

INVITATION TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE
TO THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY
ON CROFTING

CROFTING
INQUIRY



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INVITATION TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE TO THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY ON CROFTING

You are invited to submit evidence to the *Committee of Inquiry on Crofting* by 31 July 2007.

Purpose of the Committee of Inquiry on Crofting

During debates in 2006 on the Crofting Reform Bill which has since been enacted, it was realised there was a need to develop a vision for the future of crofting in the 21st Century, to guide any reforms. This *Committee of Inquiry on Crofting* was therefore set up by the Scottish Executive to work with crofting communities and others in crofting areas during 2007.

Our task is to assess how crofting might best contribute in the future to sustainable rural development and what reforms might assist this. We have been asked to recommend to the Scottish Executive any necessary changes in laws, regulations, grants or administration surrounding crofting, including the role and functioning of the Crofters Commission.

Invitation to tell us what you think

Over the next few months, members of the Committee will engage with key stakeholders, including communities throughout the crofting counties. We want to hear your ideas, however radical, and your views about some of the important issues raised during last year's debates. For example, should crofters be allowed to sell their crofts to the highest bidder? Should there be stronger regulation of neglected crofts?

We invite anyone with views about the future of crofting, and the potential contribution it could make to sustainable rural development, to write to the Committee by **31 July 2007** – using letter, fax, email contact@croftinginquiry.scotland.gsi.gov.uk or through our website www.croftinginquiry.org.

You are free to say whatever you wish, but it would help us to analyse the views we receive if you would use the questionnaire provided or if, in your response, you would clearly distinguish the particular questions you are responding to in what you say. Please illustrate your ideas, as far as you can, with examples or other evidence. These questions are available for download from our web site and you can post, fax or email the completed form. If you feel you don't want to answer all the questions, please answer those that are most important to you.

What happens to the views you submit?

The Committee of Inquiry on Crofting wants its deliberations to be informed by the views of crofting communities and others in the crofting counties, as well as other evidence, so your submissions are very important to us. We will be meeting regularly during 2007 and have a programme of visits throughout



the crofting counties during the summer months. We will use all the information we gather from all sources to identify the key issues and to inform our development of a vision for the future of crofting, and the recommendations which follow from this. Once we have formed a view we will bring our draft proposals back to you, in the autumn, to consult you again before we report to the Scottish Executive. Not everyone will agree with our proposals, as there are inevitably differences of views, but as our proposals will be based on careful assessment of evidence, we hope they will command widespread support.

Please complete a respondent information form and send it to us, with your evidence, by 31st July, or preferably sooner, in one of the following ways:

- **POST: FREEPOST** - Crofting Inquiry
- **FAX:** Evidence, Committee of Inquiry on Crofting: 0845 602 0759
- **EMAIL:** Evidence, Committee of Inquiry on Crofting: contact@croftinginquiry.scotland.gsi.gov.uk

We would like to make all the evidence submitted to us publicly available and we need to know whether you are happy for your response to be published. **Please complete the Respondent Information section of the form as this will ensure that we treat your response appropriately.** Responses from anyone who has given permission for their response to be made public will be made available on the Inquiry website. Before being placed on our website, all responses where agreement to publish has been given, will be checked by us for any potentially defamatory material.

What happens next?

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help the Committee form its view about crofting in the future. We aim to issue a report on this consultation with the Inquiry Report.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to: The Inquiry Information Officer, Phoebe Cochrane who can be contacted at: phoebe.cochrane@croftinginquiry.scotland.gsi.gov.uk



COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY ON CROFTING: QUESTIONS

1. How can crofting contribute to population retention or growth in remote areas? What do you think would help attract new entrants and/or retain people. Would it matter if new people came from outside crofting communities? Please tell us how what you say applies to your area.
2. What impact do crofting activities have on the landscape and on nature? Please tell us about these activities and the effect they have in your area.
3. Does crofting support diverse cultures, including the Gaelic language? Please tell us how it does this and whether what you say applies particularly to your local area.



- 7.** Should amalgamation, multiple croft holdings and/or the sub-division of crofts be encouraged? Should there be any limits on these? Do you think this should happen to crofts in your area and why?

- 8.** How serious are problems of access to affordable housing in the crofting counties? What are the impacts on the demand for crofts and croft land (whether inbye or common grazings)? How helpful are croft house grants, rural home ownership grants, housing association lettings, etc.? What do you think should be done? Please also tell us how what you say applies to your local area.

- 9.** Should crofters be allowed to sell their crofts, or croft land, to the highest bidder? Do you think croft assignments and sales should be regulated and, if so, how? Please tell us how what you say applies to your local area.



13. What is it about crofting which is important to you? Please tell us what features of crofting matter most to you and why.

(It may help you to think which aspects of crofting you most want to continue.)

14. Are there any other points you wish to make which would be relevant to the Committee's terms of reference?



Form B

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY ON CROFTING: RESPONDENT

INFORMATION

Thank you for telling us your views. To help ensure we handle your response appropriately, please complete the details below.

Name: _____

Postal address: _____

Postcode: _____

E-mail address: _____

B1. Are you

(a) a crofter?

(b) an aspiring crofter?

(c) not a crofter?

B2. Are you responding: (please tick one box)

(a) as an individual? go B3

(b) on behalf of a group/organisation? go to B4

INDIVIDUALS

B3a. Do you agree to your response being made available on the Committee of Inquiry on Crofting website?

Yes (go to 3b below)

No, not at all We will treat your response as confidential

No, not my response, but my name can be made available



B3b. **Where confidentiality is not requested**, we will make your response available to the public on the following bases (please tick **one** of the following boxes)

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

B4. The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public. Are you also content for your **response** to be made available?

Yes

No We will treat your response as confidential

SHARING RESPONSES/FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

B5. The Committee of Inquiry may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Committee of Inquiry on Crofting to contact you again in the future in relation to this consultation response?

Yes

No



Committee of Inquiry on Crofting

FREEPOST – Crofting Inquiry

Telephone: 0845 602 0758

Fax: 0845 602 0759

Email: contact@croftinginquiry.scotland.gsi.gov.uk

www.croftinginquiry.org

This document is also available on the Crofting Inquiry website: www.croftinginquiry.org

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