record of Scots in everyday use in all Scotland's Scots speaking areas and is a valuable resource for the public, schools and linguists.

The SLC continues to believe that developing our presence on these online platforms is the most effective way to engage with new audiences.

Web site features

SLC aims to provide a range of content to its users. In the last year the following features have appeared on our web site:

Weddings – traditions, poems and language
Laureen Johnston – Shetland poet and campaigner
Cundeez – Dundee punk band who use Scots
Tintin – translation by Susan Rennie
Asterix – translation by Matthew Fitt
Advent Readings
James Spence Xmas stories – recordings of stories from the Borders
Mary Johnston – Midlothian based poet
Scots Toun Award
Burns Nicht
Ring of Faith – film about boxing set in west central Scotland
Easter readings
Muckle Storm – film from the North East about famous storm in 1953
Analysis of Census results
Scots Language Radio
Census Results
1.5 million speakers
Scots mouth music
Caithness music
Songs of Soldiers and War – for Remembrance Sunday
Scotland's Glory 1513 – the work of Gavin Douglas
Bowling
Minnie podcast
Halloween
St Andrew's Day
Blyth Yule
Hogmanay
Weather Blether
Tale o Peter Kinnen – Scots translation of Beatix Potter story
Numbers and Time

SLC has added the following films and audio recordings to its web site:

Smeddum Test (poetry)
Shetland (education)
Cundeez (music)
Mary Johnston (poetry)
Gordon Hay (religion)
Lilian Ross (storyteller)
James Spence (storyteller)
Tim Porteus (storyteller)

Events Calendar

SLC continues to gather information about Scots language events and activities. These are featured in our Events Calendar and include regular information from Scots Language Society, SLD, Perth Burns Club, other Burns events, exhibitions, festivals, competitions and book launches.

News and Information Service

SLC gathers information and publishes news stories on its web site. This function allows SLC to continue as the main hub for information and news about Scots.

SLC is also the main point of contact for enquirers wishing to know more about Scots. These enquiries originate within and furth of Scotland. The following are examples of the enquiries we have received in the past 4 months.

Kirsten Lawson (re: timelines in Scots), Robert Douglas (USA: project to record Brus), Steven Mackenzie at BBC Scotland (help with online feature), Rick Jones (USA help with music project), Cindy Lovell (meanings of Scots words), Kevin Merritt (USA, learning Scots), Jakob Gurnicz (Polish student advice on Edinburgh Scots), Rea Trotter (advice on list of pronunciations), Carolin Hofmockel (Germany, advice with academic project), Alfredo Hamil (Italy, teacher, advice on language), Piotr K (Poland, student, advice on Scots), Bob Moir (translations into Scots), June Gargan (advice on project for children), LM Morgan (writer, advice on Caithness dialect writing), Tapsalteerie publishers (advice, and publicity), Douglas Raine (Moray writer, advice with play script), Tom McKean (Aberdeen, re: spell checker), Federico C (advice on Scots), Thomas Hughes (translation in Scots), Iwona Burns (pronunciations in Scots), Hilary Jackman (re: bothy ballads), Charles Miller (re: phrases in Scots), Edwin Cottey (re: Halloween traditions), John Aitken (place-names), Jessica Laconi (Italy: re: dissertation on Scots), Eduardo Gomez (Mexico: re: learning Scots), Leon B (advice on Doric dictionaries, etc), Andrew Tracey (courses in Scots, etc), Muriel Burnett (pronunciation), Paulo Cavestro (Italy: Scots dictionaries), Colin Vance (name), Margaret McSeveney (re report of committee of experts), Markis O'Domhnaill (advice regarding his proposed spelling system), Karolina Mlcochova (Czech, advice re dissertation on place-names).

SLC is also regularly contacted by the press for information and commentary on Scots language issues. SLC has given interviews this year to the Economist, Sunday Post, Daily Record, Press and Journal, Shetland Times, Daily Mail, BBC Radio Scotland and BBC Radio Shetland. We have taken part in an edition of BBC Radio 4's Word of Mouth programme and provided a blog post for Shetland Life.

Michael Hance
Director
Scots Language Centre

26 May 2014



Scots Language Centre

Scots Toun Award 2014 - Final Report

Introduction

Award set-up

The Applicants

The Judging Panel

The winners and prize-giving

Project costs

Appendix 1 - Scots Toun Award aims

Appendix 2 - Judging Criteria

Appendix 3 - Timetable

Appendix 4 - Application Form

Appendix 5 - Scots Toun judging panel meeting minutes

Appendix 6 - Scots Toun prize-winner press release

Appendix 7 - Scots Toun 2013-2014 - Report recommendations

Introduction

A Scottish Government Ministerial Working Group on the Scots language was set up in 2009, partly as a result of a conference on Scots held at the University of Stirling in 2008, and partly because of widespread calls for something to be done to improve the health and status of the language. This Ministerial Working Group published its recommendations for the Scots language on St Andrew's Day 2010. The report discussed several areas and made recommendations to the Scottish Government about what might be achieved for the Scots-speaking community. One of these recommendations addressed public awareness of the language and how the nature and status could be improved through the development of a 'Scots Toun'.

Ministerial Working Group on Scots Language report.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/11/25121454/0>

(Report extract

'6. Public Awareness

As already noted, a serious handicap to the development of Scots is the widespread uncertainty, even among fluent speakers, of the actual nature and status of the language; and a key factor in the task of promoting the language is that of eradicating the deep-rooted effects of the old educational tradition of denigrating it as "slang", "bad English" or the like. The following recommendations are aimed at achieving this.

Key Recommendation

a. The possibility of establishing 'Scots touns', 'dialect conservation areas' or 'sites of special linguistic interest' in areas with high concentrations of speakers should be investigated. A possible approach would be the awarding by a national body of the designation 'Scots toun' as an accolade for local work done to promote the Scots language.)

Early in 2010, Scottish Government officials made initial approaches to the Scots Language Centre to find out what assistance could be provided to help implement the report recommendations. Over the following year the officials and SLC representatives began to establish what level of commitment SLC could give to a new project and what support would be available from Government. On the one hand the Scottish Government was keen to implement the report recommendations, on the other hand it wasn't clear if funding would be available. SLC was already operating at full capacity and there were concerns that without some level of funding existing SLC projects and commitments would be abandoned in favour of this new proposal.

While being mindful of this uncertainty, in November 2011 the Scots Language Centre Council discussed the report and the idea of the development of 'Scots touns', 'dialect conservation areas' or 'sites of special linguistic interest'. The SLC Director and the Language Officer were asked to find out what this could mean, what

criteria would be used to define this, how it would be organised, advertised, judged and implemented. The Council wanted to know exactly how the general idea outlined in the report could become a specific thing that rewarded communities where Scots language was widely used and encouraged.

Through the course of 2012 SLC representatives began to develop several ideas and produced drafts of possible outcomes. There were ongoing discussions about these various development ideas in several meetings with Scottish Government officials and also with the SLC Council. By January 2013 SLC produced a final outline of how recommendation 6 of the Ministerial Report would be developed and implemented. This included a definition of the Award purpose - to recognise the use, celebration, support and promotion of the Scots language in community life.

By this stage in early 2013 the Scottish Government had agreed to provide funds of £15000 to SLC for the costs involved in running this civic award. The bulk of this funding was to enable the presentation of financial prizes to those judged to be 'Scots Touns', and the remainder would cover the cost of setting up and administering the award. This meant the wider work of SLC would not be adversely affected in becoming involved in development of the Scots Toun Award.

Award Set-up

Once the Scottish Government had agreed the general principles of the January 2013 SLC proposal, and to provide funding, the SLC Director and the Language Officer appointed a Scots Toun Award Director, responsible for overseeing the competition set-up and administration of the project through to post-award report stage. At regular intervals through the set-up stage of January to August 2013, Scottish Government officials, the SLC Director and the Scot Toun Award Director were involved in continuing discussions about what was required and what best practice should dictate. This included all being involved in deciding the timescale for the project, how the budget should be broken down and how applicants would be evaluated.

SLC briefing papers provided a starting point but with no model for such a competition in the Scots language community, civic awards for other language groups were analysed. Research and discussions were carried out into what linguistic awards are provided in the Scottish Gaelic language community and what their process of application involves. Based on this it was, after working through several ideas, agreed that the Scots Toun Award would be published and promoted through a website with a downloadable application form. This would provide the best value and be the most accessible way of promoting the Award.

By August 2013 after many SLC and Scottish Government joint discussions and after much drafting and redrafting of documents, there was in place agreement about the way forward. It was now clear what this Scots Toun Award would be (see Scots Toun Award aims appendix 1) and what criteria would be used in judging those who applied to be considered as 'Scots Touns' (see judging criteria appendix 2). There was also now in place a rough timetable for the competition (see Timetable appendix 3). The principle was now established that the purpose of the Scots Toun Award was to help define communities of living and thriving Scots language speakers and there was a plan on how this would be established. The process of getting the Award in place was clear and was started in August 2013.

The SLC website manager was asked to design and create a new Scots Toun website. Design principles were used which reflect current simple and clear website designs and which are shown to provide information in the most easy to understand way. The text for the website was based on the SLC briefing documents. The aim was to produce a website which would provide a simple and clear guide to what the Award aims are, who could apply, what the application process required and what prizes were on offer. <http://www.scots-toun.co.uk/>

It was agreed that costs could be kept to a minimum if all applications were emailed and all communications were also by email. A dedicated email address was created for the Award. It was decided that the Award should have a separate identity to SLC, and an email based on Scots Toun would help maintain this separate identity. This was to be the main email address for applicants and also for applicant or possible media enquiries. This was the email address used to set up the Scots Toun Twitter account.

A logo was commissioned to give the whole project a clear identity. Several logo designs were supplied and the final decision about which logo to use was taken after discussions at SLC team meetings.

An application form had to be created. Several possible forms were drafted and research carried out to establish what would be the most suitable and accessible format. It was decided that the .doc format would be easy to download. Again, as with the website, a clean clear layout was sought and formatting kept to a minimum. Questions on the form were based on the criteria established in 2012 by SLC representatives and the SLC Council. The application form was made available on the website as a downloadable document. See application form at appendix 4.

In order to advertise the competition while keeping administration costs as low as possible, it was decided that the competition should be announced via this dedicated website and then further promoted on the SLC website, social media (Facebook, the SLC Twitter account and a new dedicated Scots Town Twitter account) and through the regular media channels who are contacted regularly by the Scottish Government communications department.

With the website set up, application form in place and with Scottish Government and SLC agreement on requirements and processes, the Award was launched in January 2014, four months after first starting the process of setting up the whole thing. It was then promoted as planned. With the closing date set for the end of February, the focus next was on determining who would be able to join SLC representatives on a judging panel. Looking at the examples of Gaelic language Award judging panels it was decided that the individuals invited should have current and long established good standing in the language community, with active involvement at a professional level with language issues.

Recommendation

1. The website asked applicants to return the application form by email. If an application was to include attachments such as images, sound recordings and video files, the application process could become a technical challenge. These kind of attachments can also be difficult to email. In order to allow communities provide as good an example of what they have, the application should be emailed or posted. This will make it an open process and technology won't be a barrier.

