

Annex A – The Wider Context

Many of the matters in this annex have been raised in relation to crofting law, but in reality they need not require changes to crofting law to deal with them. So whilst important, some of these issues need to be looked at separately from legislative change.

The Scottish Government has committed to continue to provide public support for crofting and to secure thriving crofting communities. To this end it identified the following crofting priorities:

- **Introduce a new entrant scheme**
- **Explore the creation of new woodland crofts**
- **Publish a National Development Plan for crofting**
- **Target croft house support at those most in need**
- **Re-introduce a croft house loan scheme**
- **Modernise crofting law**

[“A Plan for Scotland 2016-17”](#), Scotland’s Programme for Government, published in September 2016, made clear that the Scottish Government would engage with crofting stakeholders in drafting a National Development Plan (NDP) for crofting. The NDP will focus on what we want from crofting in the future rather than what has gone in the past.

Stakeholder Involvement and identification of priorities

The Scottish Government has continued to engage with stakeholders through the Crofting Stakeholder Forum, where its members have been considering what recommendations they wish to make to the Scottish Government for inclusion in the NDP. The top priorities identified by the Forum are:

- **Increase Affordable Housing**
It has been identified there is a lack of affordable housing in rural and island communities, which may prevent people from staying or being attracted to these areas. There is also thought to be a lack of commercial financing available to enable crofters to build new houses or renovate existing houses.
- **Development of Crofting**
It has been suggested that there should be a lead body on crofting that would serve both the wider crofting community and support individual crofters.
- **New Entrants**
It has been identified there are a number of barriers preventing new entrants from obtaining croft tenancies, and that action requires to be undertaken to overcome these barriers for the future sustainability of crofting.

- **Financial Incentives**

It has been suggested there is a need to maintain appropriate levels of financial support, with targeted incentives to ensure crofting is able to continue as a viable and sustainable system.

- **Common Grazing**

It is suggested that common grazings are a huge potential resource for crofting communities, which need effective management to fully realise their economic potential.

- **Simplify Crofting Legislation**

It has been recognised current crofting legislation is overly complicated and outdated, requiring modernising to make it more transparent, understandable and workable in practice.

A number of papers have been drafted in relation to the stakeholder priorities, together with a high level consolidated paper. Copies of these can be obtained from the related documents section, or upon request when obtaining a paper copy of the consultation.

The combined Scottish Government and Stakeholder priorities, many of which are directly linked, will form the basis to develop a NDP for crofting.