



Who is the Ulster-Scots Agency?



Ulster-Scots Agency
Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

The Ulster-Scots Agency, or Tha Boord o Ulster Scotch as it is known in Ullans (another name for the Ulster-Scots language), has been given the legislative remit of the “promotion of greater awareness and use of Ullans and of Ulster-Scots cultural issues, both within Northern Ireland and throughout the island”.

The aims of the Ulster-Scots Agency are to promote the study, conservation, development and use of Ulster-Scots as a living language; to encourage and develop the full range of its attendant culture; and to promote an understanding of the history of the Ulster-Scots.

The Agency was established as a part of the North/South Language Body set up under the Belfast Agreement of 1998. The other part of the Language Body is Foras na Gaeilge which has responsibility for the development of the Irish (Gaelic) language. Each of these agencies has its own Board whose members together constitute the Board of the North/ South Language Body – otherwise known as Tha Boord o Leid in Ullans.

The Agency is jointly funded by the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure in Northern Ireland and the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Republic of Ireland and is responsible to the North/South Ministerial Council.

The Agency has its main office in Belfast with a regional office in Raphoe, Co. Donegal an Ulster-Scots heartland area.

The Work of the Agency

The Agency recognises that first and foremost it is a service provider with a responsibility to facilitate and encourage the Ulster-Scots community to grow and develop.

In carrying out its functions in relation to Ulster-Scots language and cultural issues the Agency may –

Content supplied by G. Patton.

DISCLAIMER: the views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the policy of the publisher.

- a) Provide advice for both administrations, public bodies and other groups in the private and voluntary sectors;
- b) Undertake research and promotional campaigns; and
- c) Support projects and grant-aid bodies and groups.

The Ulster-Scots Agency has at its core a promotional remit. Promotion comes in many forms and it is accepted that every aspect of the Agency's work involves promotion whether it be through publications, grant assisted activity or delivering a service to other organisations. However, central to all of this is the Agency's marketing and information strategy that involves the optimum use of resources to inform and educate people about Ulster-Scots both in general terms and on more specific issues.

The Agency recognises the need to protect and develop our cultural capital and is extremely conscious of the importance of cultural activity to individuals and to a healthy society.

Accordingly the Agency works with community organisations to ensure that they fulfil their potential in linguistic activity, music, dance, literature, drama and the visual arts, thus helping people to unlock their creativity.

As part of the process of facilitation to empower the Ulster-Scots community the Agency works with and provides financial assistance through grant aid or sponsorship to a wide variety of Ulster-Scots groups, community organisations and individuals in line with our Financial Assistance Scheme.

The North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (SI 1999 No. 859) makes provision for the Agency to offer financial assistance to any person or body in accordance with

arrangements to be approved by the North/South Ministerial Council and the Finance Ministers of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Ulster-Scots Agency operates its Financial Assistance Scheme to obtain the greatest possible benefit for Ulster-Scots language, culture and history. Full details of the Scheme can be obtained on the Agency website www.ulsterscotsagency.com

We also provide sustained training opportunities which will deliver programmes to improve community infrastructure and build capacity within the Ulster-Scots community.

In addition to the financial support provided to community groups, organisations and individuals provided directly by the Agency we work with these groups to assist them in drawing down funding for Ulster-Scots activities from Government Departments and other funding bodies.

If the Agency is to succeed in encouraging as many people as possible to engage in Ulster-Scots activities either as participants or audience/spectators, it is essential to establish partnerships with key organisations.

The Agency recognises that it alone cannot meet the needs of the Ulster-Scots community and is therefore committed to building relationships with Government Departments, Statutory and voluntary agencies and others who have a role to play.

The Agency believes that Ulster-Scots should be available within the formal education system as part of the curriculum and the Agency seeks to persuade the relevant Departments and organisations North and South to deliver this. The Agency will also work with individual schools, colleges and universities to promote the academic study of Ulster-Scots.

It is widely recognised that cultural tourism is a vitally important component of the economy in both jurisdictions. It is equally important in the growth and development of communities. The Agency therefore works closely with Tourism Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and all relevant agencies to improve the visitor experience by supporting Ulster-Scots activity which will be a valuable element of time spent in Ireland for visitor and resident alike.

Ulster-Scots influence is all around us including in our “built heritage”. The Agency engages with organisations to develop greater awareness of this aspect of the heritage.

Conclusion

The Ulster-Scots Agency is committed to fulfilling its legislative remit and to facilitating the continuing growth and development of the Ulster-Scots language and culture.



Ulster-Scots Agency

Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

For further information:

Main office:

The Ulster-Scots Agency
68-72 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7BB
Northern Ireland

T: +44 (0)28 9023 1113
F: +44 (0)28 9023 1898
E: info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

Tha Bord o Ulster-Scotch
68-72 Muckle Victoria Raa
Bilfawst
BT2 7BB
Norlin Airlann

Regional office:

The Ulster-Scots Agency
The Moffatt Building
The Diamond
Raphoe
Co Donegal

T: +353 7 4917 3876
F: +353 7 4917 3985
E: info@ulsterscotsagency.org.uk

Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch
Tha Moffatt Haw
The Diamond
Raphoe
Co Donegal

Visit us online at: www.ulsterscotsagency.com