The Applicants.

There were three applications - Keith Community Council, Muirkirk Enterprise Group and Aberdeen City Council's Reading Bus. Prior to application, The Reading Bus had contacted SLC querying whether they could apply.

Recommendation

2. The competition attracted three entries. This number of applicants, while small did indicate an interest in recognising linguistic identity does exist in communities. With the Award promotion depending on social media and coverage in the pages of the SLC website, it is probable that many eligible communities were not aware of this opportunity. There should therefore be some consideration given to creating more awareness of the award through an increased level of promotion. Perhaps Creative Scotland will be able to help promote the competition via their existing 'funding opportunities' pages online.

3. The website gave some indication of the diverse range of groups who could apply. This was not clear enough. The guidance should be clearer and could clarify that 'community' is not just a geographically defined term.

The Judging Panel

SLC Director and SLC Language Officer represented the SLC Council. Professor Donna Hedde of the University of the Highlands and Islands and Chris Waddell, Head of Education at the Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway accepted invitations to complete the judging panel.

The Judging Panel meeting needed to take place in an easily accessible central location with a private quiet room and wifi. With its limited space, the SLC office in Perth could not accommodate a meeting of more than three people while the Soutar House (which Perth & Kinross Council makes available to SLC for larger gatherings) does not have internet access. The Saltire Society in Edinburgh were able to provide a space that met all the requirements. A light buffet lunch with teas and coffees were sourced, booked and paid for. The meeting organisation also involved printing copies of every application for each panel member and providing a computer so that any detailed questions from panel members could be researched as they arose through the meeting. Computer access during the meeting was also needed for listening to or watching audio or video material provided by applicants. Minutes of the meeting were made and are provided at appendix 5.

The Winners and Prize Giving

The Panel awarded first prize to Keith Community Council, second placed was Aberdeen Council Reading Bus and third place went to Muirkirk Enterprise Group. The main prize was due to be presented in the winning community by Dr Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages. However parliamentary business on the day prevented this, so on behalf of the judging panel the SLC Director travelled to Keith and attended a ceremony organised by Keith Community Council. A specially designed certificate signed by Dr Allan was presented along with the winners cheque. Press coverage of this event included STV news, The Press and Journal and The Banffshire Journal. The other two prizes winners The Reading Bus and Muirkirk were sent their cheques by post. All prize-winners were encouraged to promote their achievements through their own press contacts. A press release was written and provided to all Scots Toun prizewinners and the Scottish Government communications department. This press release is at appendix 6.

Recommendation

4. There was some confusion about the process of when and who would announce the outcome of the Award, with concern that in the end press were informed before Scottish government or ministerial department were aware of the competition outcome. There should be a clearer media strategy.
5. The decision panel mentioned follow-up verification and consideration could be given to how this would be achieved in future.

Project Costs

The funding for the project was £15 000 along with the support of Scottish Government media communications. The breakdown of how this funding was spent is as follows.

Awards

Keith	6,000.00
Aberdeen Reading Bus	4,000.00
Muirkirk Enterprise Group	<u>1,000.00</u>
	£11,000.00

Costs

Katrina MacLeod (1)	2,022	
Chris Third (2)	475	
Michael Hance (3)	123	
Andrew Fielding (4)	300	
Donna Heddle (5)	<u>372</u>	
		<u>3,292</u>

Total to date £14,292

* - figures not yet finalised

1 - Fees for professional services as follows

Creating Award timetable

Setting budget

Creating promotional methods and media strategy

Promotion of award launch on SLC website (creating and writing a feature and news story)

Setting up a Scots Toun Twitter account

Promotion of the Award on social media - SLC Facebook group, SLC Twitter and Scots Toun Twitter

Liaison with Scottish Government media communications department for Award promotion (including providing text for press releases)

Research into other similar Awards and methods of linguistic civic recognition application form design

Website content drafting (transforming briefing documents into text for the Award)

website)

Website and logo design liaison

Evaluation methods research

Possible panel judges research and contacting

Award application forms receipt and checking

Regular progress reports to SLC and Scottish Government

Liaison with The Saltire Society for judging panel meeting

Booking and paying for meeting catering

Communications with all involved with judging panel meeting to ensure attendance, Informing winners

Prize-giving planning

Organising Scots wording for winning certificate

Organising winning certificate printing

Organising signing of Award certificate by Dr Alasdair Allan MSP and delivery of certificate to SLC Director for Award ceremony

Winner promotion on social media, SLC website and press release to Government communications

Finding and providing to SLC accounts manager details of winner and runner-up for cheque payments of prizes

Liaison with SLC accounts manager regarding final Award budget and spending plan

Archiving in SLC office documents relating the the 2013-14 Scots Toun Award

(17 days)

- Fees for catering for the judging panel meeting, travel to the judging panel meeting and to Parliament for Award Certificate signature.

2 - Fees for professional services - website design (311) and costs for website hosting (164).

3 - Fees for travel to judging panel meeting and travel to Award winning town for prize-giving ceremony

4 - Fees for professional services - Award logo design and production

5 - Fees for travel to judging panel meeting

It should be noted that in addition to the above chargeable expenses, Michael Hance and Dauvit Horsbroch spent 12 days of Scots Language Centre time on the project.

Recommendation

6. The web set-up and logo design would likely be significantly lower if the project ran again. There would also be no requirement to repeat the research carried out into other language awards. However there would need to be consideration given to increasing spending on media communications and promotion so that the project is made more widely known and to encourage more applications.

APPENDIX 1

Scots Toun Award - aims

The Scots Toun Award aims to recognise the use, celebration, support and promotion of the Scots language in community life. The Scots Toun award is aimed at identifying communities where Scots language culture is encouraged and promoted. This can take the form of festivals, writers groups, kirk services, street naming policies that encourage the use of traditional names, the use of Scots in public signage and the development of language based tourism. We're hoping to hear about projects that help promote a sense of cultural and community vitality and wellbeing and that seek to encourage new generations to learn the about the language and its rich culture. The awards are given to enable communities to develop new projects aimed at encouraging Scots. The award is also aimed at helping the development of a specific project or measure which will boost the profile of Scots language in that community. The award needs to support and further develop existing Scots language events or projects and by one year after the award grant, the community will need to demonstrate evidence of the positive impact the award has had on the awareness and usage of the Scots language. This evidence will take the form of a report outlining measurable improvements in at least one of the award criteria.

APPENDIX 2

Judging Criteria

Entries may be made by any recognised and clearly defined community. There are no strict limits to the size of the community, be it a township, village, town or a collection of townships and villages, as long as the area can be defined as having a sense of belonging to a common community. It is important to note that the award is for a "community" and not for a "community event" although a community event may very well be part of the submission on behalf of a community. The judges' decision on eligibility will be final. The entries will be judged according to the following percentage criteria:

Use of Scots as a spoken language	35
The visible use of Scots in the community	35
Frequency of Scots social events	10
The use of Scots amongst young people	10
Opportunities to learn the Scots language	10

APPENDIX 3

Timetable (established in August 2013)

Create workflow timetable by end August 2013

Create and agree with Scottish Government publicity strategy and budget by end September 2013

Scots Toun Award website designed and live by end September 2013

Award announcement by 1 October 2013

Design and agree with Scottish Government evaluation method for judging by end October

Select and agree with Scottish Government the members of the competition panel judges by end of 2013

Entries for the Scots Toun of the Year award submitted by 28th February 2014.

The award announcement on 30th April 2014 and presentation of prize and certificate to winner on 10th June 2014.

APPENDIX 4

Scots Toun Award application form

Scots Toun Award Entry Form

Organisation Details

Name of community group

Description or nature of group (community council, local authority, campaign group, festival steering committee, arts group etc) and approximate size

Main activities of community

Please provide some information on how you feel your community performs against the following criteria:

The frequency and use of Scots as the spoken language of members of the community as well as the availability of spoken Scots at community facilities such as shops, the post office, leisure facilities, cafes, etc (evidence of this could come from census statistics, interviews, recordings of public conversations etc).

The frequency and level of use of Scots as the spoken language amongst younger members of the community (those under 40 years of age).

The visible use of Scots across the community on road signs, shop fronts, at community facilities, etc (evidence of this could come from photographs of public signs etc).

The level of funding, frequency and general nature of community events based on and celebrating the Scots heritage, culture and language of the area (funding details could be cash grants or volunteer hours).

The level of funding, frequency and general nature of opportunities to learn Scots in the community (Include school activities, volunteer led activities, formal organised events and any other occasion where learning the language will take place on a one-off or regular basis).

The community may make a further contribution to the entry by submitting additional information to the extent of no more than 500 words. Relevant literature may accompany the application but will not be returned to entrants.

We may wish to visit the community or verify some of the aspects of the community activities related to the award

Contact Details

Name

Address

Website (if applicable)

Email

Phone

Completed entry forms should be returned by 28th February 2014 to: HYPERLINK "<mailto:info@scots-toun.co.uk>" info@scots-toun.co.uk

For further information is available at HYPERLINK "<http://www.scots-toun.co.uk>"
<http://www.scots-toun.co.uk>

APPENDIX 5

Scots Toun Panel Meeting Minutes

At - The Saltire Society, 22 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1TF

On - Thursday 8 May 2014

Present - Michael Hance, Dr Dauvit Horsbroch, Professor Donna Heddle, Chris Waddell.

Minutes - Katrina MacLeod

Michael welcomed everyone and gave some brief details of the background to the setting up of the Scots Toun Award. The initial idea had been to create some kind of civic recognition of areas where the Scots language was the main language, a linguistic version of a Site of Special Scientific Interest. There was also an awareness of Gaelic language awards that aimed to encourage Gaelic language projects and use while there was no similar thing for Scots speaking communities.

The three applications were then considered

Aberdeen Reading Bus

The panel considered this an exciting and interesting application. It involved working in a community and the council, it contained sensible and targeted ideas and the graphic novel idea sounded a good.

Muirkirk

The panel were unclear about what actions the community had pursued since an initial flurry of Scots language related activities in 2010. There was a lack of targeted information about either what the community has achieved since then or what it proposes to promote in the future.

Keith

The panel agreed that the Keith application showed lots of evidence of Scots language promotional activity, with several individuals and a community council driving things forward. This was the only application which contained images, video footage and audio recordings so the panel were able to spend a little time on these and obtain an idea of what the community sounded and looked like.

The general discussion which followed ranged from the different levels of linguistic awareness communities will have, the importance of using the current applications in future to provide examples of what makes a strong entrant and the need to have follow up verification after awards are granted to ensure Scots Language projects have gained benefit from the process.

It was agreed unanimously that Keith should be granted first place and The Aberdeen Reading Bus the second prize. Katrina indicated that the Scots Toun project budget had not all been allocated, so the panel agreed to award a third prize of £1000 to Muirkirk. Michael, Dauvit and Katrina agreed to inform the communities and begin the process of organising the award ceremony.

