



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **ONGOING SUPPORT FOR CROFTING COMMUNITY PLANS WELCOMED**

The Scottish Crofting Foundation this week commended the decision of the Scottish Government to continue the highly successful Crofting Community Development Scheme. The announcement by Crofting Minister, Mike Russell at the SCF Gathering in Dingwall last week follows a campaign by the crofting organisation over many months to secure the future of this useful scheme.

SCF Vice Chairman Neil MacLeod said, The feedback from members has been very positive. This is a well-valued and practical assistance for remote, rural communities. In the past six years of this scheme, it has made a real difference in many crofting areas, supporting crofting community plans and helping to stimulate investment in crofting communities to the tune of £35M. The flexible, helpful approach of the staff running this scheme has no doubt contributed to its success and we are pleased that this team of locally-based advisers will continue to be available to assist crofting communities.

We have written to the Minister thanking him for supporting the scheme under the new Rural Development Programme and urging him to ensure that the process of application is as simple and straightforward as possible.”

The Crofting Community Development Scheme has assisted crofting groups with activities as diverse as the building and upgrading of village halls, creation of slipways, township machinery purchase and creation of animal handling facilities. In addition it has helped with the marketing of agricultural produce, footpath signage and mapping, development of a loch fishery, provision of materials for a Gaelic choir and a conference on the next steps for land reform.

Neil MacLeod added, This scheme has been particularly successful in bringing together all members of the crofting and wider community. Plans developed under the scheme have involved more than 17,000 people and contributed to some really worthwhile projects.”

END

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### **Notes to editors**

Pictures can be found at: [http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/index.php/contact\\_headoffice](http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/index.php/contact_headoffice)