



NEWS RELEASE

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CROFTERS MUST SPEAK UP ON THE PROPOSED CROFTING REFORMS SAY SCF

The Scottish Crofting Foundation (SCF), the only member-led organisation dedicated to promoting crofting has greeted the Draft Crofting reform Bill consultation paper released today with enthusiasm tempered with caution.

SCF Chairman Neil MacLeod said "we are all aware that there needs to be an overhaul of crofting legislation, regulation and, critically, the support for crofting. We are looking at this consultation with optimism and at first glance it is a thorough document which attempts to address issues that came out of the Committee of Inquiry on Crofting. There are positive aspects such as the welcome move towards a more democratic governing body, but there are areas over which we will be examining possible consequences and which may need recommendation for modification. We will be widely consulting our membership on their views to inform our position."

The consultation released today lays out a draft crofting reform bill that will address the governance of crofting, the formation and maintenance of an accurate register of crofts, the possibility of standard security on tenanted crofts to raise loans without de-crofting, an occupancy requirement for houses on de-crofted land and effective regulation concerning absenteeism and neglect.

SCF Parliamentary spokesman Norman Leask said "the most important thing is to hear what crofters think. It is gratifying to see that the Scottish Government will be out and about to hear crofters' views. The SCF will be gathering opinion from our members whom we ask to write, phone, email, attend local meetings, come to our meeting in Dingwall on June 23rd or visit our stand at shows. This is ground-breaking legislation and it is essential that your views are known."

END

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Notes to editors

- The Scottish Crofting Foundation is the largest association of small-scale food producers in the UK.
- Pictures can be found at: <http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/index.php/home>