APPENDIX 6

Scots Toun prize winner press release

Keith wins Scots language award

Keith has been named as the first winner of the Scots Toun prize, an award established this year to recognise communities which support and encourage the use of the Scots language.

Judges were impressed with the many positive steps taken by the community in Keith to encourage the use of the local dialect. Initiatives designed to encourage the language have included using Scots in street names, projects involving school children and activities centred round Mither Tongue, a Keith based business which produces gifts and stationery with a Scots language theme.

Commenting on the judges' decision, Michael Hance, Director of the Scots Language Centre, said, 'The application from Keith was extremely impressive. A number of agencies have been involved in developing initiatives which encourage folk in Keith to value their linguistic heritage, to make the local dialect more visible and to see the potential of the language in terms of tourism and business. This was a joint effort involving local business, the community council and language enthusiasts. There is no doubt that the Scots language is alive and well in Keith and that it is seen as a vital part of local identity and culture there.'

The Scots Toun award is administered by the Scots Language Centre. Judges awarded three prizes with Keith receiving the top spot and a cheque for £6000. Other winners included the Reading Bus based in Aberdeen and Fraserburgh, and the East Ayrshire town of Muirkirk which is aiming to use the language as part of its regeneration programme.

The judging panel was made up of Prof Donna Heddle of University of the Highlands and Islands, Chris Waddell, Head of Education at the Burns Birthplace Museum in Alloway, Dr Dauvit Horsbroch, Language and Information Officer at the Scots Language Centre and Michael Hance, Director of the Scots Language Centre. The prize will be presented at a ceremony in Keith on Thursday 19th June.

Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages, said: "This Scots Toun prize has encouraged communities to look at how they use the language to celebrate their unique identity and I know that the judges were impressed by all of the entries. I would like to congratulate Keith for being the first town to win this award and hope that the prize money will help develop its Scots programmes even further.

"The success of the local work in Keith; the Reading Bus in the North East and the community of Muirkirk are great examples for other cities, towns and villages that want to make more of their Scots heritage and I am confident we will see their achievements increase as these awards grow."

Maggie Cruickshank, who is a long standing local campaigner for Scots said: "Having been awarded the prestigious accolade of Scotland's first Scots Toun, this is a wonderful opportunity for Keith to shine, and continue its mission to get the message across that Scots is a sister language of English and it's time we started to reclaim it, encouraging our children and grandchildren to speak it with confidence and pride.

"With an official figure now existing for the number of Scots speakers in Scotland at

1,541,693 (40,849 in Moray), and Scots Language Co-ordinators recently appointed within the education system, it is at long last beginning to enjoy the increased credibility and support it so richly deserves.

"King James VI, himself a Scots speaker and writer, abandoned it when he commenced ruling from England in 1603, Robert Burns halted its decline by ignoring all advice to write exclusively in English, and now my home town is in a unique position to proudly continue his priceless legacy – what an honour."

APPENDIX 7

Scots Toun 2013-2014 - Report recommendations

1. The website asked applicants to return the application form by email. If an application was to include attachments such as images, sound recordings and video files, the application process could become a technical challenge. These kind of attachments can also be difficult to email. In order to allow communities provide as good an example of what they have, the application should be emailed or posted. This will make it an open process and technology won't be a barrier.
2. The competition attracted three entries. This number of applicants, while small did indicate an interest in recognising linguistic identity does exist in communities. With the Award promotion depending on social media and coverage in the pages of the SLC website, it is probable that many eligible communities were not aware of this opportunity. There should therefore be some consideration given to creating more awareness of the award through an increased level of promotion. Perhaps Creative Scotland will be able to help promote the competition via their existing 'funding opportunities' pages online.
3. The website gave some indication of the diverse range of groups who could apply. This was not clear enough. The guidance should be clearer and could clarify that 'community' is not just a geographically defined term.
4. There was some confusion about the process of when and who would announce the outcome of the Award, with concern that in the end press were informed before Scottish government or ministerial department. There should be a clearer media strategy.
5. The decision panel mentioned follow-up verification and consideration could be given to how this would be achieved in future.
6. The web set-up and logo design would likely be significantly lower if the project ran again. There would also be no requirement to repeat the research carried out into other language awards. However there would need to be consideration given to increasing spending on media communications and promotion so that the project is made more widely known and to encourage more applications.

Scots Language Centre

Grant in Aid report

TARGET: Evidence of strategic partnership working with local authorities, other Scots bodies, public bodies, minority language interests (national and international), academic institutions, national and local institutions and organisations to promote Scots language and culture by end March 2016.

The Scots Language Centre works with a range of bodies to promote Scots and encourage a better understanding of Scots language and culture.

For a number of years SLC has worked with **Scottish Language Dictionaries** to promote SLD's Scots word of the week project. The Centre features SLD's word of the week on the home page of its website. We posts the SLD feature to our audiences on facebook and twitter. SLC has promoted a range of SLD projects and publications on its site and online platforms over the year. The SLC and SLD directors meet regularly to discuss common interests and projects.

This year the SLC was involved in developing a major online project aimed at creating learning and teaching resources for primary schools based on the popular Oor Wullie comic strips. SLC staff gave advice on a range of language and other issues and were central to the development and promotion of the project. SLC worked on this project with the **National Library of Scotland, D C Thomson, Scottish Language Dictionaries and the Burns Birthplace Museum.**

Staff from SLC and the **Burns Birthplace Museum** have met regularly over the last year with the aim of developing Scots language teaching and learning resources.

From Feb 2014 to Feb 2015 SLC staff played a key role in assisting the **Scottish Qualifications Authority** to develop a new Scots language qualification. SLC's contribution included attending workshops, being part of the qualification design team, checking and editing initial proposals, agreeing final standards and developing supporting materials.

The Scots Language Centre has been working with the **W L Lorimer Trust** to develop innovative ways to promote the W L Lorimer Scots language translation of the New Testament on a range of online platforms. SLC continues to provide the Trust with administrative and management support.

The SLC has been working with the **Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster** in developing its programme of activities over the last year.

The Centre continues to work with the Scots Language Society. The Centre's director gave a paper at last year's SLS colloque and has been active in providing advice and assistance to SLS as it makes plans for the future.

The Scots Language Centre works closely with **Shetland ForWirds** to promote information about Shetland dialect. The Centre's director is a member of Shetland ForWird's committee.

SLC has been involved in discussions with **Creative Scotland** and others about developing support for Scots. These strategic discussions will be extended this year to include input from the **Scots Language co-ordinators**.

The Centre has been involved in assisting Creative Scotland with the development of its policy and plan for Scots. Michael Hance, the Centre's Director, is a member of the Scots Screiver steering group. The **Scots Screiver project** forms a core element of Creative Scotland's support for Scots.

Creative Scotland has funded the Scots Language Centre to develop a monthly Scots language podcast. SLC administers the funding for this project which is managed by Frieda Morrison and staff at the Centre. SLC provides assistance with IT services and online promotion. **Scots Language Radio** produces a popular monthly podcast which has developed a growing audience. The podcast showcases Scots language cultural activities and includes discussion in Scots about a range of cultural and language issues.

SLC has worked closely with the **Scots Language co-ordinators**. We have restructured the education section of our web site to take account of suggestions and recommendations made by the co-ordinators. We have met regularly with the co-ordinators and had

extensive discussions with them online and by phone.

The Scots Language Centre has been working with author and educationalist, **Liz Niven**, to produce an audio version of her 'Braw Brew' anthology. This along with pdf versions of the stories will feature in the education section of the SLC web site. This project has developed in collaboration with the Scots Language co-ordinators.

SLC has begun discussions with Aileen Ogilvy of **Perth and Kinross Council's Living Communities** agency to discuss possible future collaboration.

SLC has begun discussions with Rebecca Boyde of **Dig-It** (at the **National Museums of Scotland**) about collaborating on developing a Scots language and archaeology education resource.

SLC has worked with Lisa Simmons of **Hospitalfield Arts** to promote a range of events and education activities connected to the life and work of Violet Jacob.

SLC has begun discussions with Georgi Gill of **Scottish Poetry Library** on the development of a potential education resource.

SLC is a member of the **British Institute of Sound Archives** and maintains an excellent working relationship with the Institute. SLC has one of the most extensive archives of Scots language recordings and we seek to employ the highest standards when maintaining our recordings and presenting these to a wider audience. Our connection to BISA links us with sound archivists in libraries and universities throughout the UK.

TARGET: Continue to develop online services to maximise impact on online space and to demonstrate this in place by including statistics in each quarterly report.

Full details are outlined below. SLC believes that a quarterly reporting mechanism might be replaced if it is agreeable to the SG with less frequent reports.

The SLC continues to focus on the delivery of online services as the core mechanism for outreach and engagement. In line with and building on previous years, the Centre is active across three main areas.

Core online presence, the SLC maintains a core online presence at www.scotslanguage.com which serves as the foundation of all online activity. The current online presence is structured to serve two main roles:

Raising awareness of and providing information about the Scots language, its roots and role in contemporary society.

Providing a platform for the dissemination and promotion of Scots language materials and activity both on and offline.

The core online presence has become a unique and valuable resource with a wealth of information and content amassed over 9 years of continual activity.

Platform specific activity, the SLC maintains a presence on a number of popular online platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Instagram, SoundCloud and iTunes. Activity across the online platforms is focused on delivering Scots related materials which are both engaging and informative, the activity achieves two main goals;

- Exposure of Scots language content and issues to a wider audience who may not have encountered or be aware of Scots language and the role it plays in their contemporary culture.
- Providing regular, engaging content to existing SLC audiences within the online environments they most commonly inhabit.

Platform specific activities have proven invaluable in developing and retaining audiences reducing the need to engage in continual effort to drive traffic to the core presence.

Community engagement, over the last 5 years the SLC has developed several online community spaces across Twitter and Facebook which are continually moderated and managed.

These work in tandem with the platform specific activity and our core presence to deliver spaces where the SLC audience can

directly interact with the centre staff and other Scots language speakers discussing SLC specific activity along with a wider range of topics.

Activity within social spaces has been a long term investment by the SLC which began in the early days of social media. This has grown into a self-sustaining focus for Scots language online.

Activities and project delivery

The SLC maintains a wide variety of short and long-term projects which feed into the three main online activity areas with projects spanning from short term online publications to initiatives which have been running continuously for over 6 years.

Long term / continuing projects include several periodical projects including;

Scots language radio, a podcast released on a monthly basis covering Scots language culture and topical issues, presented by Frieda Morrison with her co-host Steven Byrne the podcast has been running for 13 months. The show has been well received with a loyal audience, significant iTunes subscriber base and a lively Facebook community.

Scots word project published weekly in conjunction with the Scottish Language Dictionaries, a Scots word is explored and an example of its pronunciation provided. This feature receives high levels of engagement on Twitter and Facebook both within the core Scots language audience and further afield.

Scots New Testament published weekly (in line with the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar) the readings from William Lorimer's translation of the New testament are read by Tom Fleming. This has a loyal following within specific audience demographics and reaches wider audiences at seasonal high points including Easter and Christmas.

Scots proverbs, published fortnightly a simple but highly engaging activity which publishes a Scots proverb (along with an audio recording of the proverb) often seasonal in its subject matter

the proverbs reach a wide audience on Twitter and Facebook with high levels of engagement.

Scots poems, published monthly the Scots poetry section publishes and promotes a selection of new and existing poetry in Scots along with interviews with Scots poets. A new Scots poem has been published monthly since 2007, a popular aspect of Scots language culture it has consistently shown high visitor numbers and is widely shared online.

Scots in use, has been an active project since September 2009 publishing photos of Scots in everyday use on the core presence and on Flickr, with over 1,000 photos the new images reach thousands of users on the Flickr platform.

Shorter term / one off projects

Online publication and archiving, the SLC continues to provide several platforms for the publishing and promotion of Scots language materials, both new and historical to ensure they reach the widest audience and are preserved for the future. The centre now holds a wide range of material in Scots across a broad range of contexts ranging from poetry to science fiction.

The preservation and promotion of material spans written, audio and video materials with the wider online platforms used where possible to give the widest reach.

Currently the SLC is working with archivists to preserve and publish the papers of the late academic, A J Aitken, one of the foremost Scots language scholars.

Scots language learning resources, in conjunction with partner organisations and the Scots language education coordinators the SLC continues to develop a variety of written, audio and video materials supporting the use of Scots in the classroom.

Core presence development and platform activity strategy, the SLC is committed to a continual assessment and refinement of the core presence and activity across the relevant online platforms through regularly measuring audience engagement.

The core presence has undergone several updates over the last quarter. This has including improved archiving, an audit of content across several subjects and will culminate in a revised structure and presentation which addresses the challenges of presenting over 9 years of Scots language content in a intuitive manner.

Performance and analysis

The SLC carries out a continual measurement and assessment of its performance; the following figures offer a snapshot of the last two quarters of activity (October 2014 - February 2015).

Platform activity

Twitter, continues to provide a strong platform for promotion of content and 'light' engagement, @Scotslanguage has over 2,600 followers with an estimated reach of 70,000 users through its network of followers.

Facebook, primarily serves as a community space although the centre also uses it as a tool for the promotion of activity on the core presence. With over 3,400 members and a core active group of over 100 regular participants the Facebook group although still requiring extensive moderation has become a self sustaining, lively community where SLC content and wider materials are discussed. The Facebook group (excluding searches for 'what is Scots' on Google) is the primary referrer for the core presence. Additionally the Scots Language Radio page although under a year old has developed a loyal core audience and posts regularly reach in excess of 3,500 users.

Flickr, has been a long term project for the centre running since 2009 it is not only a valuable archival resource recording the user of Scots in everyday contexts but also widens exposure of Scots to wider audiences. Our flickr collection represents the world's largest collection of Scots language images.

Instagram and Soundcloud, both of these platforms to an extent replicate activity on other channels (Flickr and the core presence

respectively) but provide access to new audiences and different contexts for sharing and interaction.

YouTube, continues to be an important channel to the centre providing an engaging, immediate context for the promotion of Scots. Activity is split between the collation and aggregation of existing Scots content published by the Scots language community along with the generation of new materials and publishing of archive materials online.

With a strong subscriber base and over 200 videos online the channel has reached over 33,000 users and continues to provide a highly effective promotional tool for the centre and Scots language.

www.scotslanguage.com continues to demonstrate high visitor numbers and good levels of engagement.

Over the last two quarters the site has attracted over 93,000 unique visitors who have viewed over 200,000 pages, visitors to the site have stayed on average over 2 minutes on the site showing a good level of engagement.

Audience segments, over the last 5 years a clear trend in audience behaviour has been visible in the analytics for the site, there are two distinct audiences with differing needs;

- What is Scots, users who are seeking explanations of Scots or have encountered definitions of Scots words or phrases online and are seeking context.
- Engaged Scots speakers / enthusiasts, users who already have some knowledge of Scots and are seeking specific or general information, topical material or entertainment.

The site offers an extensive Scots language orientation section which is optimised to attract the majority of search engine referrals for 'What is Scots' freeing up the rest of the site to serve the recurring 'engaged' audiences. This has proved an effective approach to date, the revised presence will attempt to build on this by providing onward channels for the 'What is Scots' audience leading them into the community and subscription contexts.

Mobile devices, optimisation of the online experience for mobile devices has been reflected in over 41% of visitors viewing the website on a tablet or phone, in line with this trend the new version

of the website platform coming online in February offers further optimisation of the small screen experience.

Referrals / traffic sources, can be broken down into the two audiences (what is Scots and engaged). In line with historical data over 70% of the general referrals comes from search engines.

However excluding the 'what is Scots' audience social media channels provide more than half of the overall traffic to the core site with Facebook representing 78% of social media referrals followed by 22% from Twitter.

Trends and comparative performance of the site against previous equivalent timeframes show a 32% increase in visitors, 12% increase in page views and 5% increase in duration of visit compared to 2013-14, looking back further to 2009-10 period shows that over a 4 year period the core website has seen a trebling of quarterly visitor figures and doubling of page views.

Goals and responses to the quarterly assessment

Analysing the overall activity of the organisation online and measuring this against the core objectives shows that the majority of activities have generated a good response and strengthen the organisation and the overall presence of Scots language online.

The continuing challenge is to maintain the quality of the content delivered online in the context of a growing community and an ever expanding resource of content which requires continual review and in some cases revision. This is becoming increasingly difficult within the resources available to SLC.

There is a distinct risk that achieving more with less resource could lead to a reduction in overall quality of the product and the SLC must strive to maintain standards and be realistic about short terms goals and prioritisation of projects.

TARGET: Continue to develop links with local communities and provide space online for community based projects.

SLC's main contribution to local and community based projects is to provide online space where projects can be showcased and promoted. SLC has worked with a range of large and small scale

projects in the last year. The following are examples of the work we have undertaken.

Developing and promoting a Scots language element at
Previously, the festival of history.

Assisting with the development and promotion of a series of events at the Hospitalfield Arts Trust in Arbroath connected to the life and work of Violet Jacob. The SLC has provided ongoing advice, information and advertising for Scots-related events at Hospitalfield, particularly in relation to Violet Jacob weekend courses. Hospitalfield has indicated that its connection to SLC had boosted knowledge of the courses and the numbers attending them. We have assisted with their plans to establish an Angus Writers' Festival by providing information about potential speakers, poets, etc, and recently interviewed one of their tutors, Lisa Simmons, who is now also preparing written material as a contribution to the SLC website. This will provide an additional outlet for their activities.

Working with Keith Community Council and Mither Tongue in developing projects aimed at encouraging interest in the local dialect. We have, over many years, provided considerable information and advice to this community, largely via Mither Tongue run by Maggie Cruickshank, and also by way of the community and council groups. We have visited the town and helped with their efforts to promote the language in the area.

Working with Jamie Reid Baxter on promoting a range of Scots language arts projects and conferences in Edinburgh, Dunfermline and Stirling. We have promoted projects such as the Elizabeth Melville celebration, Church Service in Scots (at St Giles cathedral), and Gavin Douglas commemoration events and conference.

SLC has provided advice and assistance to the Tarbert based **George Campbell Hay centenary project**. A series of events will take place in Tarbert over the year and will include workshops on Scots language and Scots language poetry.

Billy Kay, we have continued to assist writer and broadcaster Billy Kay with promoting a range of projects in which he is involved. Billy is well known in the Scots language world and provides links with other groups.

We have worked with the **Babelang** project which is based in France and is a website providing translation of certain key words and phrases into many languages. The SLC has assisted over the last year or so with providing listings and corrections. We continue to answer a variety of enquiries from both academics and interested parties from around the world.

The SLC has recently helped promote the work of Ishbel MacFarlane who has developed a one-woman theatre show about the Scots language. This has proven successful and is due to show again in Glasgow and Edinburgh. It is our intention to interview her and showcase her material.

Publishing

The SLC promotes the work of writers in/about Scots with news stories, links, features and book purchase information. For example, Susan Rennie's translations of *Tin Tin*, or Betty Kirkpatrick's *Favourite Scots Words*. For many writers in Scots, the SLC is often the only organisation which provides in-depth exposure for their work. The SLC also publishes online, by way of its discussion groups, material by writers whose work might not otherwise have extensive exposure.

The SLC continues to promote Scots-related events. These include most recently:

- (a) **Gruffalo Tour** which is jointly sponsored by Education Scotland and appearing in a number of locations accompanied by writers reading versions in various Scots dialects.
- (b) The SLC has worked in conjunction with **Dr Jamie Reid Baxter** to promote projects such as the Elizabeth Melville celebration, Church Service in Scots (at St Giles cathedral), and Gavin Douglas commemoration.
- (c) Work of **Rab Wilson** who was the centre's poet in residence. We continue to promote projects such as the recent Edinburgh Iranian Festival.

- (d) **Perth Burns Club**, we promote events run by this society, including their Scottish day of Culture held each year.
- (e) We promote Scots-related events and competitions sponsored by the **Saltire Society**.
- (f) We promote Scots-related events run by the **Scottish Storytelling Centre**.
- (g) **Ayrshire Opera Experience**. Last year they produced a new opera in Scots, written by the manager of the Burns Birthplace Museum. The SLC helped to promote this and has since arranged for David Douglas, who organised the production, to be interviewed for Scots Radio.

Academic

The SLC continues to have links with various academic institutions by way of a number of individuals including J Derrick McClure, Chris Robinson, Caroline Macafee, Sheena Blackhall and Jamie Reid Baxter, whose academic work has been promoted on the SLC website. While there is no formal agreement, there has been a growing recognition among academics that the SLC is the appropriate place to deposit and access certain work. Recently Dr Caroline Macafee has arranged for the SLC to make available the work of the late **Jack Aitken**, while the family of the late **Dr David Purves** have also offered his papers to the SLC.

Local authorities. A number of individuals within local authorities in traditional Scots language areas have contacted the SLC over the year, requesting information, guidance and translations. It may be time to look at ways of drawing authorities together within a more formal partnership to provide information to (about place-names, translations etc) and promote Scots within community groups.

TARGET: Administer 'Scots Toun' project, making an award by end July 2014.

The Scots Language Centre developed and administered this major project during 2013 and 2014.

TARGET: Provide the Scottish Government with a report and recommendations based on the findings of the 'Scots Toun' pilot project by end October 2014.

The Scots Language Centre provided the Scottish Government with a report by October 2014.

The Scots Language Centre is considering how best to take forward this initiative and intends to meet with staff at the Scottish Government to discuss this in more detail. The SLC believes that the format developed for the 2014 project may not be appropriate in the long term and would seek to develop alternative mechanisms for recognizing Scots language community activities in future years. It is our intention to explore these with staff at the SG.

TARGET: Host an event at the Soutar House bringing together Scots language interests to consider the results of Census 2011 and how this information can be used to support Scots and policy development by end November 2014.

The Scots Language Centre, Scottish Government and NRS discussed the possibility of hosting an event to discuss the outcome of the 2011 census. Unfortunately these discussions did not progress beyond the exploratory stage. SLC believes that the data collected in the census requires further examination, discussion and analysis. We commissioned a paper from Dr Caroline Macafee in which some of the data is analysed and discussed. This paper was to be presented at an event in Perth. As this did not take place, SLC has arranged for the paper to be presented instead at this year's Forum for Research on the Languages of Scotland and Ulster conference in Ayr in August. The paper will be read by SLC Director, Michael Hance, as Dr Macafee will be unable to present the paper due to other commitments.

Working with Scots Language co-ordinators

SLC has established friendly working relationships with the Scots language co-ordinators. We have had extensive and productive discussions with the co-ordinators on a range of subjects. We have re-organised the education section of our web site in response to suggestions from the co-ordinators.

We have been working with the co-ordinators and intofilm on the co-ordinators Gruffalo project.

We will be working with Creative Scotland and the co-ordinators in developing the Scots Screivar project.

SLC provides information to the wider community about the co-ordinators and their work.

Business Plan

The business plan agreed with the Scottish Governments remains current.

Michael Hance

16 March 2015



www.scotslanguage.com

SCOTS LANGUAGE CENTRE

QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL - JULY 2015

- Introduction

The Scots Language Centre begins the new financial year in optimistic mood. Levels of engagement with the public continue to grow, our finances are in good order and we are engaged in collaborative projects with colleagues across a range of sectors. Details of recent activities are outlined below.

- Web site

The Centre has three main functions: information provision, advocacy and archiving. Our web site is the first stop for those searching online for information about Scots and it is vital that we present information about Scots in a form which is easily accessible to the range of people who use our services.

In the spring we launched an updated version of our web site – this is the most recent in a series of designs which the Centre has developed over the last 7 years. The latest site is the most complex yet and provides a number of enhanced management tools for those adding and editing content.

The new version of the site is intended to improve visitor experience by incorporating high quality visual content, clearer audio content and more effective organisation of features.

Since the new site was launched we have become aware of a number of content management and presentation issues which need to be addressed. Some of these relate to accessibility and navigation while others are connected to ‘broken’ links and pages. As the Centre is principally an online organisation it was our view that these issues needed immediate attention and that a thorough audit of the site was required if our users were to maintain confidence in us and the services we provide.

In May we agreed to begin the process of systematically auditing the site with the intention of updating, correcting and cleaning the site. As a result it was agreed that all other projects should be suspended until the audit was complete and the problems identified were dealt with.

This process is now under way and we are working through a long list of issues identified by the staff. It is our expectation that the site will be fully operational and in good order by the middle of the autumn.

The Centre has amassed many thousands of articles, features, images, videos and audio recordings on its site and these require constant management. We have built and maintain the largest online collection of Scots language material in the world. For this to be fully accessible, the Centre will need to build a content audit into its annual programme of activities. This has become particularly apparent in recent times as the quantity of material has increased ever further.

In spite of the issues noted above we believe that the new version of the site offers users a much enhanced experience. We are particularly happy that the enhanced version of our education section has been built in collaboration with the Scots language co-ordinators. We believe it will help meet the interest in this subject which the co-ordinators are developing in schools.

- Social media and other online platforms

The Centre continues to develop its presence on social media. For a number of years the Centre has run a group on facebook aimed at engaging social media users in Scots language related content. This large facebook group had become increasingly user led and it was agreed in April to change the name of the group to Scots Language Forum. This group is now administered principally by users and provides space for informal chat on the subject of Scots. Users can post their own content to the page. The Centre has reactivated its official page enabling us to have closer management of the content posted in our space. The Centre's page also feeds to Twitter and we have increased significantly our postings to that platform.

The Centre's collection of images on Flickr continues to grow. Our presence there is under review as we are conscious of the increasing relevance of Instagram to our audiences. The wholesale transfer of material to Instagram is a long term possibility which the Centre will need to consider.

The Centre maintains a limited presence on YouTube and continues to attract visitors to its channel.

Our iTunes presence is mainly connected to the delivery of our Scots Language Radio podcast. The number of listeners continues to grow.

The Centre has begun a review of its social media strategy and we have been working recently with two artists – Stewart Bremner and Andrew Barr - to develop social media content independently of the content developed for our web site. Our aim is to increase user engagement on social media and to develop material which may be of use to the Scots language co-ordinators. We are presently seeking funding from Creative Scotland to develop these resources further.

The Centre is also seeking funding from Creative Scotland to commission external support in developing our social media presence.

- Finances

The Centre continues to enjoy sound financial health due to the ongoing support of our funders and the prudent management of our budget by our Treasurer and staff.

In recent times the Centre has experienced the loss of our very long standing Treasurer, Gordon Beange. As noted in previous communications with the Scottish Government, Gordon managed the Centre's financial affairs for nearly 21 years. On his death last year the Centre employed the services of a new Treasurer, Susan Grant. Susan immediately began the process of sorting through Gordon's paper and electronic files. This process continues to the present.

Susan's job was made more complicated by the deterioration that had taken place in record keeping which had occurred as Gordon's health

failed. In particular Susan noticed some underpayments and overpayments to HMRC. These have now been resolved to the benefit of the Centre. Susan is presently negotiating the terms with HMRC but it is likely the Centre will recover £3600 in overpayments from the Revenue later this year.

The Centre has re-invested its reserves with the aim of generating an annual income which will enhance our existing support from the Scottish government and other funders and donors.

Michael Hance

Director

1st September 2015



Summary

Over the last two quarters the SLC has focused on refining and optimizing of our core online presence to improve the quality of the services provided and further meet audience needs.

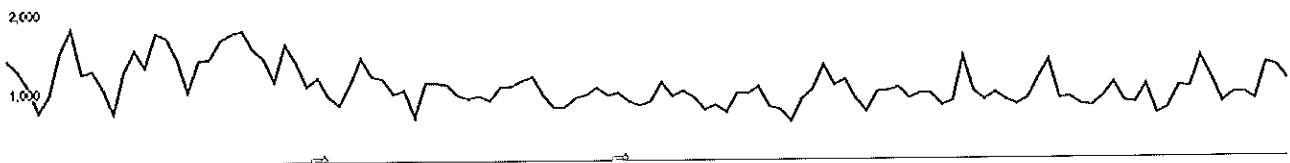
This has included the launch of a revamped structure and visual refresh of the website, an extensive review and research phase examining the existing assets, audience research, revisiting the core organisational objectives, refining our digital strategy in line with developing trends and online behaviour, and extensive rationalisation and reworking of content across the Centre's properties

Improving user experience

A core aim of the revitalised core online property www.scotslanguage.com is to improve the experience for core audiences, expanding engagement and enhancing the quality of content through a more open structure and higher quality presentation.

This has been dramatically reflected in the analytics data for 2015. In comparison to 2014 the core website has seen a 30% increase in pages viewed by the audience during visits; visitors spent on average 56% longer on the website and there was a 10% reduction in 'bounce' (users leaving the site after viewing only one page).

Site traffic



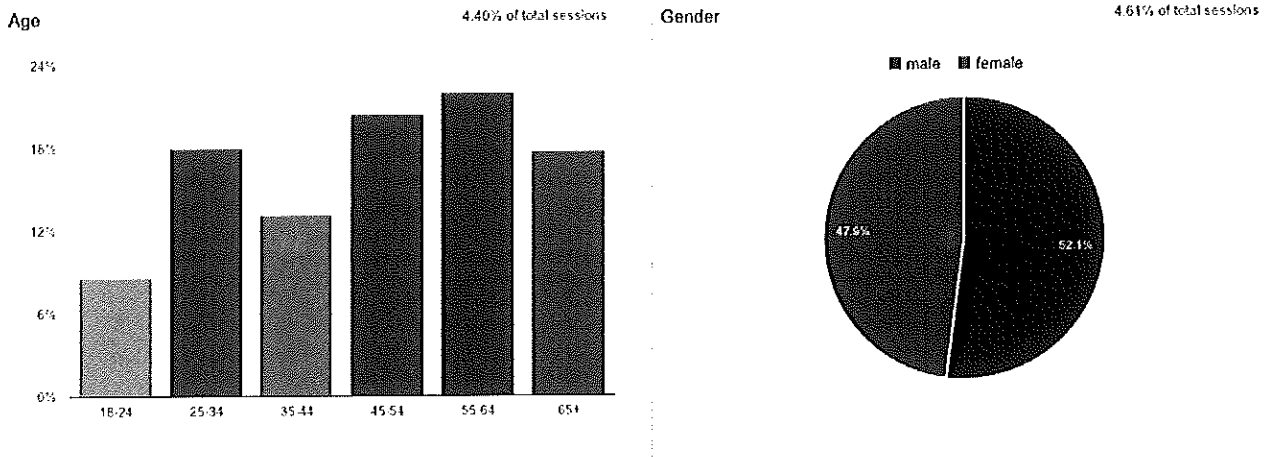
Site traffic is consistent overall with last year although the independence referendum caused a significant surge in traffic around Scots language and Scots cultural subjects in the second quarter of 2014 leaving second quarter traffic in 2015 around 15% lower than with the comparable period last year.

Scots Language Centre - Spring / Summer 2015

The percentage of new vs. return visitors dropped by 6% but this is compensated for with the new site developing a core audience of users who visit the site on a daily or weekly basis for new Scots language content.

Audience

New reporting tools have given us access to more detailed demographic information on the audience. This along with an ongoing consumer research project means we are developing a



deeper understanding of our users and their needs.

The age range of users on the site shows a reasonable range with a skew towards the 55-64 demographic, the gender distribution is roughly equal with a slight male bias.

The geographical distribution of the audience remain constant, over 60% of the audience is within the UK. Brazil remains a significant new global audience but India has also emerged as a small but growing international audience.

Countries where there are known to be significant expat communities and Scottish descendants remain the top three global audiences.

Scots Language Centre - Spring / Summer 2015

Traffic sources

There are two main drivers in the traffic to www.scotslanguage.com These are search engine referrals derived from users searching for 'Scots language' related terms and site referrals where users follow links from other websites.

Search referrals

The SLC core properties continue to dominate the body of relevant first page results for Scots language and Scots language cultural terms on the major search engines. SLC's content is presently represented in 6 of the top10 results in Google searches for 'Scots language'.

The search terms we see audiences using remains consistent with previous seasons, '*Scots Language*' and '*Scottish Language*' are always high in the charts and the seasonal search terms make their annual appearance.

The specially commissioned 'Scots Weddings' feature continues to deliver a high level of traffic (and a good level of user engagement).

Direct referrals

Direct referrals show a similar pattern to last year, the following snapshot of a timeframe of data shows that Social Media traffic remains significant while authoritative sources (including the BBC, Wikipedia and scotland.org remain significant drivers.

Site	Visitors	New Visitors	Pages visited	Time on site
scotland.org	2674	1173	2.57	00:01:35
facebook.com	2845	936	2.98	00:01:52

Scots Language Centre - Spring / Summer 2015

Twitter	964	388	2.08	00:02:20
en.wikipedia.org	347	319	3.02	00:02:46
bbc.co.uk	231	99	1.76	00:01:12
<u>cs.stir.ac.uk</u>	222	188	4.84	00:05:30

Scots Language Centre - Spring / Summer 2015

Social media activity

Over the first two years of the Centre's activity on social media networks we saw a slow but steady increase in participants with a core engaged group and wider casual audience. As the size of our subscriber base has reached a critical mass over the last 12 months the return on activity, while always sustainable, has continued to improve.

Twitter

The Twitter account @scotslanguage has 2,889 followers and demonstrates a high level of engagement with posts frequently quoted and retweeted especially around the popular 'Word of the week' feature.

Facebook

As part of its review of activity, the Centre has shifted focus away from managing an online community within Facebook to developing a suite of Facebook pages which better engage with existing and new audiences while reducing the burden and problematic activity an online community can involve.

The Scots Language Centre Group has been successfully transitioned to a non affiliated Scots Language Forum and is thriving under community management while the Scots Language Centre page is showing good levels of engagement. The Scots Language Radio page and other presences will grow as a valuable channel for engaging core and new audiences.

YouTube

The Scots Language Youtube channel in addition to providing the video content served on the main www.scotslanguage.com site also provides exposure for the Centre and Scots language in the wider context of YouTube communities.

The volume of content published by the SLC spanning from interviews and poetry to song and drama has over 211 videos show casing original content in Scots.

Over the period covered in this report the Centre achieved 3,828 views totalling over 223 hours of viewing, demonstrating a high level of engagement in the material (which is mostly short form and viewed in its entirety)

Scots Language Centre - Spring / Summer 2015

SCOTS LANGUAGE CENTRE
QUARTERLY REPORT
AUGUST 2015 – JANUARY 2016

Introduction

This report covers two quarters, namely August to October 2015 and November 2015 to January 2016.

The reports covers the period of the year which has traditionally been the busiest for the Scots Language Centre in terms of web site traffic and engagement on social media.

Interest in Scots language and culture can be encouraged and developed over the late autumn and winter months by connecting web site features and social media activity to the series of events and festivals that take place during this period. Details of how we have capitalised on this interest are outlined below.

Social media

The Centre has increasingly focused on developing its presence on social media with the aim of attracting new audiences. We have shifted our attention recently to producing material which can be easily shared by users. Previously the Centre had taken a relatively passive approach to social media, posting links to its own web site and to Scots language content hosted by other organisations as well as individual writers and so on. This proved worthwhile in the sense that it drove traffic to our web site and increased knowledge and understanding of Scots. However it represents an approach that is no longer viable for a range of reasons connected to trends in social media use. We are conscious of the need to develop product that takes account of the immediacy of social media interaction and the desire of social media users to share material easily.

The Centre has taken the view that it must enhance its social media offer. In the summer of last year we began to manage a

number of additional pages on facebook aimed at securing a larger and more engaged audience. Our informal Scots Language Forum page now represents the busiest online space for discussion of Scots language issues and engages a large audience of social media users. We also manage an 'official' Facebook page, and a Scots New Testament page. We also help manage the Scots Language Society's page and post regularly across a number of other groups and pages connected to Scots language and culture. Our reach is increasing as a result of these activities and we continue to attract new 'members' and followers.

We continue to be the main Scots language presence on twitter with a growing number of followers. We had become aware that our presence on twitter needed to be reviewed. We have now decoupled our Facebook and Twitter pages enabling the Centre to target content more effectively. Additionally we have begun to use more sophisticated posting techniques to maximise our audience reach. Social media monitoring tools to allow us to check the effectiveness of our new strategies and we are able to see a clear uptick in engagement with the Centre's content.

Part of our new engagement strategy involves producing highly shareable product. For example, at New Year we produced an attractive Gif which contained the greeting, 'Lang May yer Lum Reek!' which was widely shared across facebook. Our Christmas Gif was similarly popular and resulted in the Scots Language Centre being one of the most visible Scottish cultural organisations on social media over the Xmas holidays.

SLC out performed similarly sized and larger cultural organisations on social media during the festive period by continuing to 'live' post during the holidays. For example, the Scots Language Centre posted over 20 times in one week during the Xmas and New Year holiday. This included content ranging from the Christmas story in Scots to poems in Shetland dialect. We posted on Xmas Eve, Xmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. As these were live rather than scheduled posts we had to count on the commitment of our staff to take time to engage on social media during the holiday period. By way of comparison, during the same period, Scottish Language Dictionaries, the Saltire Society and the Ulster Scots Agency did not post on social media at all while the Scottish Book Trust posted only once – on New Year's Day.

The Centre experienced high levels of engagement on social media at Hallowe'en, St Andrew's Day, Hogmanay and Burns Night. We have commissioned material specifically for use on social media on Valentine's Day and will be posting new graphic based language learning material on social media over the late winter and early spring.

The Centre continues to maintain and enhance its large collection of images on flickr. This represents the largest collection of Scots language images online and continues to attract a growing audience.

We have continued to promote and work with our colleagues at Scots Language Radio. We have helped them develop their social media presence and have promoted their product widely on our own channels as well as promoting and developing their presence on i-Tunes.

Web site

The Scots Language Centre web site represents the largest and most popular Scots language presence online. We continue to enjoy extremely favourable positions in Google rankings and as a result we remain the first port of call for users seeking information about Scots language and culture. We aim to offer a very high quality product which gives users access to a variety of educational, informative and light-hearted content in an attractive and easy to use online space. Last year we undertook a lengthy review of our content, focusing on repairing broken links, tidying up features and ensuring that articles were accompanied where possible by high quality graphics and images. We also sought to ensure that our video and audio material was presented in the most attractive way, giving users easy access to a range of spoken Scots.

We expect to complete the review process in the next few months. At present we are completing the restructuring of the 'advocacy' section of the site. This part of the site contains information about a range of complex policy issues as well as a record of international and local political developments connected to Scots. This has been a lengthy process as the material is so abundant and complex. We have commissioned an expert on Scots

language policy who is based in Germany to undertake this work for us and good progress is being made in completing it.

The Centre has enhanced its web site with the following new features:

Funerals – following on from our very popular weddings feature we have developed a feature on funerals. The feature provides suggestions for appropriate Scots language poems and readings for funerals.

Weddings – the weddings feature has been enhanced to include recordings of the suggested poems.

Education – the education section has been further developed and contains the following new items: a Scots translation of the Declaration of Arbroath, the history of Scots animation produced by Education Scotland, information about the SQA Scottish Studies Award, information about the Historical Thesaurus and Boswell's Scottish Dictionary, Scottish Government language policy and new resources on food and language

Development of new feature on the 'Aitken Papers' - SLC has collaborated with Dr Caroline Macafee of Aberdeen University on collating, editing and digitising the work of the prominent Scots Language academic, Jack Aitken, to produce a unique resource for scholars and academics. This project was completed in the autumn.

SLC has appointed Stuart Paterson to be its new poet in virtual residence, Stuart's work will feature on the home page of the web site over the next two years.

The New Testament in Scots – SLC continues to administer the affairs of the W L Lorimer Trust and has developed a programme of features which showcase the book and the recordings which accompany it. Special features marked All Saints Day, Advent and Christmas.

The Centre has attracted a large audience to its web site in the last six months. Please see the attached paper for more detailed information on this web site traffic.

Collaborative Projects

SLC is presently working with Scottish Language Dictionaries and the Scots Language Co-ordinators on developing online based learning resources for use in schools and elsewhere.

SLC continues to take part in the work of the Literature Alliance for Scotland.

SLC continues to work with the National Library of Scotland in promoting Scots language projects.

SLC staff meet regularly with the Scots language co-ordinators to discuss ways in which we can support their work.

SLC in the press

SLC continues to act as the first port of call for journalists and commentators interested in Scots language issues. SLC spokespeople regularly comment on Scots language issues but we also encourage journalists to contact and seek comment from partner organisations.

SLC director, Michael Hance, took part in a number of radio discussions on Scots language connected to changes in phonology and dialect.

SLC director, Michael Hance, appeared in the BBC Northern Ireland TV programme 'Mindin yer language'.

SLC was quoted extensively in the press and radio in connection with a reported decision by the TESCO supermarket to change the name of one of their products.

Events

The SLC Director delivered a paper on Scots in the Census at the Languages of Scotland and Ulster conference held in Ayr in the autumn.

SLC staff attended and staffed an information stall at the Education Scotland Scots language conference in Stirling in the autumn.

SLC staff delivered talks to community groups in Edinburgh and Duns.

SLC staff met with staff and students at Eyemouth High School to discuss and record Scots language projects there.

Census

The Centre collaborated with the Scottish Government and other interested agencies in co-ordinating responses to the NRS census consultation.

Enquiry service

SLC has received a large number of enquiries over the last six months on a wide range of topics connected to Scots language and culture. We aim to assist enquirers within a week of receiving e-mails and have succeeded in doing this in 100% of cases.

Governance

Dr Colin Milton, the long standing convenor of SLC's board, has resigned and has been replaced by Cllr Kate Howie.

Dr Warren Maguire has joined the Council.

Michael Hance
31st January 2016



Summary

Over the last two quarters the SLC has focussed on refining and optimising the SLC core online presence to improve the quality of the services provided and further meet audience needs.

This has included the launch of a revamped structure and visual refresh of the website, an extensive review and research phase examining and restructuring the existing assets, audience research, revisiting the core organisational objectives, refining the digital strategy inline with developing trends and online behaviour, and extensive rationalisation and reworking of content across the Centre's properties

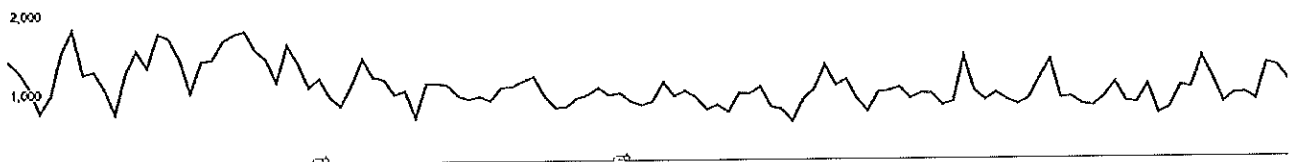
Improving user experience

A core aim of the revitalised core online property www.scotslanguage.com was improving the experience for core audiences, expanding the engagement and quality of content through a more open structure and developing a higher quality presentation.

This has been dramatically reflected in the analytics data in a like for like comparison of dates between 2014/15 and 2015/16, the core website has seen an 18% increase in pages viewed by the audience during visits, visitors spent on average 25% longer on the website and there was a 9% reduction in 'bounce' (users leaving the site after viewing only one page).

The current figures represent the ongoing aim to improve audience engagement and the aggregate gains since the project started have seen user engagement / usage almost treble.

Site traffic



Site traffic is overall consistent with last years figures. There has been a slight increase by 2% in regular visitors while new audience figures have grown by around 15% on average across the seasonal peaks.

Scots Language Centre, Autumn 2015 - Spring 2016

The relatively flat growth in overall traffic volume (relative to growth over the last 5 years) reflects in part the strategy of providing more content and engagement on social media channels without driving users to the core online presence.

Scots Language Centre, Autumn 2015 - Spring 2016

Audience

New reporting tools have given us access to more detailed demographic information on the audience, along with an ongoing consumer research project we are developing a deeper understanding of the users and their needs.

This is the second year of access to the demographic information and interestingly the age bias which was previously weighted towards the 55-64 age range has shifted and 25-34 year olds now represent the most significant age group, the gender distribution is roughly equal with a slight female bias.



The geographical distribution of the audience remain constant, over 60% of the audience is within the UK. Russia is developing as an emerging global audience while countries where there are known to be significant expat communities and Scottish descendants remain the top three global audiences.

Scots Language Centre, Autumn 2015 - Spring 2016

Traffic sources

There are two main drivers in the traffic to www.scotslanguage.com Search engine referrals coming from users searching for Scots language related terms and site referrals where users follow links from other websites.

Search referrals

The SLC core properties continue to cover the main body of relevant first page results for Scots language and Scots language cultural terms on the major search engines.

The search terms we see audiences using remains consistent with previous seasons, '*Scots Language*' and '*Scottish Language*' are always high in the charts and the seasonal search terms make their annual appearance.

The SLC commissioned materials continue to deliver a high level of traffic (and a good level of user engagement) notable recent campaigns including 'Scottish love poems' developed specifically to develop new audiences through search channels have delivered strong returns with search traffic representing over 31% of the audience.

Direct referrals

Direct referrals show a similar pattern to last year, the following snapshot of a timeframe of data shows that Social Media traffic remains significant while authoritative sources (including the BBC and National Library for Scotland) remain significant drivers.

Site	Visitors	New Visitors	Pages visited	Time on site
facebook.com	2483	936	2.04	00:01:20

Scots Language Centre, Autumn 2015 - Spring 2016

Twitter	2074	388	1.97	00:01:09
bbc.co.uk	231	99	1.76	00:00:51
scotland.org	223	1173	3.54	00:03:14
<u>scotshoose.com</u>	153	5	4.38	00:01:00
<u>digital.nls.uk</u>	118	92	5.61	00:04:52

Scots Language Centre, Autumn 2015 - Spring 2016

Social media activity

Over the first two years of the Centre's activity on social media networks we saw a slow but steady increase in participants with a core engaged group and wider causal audience. As the size of our subscriber base has reached a critical mass over the last 12 months the return on activity while always sustainable has continued to improve.

Twitter

The Twitter account @scotslanguage has 3,186 followers (an increase of 10% in the last 3 months) and demonstrates a high level of engagement. Posts are frequently quoted and retweeted. Recent target campaigns around specifically commissioned media have been particularly successful.

Facebook

The Centre as part of its review of activity has shifted focus away from managing an online community within Facebook to developing a suite of Facebook pages which better engage with existing and new audiences while reducing the burden which managing an online community can involve.

The core Facebook page 'Scots Language Centre' although relatively new has a good level of audience share with content regularly reaching 1.5K users and engagement figures in the 10-15% region. The social media campaigns run around specifically commissioned media (such as the Valentine's Day and Christmas materials) have worked well in developing a strong core audience.

Average daily reach for the Facebook page is around 601 users. As with the wider audience figures there is a slight female bias in the demographics - the age group is older than the core online presence at 20% of all users in the 45-64 bracket

YouTube

Scots Language Centre, Autumn 2015 - Spring 2016

The Scots Language Youtube channel in addition to providing the video content served on the main www.scotslanguage.com site also provides exposure for the Centre and Scots language in the wider context of YouTube communities.

The volume of content published by the SLC spanning from interviews and poetry to song and drama has over 244 videos showing original content in Scots.

Over the period covered in this report the Centre achieved 4,912 views totalling over 327 hours of viewing demonstrating a high level of engagement in the material (which is mostly short form and viewed in its entirety)

SCOTS LANGUAGE CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2017

1. Introduction

The Scots Language Centre has completed another successful year delivering information and support online to a large and increasingly engaged audience.

We have managed a number of projects and been central to the discussion of Scots language issues. The Centre continues to be the main point of access for information about Scots online, attracting several hundred thousand visits in the last year.

The Centre continues to respond to developments in technology, design and use of online resource. We have maintained our position as the largest, most used and most frequently referenced Scots language resource.

2. Web site

www.scotslanguage.com is the largest Scots language resource online. The web site benefits from over ten years of continuous development and includes a huge range of content. We have added a number of new features in the last year and reviewed and restructured existing content.

The Education section of the web site has been extensively restructured to make it easier for users to find content, to present the content in more attractive ways and to enhance existing content with new features.

The Centre has begun the process of rehousing material from the Education Scotland web site and we expect this to be completed by the end of May.

We have developed a new resource for use in schools and social media focused on body parts. The images can be shared individually or as a poster and can be downloaded or printed for use in school classrooms.

We have restructured the advocacy section of our web site. This contains information about policy and political issues referencing domestic and international developments.

We developed features on funerals and memorial events to complement our popular feature on weddings.

The home page of the site has featured old and new content, a news section which is regularly updated, and weekly features on words, poetry and proverbs.

The home page features video and audio content as well as links to image resources on Flickr and Instagram.

The web site links to our multiple online platforms on social media along with image and video sharing sites.

3. Social Media

The Centre's official facebook page continues to attract new likes and has had an increasing level of engagement over the past year. We have worked on making content more shareable and aimed at improving the quality of the images it contains.

We have seen a significant increase in engagement on our 'official' page with more shares and comments than ever before. The body part images and other specially commissioned graphics – for example, those connected to events and festivals have been particularly popular.

The Centre continues to attract followers on Twitter and is the main account from which Scots language content is delivered. The Centre's highest level of engagement on Twitter this year was on Valentine's Day when our specially commissioned graphic received 76k impressions on one day.

The Centre administers the New Testament in Scots facebook page. It's a small scale effort but from it we deliver high quality Scots language content across the social media platform and have recorded a modest gain in likes and shares over the last year.

The Centre part administers the lively and largely self sustaining Scots Language Forum facebook page. This group has grown again this year and represents the most significant online forum for academic and popular discussion of Scots language and culture.

The Scots Language Centre account on flickr represents the largest collection of Scots language images online.

The Scots Language Centre has enhanced its image sharing capacity online by developing an account on Instagram.

The Centre's channel on YouTube represents a collection of Scots language audio and video material gathered together from across the internet, along with self-generated content.

The Centre promotes Scots language events, readings, book launches, and theatre and music performances, We act as a showcase for writers, artists and performers and encourages those connected to Scots language and culture to use our services. We share information about events and activities

across a range of institutions. The Centre represents the main showcase for Scots language product online.

4. Enquiry service

The Centre acts as the main point of information for enquiries about Scots. Enquiries take a number of forms. Users may be seeking information about language issues: for example, the meaning of words or the features of a local dialect, or more general matters to do with, for example, language policy or the words to a poem.

The Centre provides translation services to a number of users and in the last year we have provided Scots versions of guidance to the EU referendum and the local council elections to the Electoral Commission, as well as a number of other individuals and institutions.

5. SLC and the outside world

SLC has worked extensively with the schools co-ordinators. We have taken part in discussions with NRS about the census. We worked with the NLS on the development of the Wee Windaes project. We worked with SLD on developing our body parts graphics. We are working with SLD in developing Scots language maps. We have worked with Education Scotland in rehousing Scots language content from its web site.

SLC staff have taken part in discussions and conferences at Edinburgh University, the Literature Forum for Scotland, the National Library of Scotland and the Elphinstone Institute.

SLC has been the main point of contact for journalists and others seeking information and comment on Scots language issues. We have been quoted extensively and appeared on a range of mainstream and alternative news and comment sites.

SLC maintained its connection with Scots Radio, the regular podcast that it founded and developed along with broadcaster, Frieda Morrison. Scots Radio is now an independent and self-sustaining entity.

SLC has been working with actor and performer, Ishbel Macfarlane in developing minority language training for institutions.

6. Funding

SLC managed a cut of £5000 in its annual funding. Staff hours were reduced and spending carefully monitored to identify where further savings might be made.

7. Governance

Our secretary, James Forbes, died in the summer of 2016 and was replaced by Dr Warren Maguire from the University of Edinburgh.

Our convener, Cllr Kate Howie, resigned from her position in April 2017 and has been replaced by Rab Wilson.

Ashley Douglas and Ishbel Macfarlane have been appointed to serve on the Council.

The Centre has taken steps to lower the average age of its members and ensure better gender balance. Both these aims have been achieved in the last year.

Michael Hance
Director

10 April 2017



SCOTS LANGUAGE CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2018

1. Introduction

The Centre has completed another successful year delivering information about Scots on a range of online platforms. Audience numbers and engagement levels continue to increase and we have developed and enhanced our product to appeal to a broader range of users than ever.

The Centre has faced a number of staffing challenges over the last year, details of which are described below.

2. Website

The SLC continues to focus on the delivery of online services as the core outreach and engagement channel for the organisation. In line with, and building on previous activity, the Centre is active across three areas.

Core online presence, the SLC maintains a core online presence at www.scotslanguage.com which serves as the foundation of all online activity. The current online presence is structured to serve two main roles:

- Awareness raising of, and information on the Scots language, its roots and role in contemporary society.
- Providing a platform for the dissemination and promotion of Scots language materials and activity both on and offline.

The core online presence has become a unique and invaluable online resource with a wealth of information and content amassed over 10 years of continual activity.

The web site is home to many thousands of articles and images connected to Scots language, and represents the largest collection of Scots language material online.

This year we have undertaken extensive restructuring of the Education section of our web site. In part this has been done to accommodate material which was previously housed on the Education Scotland web site and Scottish Language Dictionaries' schuil wab.

Alongside the restructuring process we have begun developing a Scots Learning Centre which will provide easy access to resources from a range of institutions as well as newly developed material aimed at young learners.

The Centre had previously left this area rather undeveloped on the grounds that other institutions were providing this service. As other bodies have reduced their capacities in this field we have sought to fill the gaps. We have benefitted significantly in this regard from the leadership and direction of our new education specialist, Laura Green. The Centre's learning pages represent the largest online collection of information about Scots language in education and will see further development in the next year.

Laura has undertaken significant promotional work and has liaised with practitioners in schools to ensure that the education pages of the site meet teachers' and learners' needs more effectively.

We have developed a range of graphics connected to numbers for use by learners and teachers and we have shared these extensively online.

We have worked closely with Bruce Eunson, the national Scots Language Education Co-ordinator, in developing our education resources.

Welcome additional funding from the Scottish Government has helped ensure the development of high quality, accessible and attractive new resource.

In the past year the Centre has more than doubled the volume of education materials generated and seen a 246% increase in use of teaching resources.

We have worked with actor and educator, Ishbel MacFarlane, to enhance our teaching resources with the use of audio material and expect to develop this further in the next year.

In the last two years the Centre has begun to focus on the development of material designed specifically for sharing on social media. Despite this shift in strategy - which has meant moving away from treating the website as the core destination for all audiences – we continue to attract large numbers of visitors and good levels of engagement.

Over the last twelve months the website has seen a rise in traffic of 27% achieving over 250,000 visits. About one quarter of our audience visits the site on a regular basis.

Over the last 7 years a clear trend in audience behaviour has been visible in the analytics for the site. We usually think of these as representing two distinct audiences:

- Visitors who use the ‘What is Scots?’ section of the web site to explore the history and contemporary significance of the language.
- Engaged speakers / enthusiasts, who may already have some knowledge of Scots and are seeking specific or general information, topical material or entertainment.

The site offers an extensive Scots language orientation section which is optimised to attract the majority of search engine referrals for ‘What is Scots’ freeing up the rest of the site to serve the recurring ‘engaged’ audiences. This has proved an effective approach to date. In the next year an updated and revised version of the website will attempt to build on this by providing onward channels for the ‘What is Scots’ audience leading them into the community and subscription platforms.

Longstanding web site features including ‘Word of the Week’, Scots proverbs and poem of the month continue to appeal to users and will form a key element of the revised version of the site currently being developed. Our poetry editor, Sally Evans, provides invaluable service in terms of maintaining the poetry content of the site and in responding to the many enquiries we receive on this subject.

We have benefitted from the input of Ashley Douglas in maintaining our extensive collection of material on parliamentary affairs and policy development.

We have provided extensive coverage of Scots language affairs in our news and events sections. The Centre seeks to gather information about Scots language activities from practitioners, institutional partners, activists and creatives in the Scots language world with the purpose of promoting Scots and maintaining a record of activities connected to this subject.

Trends and comparative performance of the site against previous equivalent timeframes show a 27% increase in visitors, 20% increase in page views and 5% increase in number of visits per user compared to 2016-17. Looking back further to 2010-11 period shows that over a 5 year period the core website has seen a trebling of visitor figures and doubling of page views.

After several years of dramatic increases in mobile device traffic the split between desktop and mobile devices has slowed with a shift of around 6% in the last twelve months in favour of mobile usage. Traffic to the site splits at around 45% mobile use to 55% desktop. The Centre continues to monitor usage and adapt and refine the online experience to meet new device requirements.

Referrals and traffic sources, can be broken down into the two audiences (what is Scots and engaged). In line with historical data over 70% of the general referrals comes from search engines.

However excluding the 'what is Scots' audience, social media channels provide over 80% of the overall traffic to the core site with Facebook representing 52% of social media referrals followed by 28% from Twitter which shows significant increases especially from Twitter.

SLC is committed to a process of continual assessment and refinement of its core presence and activity across the relevant online platforms. We achieve this through the continuous measurement of audience engagement.

The core presence has undergone several updates over the last twelve months including improved archiving, and an audit of content across several areas. We will launch an updated and improved version of the site sometime around November 2018. We hope that this will help us address the considerable challenges of presenting over 10 years of Scots language content to our ever growing audiences.

The Centre's web site is by far the largest and most used of any Scots language resource. We reach large audiences across the world and demonstrate through the large range of material on offer the diverse nature of our culture.

3. Social media

The Centre aims to provide a programme of social media content throughout the year. Unlike many other funded organisations the Centre is able to provide content during the major holidays and we

have had particular success in attracting audiences at Christmas and New Year with daily postings of high quality content.

Our main social media activities are outlined below:

Twitter, continues to provide a strong platform for promotion of content and 'light' engagement, @Scotslanguage has over 5,555 followers with an estimated reach of 70,000 users through its network of followers.

Facebook, primarily serves as a community engagement space and as a tool for the promotion of activity on the core presence with daily updates featuring content from the SLC site and wider Scots Language community.

There are two key areas of activity, the Scots Language Forum group (which was moved from the direct control of the Centre to community management and has now become a vibrant self sustaining group), and the Scots Language Centre Page. The former page has around 5000 followers and is largely self sustaining.

The Scots Language Centre Page has over 2,589 followers and a monthly reach in excess of 15,000 Facebook users with a high level of audience engagement.

The development of a **Flickr** collection has been a long term project for the Centre running since 2009. It is not only a valuable archival resource recording the use of Scots in everyday contexts but also widens exposure of Scots to new audiences, with over 1,334 photos showcasing Scots language in everyday situations.

Instagram and Soundcloud, both of these platforms to an extent replicate activity on other channels (Flickr and the core presence respectively) but provide access to new audiences and different contexts for sharing and interaction. Our activity in Instagram has increased significantly in the past few months.

YouTube, continues to be an important channel for the Centre providing an engaging, immediate context for the promotion of Scots. Activity is split between the collation and aggregation of existing Scots content published by the Scots language community along with the generation of new materials and publishing of archive materials online.

With a strong subscriber base and over 200 videos online the channel has reached over 33,000 users and continues to provide a highly effective promotional tool for the Centre and Scots language.

4. Enquiry service

The Centre acts as the main point of information for enquiries about Scots. Enquiries take a number of forms. Users may be seeking information about language issues: for example, the meaning of words or the features of a local dialect, or more general matters to do with, for example, language policy or the words to a poem.

Our language officer, Dr Dauvit Horsbroch, provides an excellent service in this regard endeavouring to answer the many enquiries we receive on a range of matters connected to language and culture within a maximum of five working days.

5. SLC and the outside world

In the last year the Centre has worked with institutions and individuals on a range of projects.

Education Scotland – transferring resources to the new website and developing education resources in collaboration with the Scots Language Education Co-ordinator

National Library of Scotland and Creative Scotland – promoting the Scots Scriever project on our web site and participating in the Scriever Steering Group. Maintaining a point of access to the Wee Windaes project on the SLC web site home page.

Scottish Government – working with civil servants in preparing evidence for the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages enquiry.

Scottish Parliament - providing advice on Scots language content online.

Association for Scottish Literary Studies – working with ASLS on developing support for Scots.

North East Scotland Language Board – providing support and information to the new board. Our director and social media officer have been appointed to the advisory board. Staff from SLC attended the launch event for NESLB and provided extensive coverage of this on social media.

Scottish Language Dictionaries – SLC has maintained a long term and extremely cordial relationship with SLD. This year we agreed to rehouse

material from SLD's schuil wab. We promote SLD's 'word of the week' and meet regularly with staff there to discuss joint working opportunities.

Shetland Forwards – we have a long standing relationship with Shetland Forwards and are in regular contact with members of its committee to discuss matters of mutual interest. We maintain an easy access point to SF materials from a dedicated window on the home page of our web site.

Ulster Scots Agency – our director and the director of USA maintain regular contact.

Historic Environment Scotland – we have developed increasingly cordial relations with HES and have provided advice and assistance to the institution as it seeks to develop a Scots language presence at its sites.

Scots Radio – Scots Radio was founded as a result of a joint initiative between SLC and Frieda Morrison. Scots Radio is now an independent self sustaining entity. SLC provides dedicated space on the home page of its web site to Scots Radio and we expect this to continue in the future. Our director and Frieda meet regularly to discuss matters of mutual interest.

W L Lorimer Trust – for a number of years our director, Michael Hance, has served as secretary and treasurer of the W L Lorimer Trust. The Trust had agreed to wind up its affairs and during the year Michael and Susan Grant, the Centre's treasurer, made arrangements to carry out the Trustees' wishes. This was a highly complex affair and we are most grateful to Susan for ensuring we complied with all the regulatory requirements. The Centre has had a long and very friendly relationship with the Lorimer family and our director was sorry to attend the funeral of Priscilla Lorimer in December. Priscilla was a long standing friend to the Centre and our staff.

SLC receives enquires from writers, poets and artists of all kinds who wish to promote their work. We try where possible to encourage activity in Scots and to suggest platforms where producers can showcase their work.

SLC's staff have attended a number of events over the last year including education and academic conferences, performances, book

launches, and film screenings. Staff have been involved in a range of working groups and committees.

6. Staff

In the last year we were sorry to say goodbye to Katrina MacLeod. Katrina had been with the Centre for over ten years and provided a highly professional service in the fields of education and social media. Katrina suffered the loss of both parents early in the year and after some soul searching decided to move on to new pastures.

In August Laura Green took over from Katrina as education specialist. In December we recruited Dr Michael Dempster to become our social media manager.

Dr Dauvit Horsbroch, our language officer of many years standing, developed a sight related disorder in December and was unable to carry out his usual functions for a number of months. This represented a considerable loss to the Centre since Dauvit is an unrivalled expert on all matters connected to Scots. Dauvit's condition improved towards the end of this reporting period and he has accomplished a managed return to work. We are most grateful to Susan Grant for overseeing this process.

Michael Dempster and Laura Green bring welcome new approaches to the Centre's work and we are benefitting enormously from their expertise and enthusiasm.

Our web management expert, Chris Third, continues to ensure that SLC is on trend in design and technology issues. His many achievements are outlined throughout this report.

Avril Nicol provides the usual unflustered support in the office and carries out a range of day to day administrative tasks efficiently.

We are grateful to the following for support given to the Centre over the year:

Ashley Douglas – politics and policy
Sally Evans – poetry
Susan Grant – finance and regulation
Ishbel Macfarlane – audio support

7. Funding

Our Scottish government funding was maintained at the reduced stand still level of £65k annually. Last year we reduced staffing costs by cutting back hours. We have tried where possible to maintain services at previous levels and we are confident that users will not have noticed any radical changes in the quality of service provided.

We received additional funding through the year from the Scottish government to support development of educational resources.

Perth and Kinross Council continues to provide in kind support in the form office accommodation at the AK Bell Library in Perth. This amounts to support of around £7.5k per year.

8. Governance

Dr Warren Maguire resigned as secretary of the Centre's Coouncil and is replaced by Chris Waddell.

The Coouncil met three times and we are grateful to the NLS in Edinburgh for providing space for us to hold alternate meetings.

9. Conclusion

2017-18 has been another demanding but successful year for the Centre, the biggest and most successful ever Scots language organisation. We continue to outrank all rivals in search engine results and to maintain our leading position as one of Scotland's most valued and well used cultural institutions.

We depend for our success on the extremely high quality of service provided by a range of contractors and our dedicated staff.

It is particularly encouraging to have heard this year the views of so many people who use our services. It is heartening to know that we perform useful functions and that the community is appreciative of our efforts.

The following, quoted from an analytical report on Scots produced this year by Prof Robert Millar, sums up the positive reactions to our work that we have received again this year.

'The Scots Language Centre represents a rather more language based approach to Scots. Originally named the Scots Language Resource Centre it is housed in the Bell Library in Perth and has a considerable collection of paper materials which are available for consultation by members of the public. Over the last ten to fifteen years, however, it has moved many of its operations on to the web. While maintaining its mission to provide resources in and on (particularly contemporary) Scots, it has altered its position – under the forward thinking direction of Michael Hance – in the direction of campaigning for Scots and Scots speakers. This was particularly the case in the build up to the Scottish Census of 2011, the first to contain a question on the use of Scots. Its innovative *Aye Can* campaign encouraged – with very limited funds wisely used – an awareness of what Scots is through the harnessing of (normally video) recordings of a range of urban and rural Scots dialects (these recordings also serving the role of documenting the language in the early twenty-first century)'

Michael Hance
Director

April 2018