



NEWS RELEASE

Use: **Immediate**

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CALL FOR SPECIAL 4 X4 RATE FOR NECESSITY VEHICLES

Following yesterday's budget announcement on higher road tax for 4-wheel drive vehicles, the Scottish Crofting Foundation has written to all Highlands and Islands MPs seeking a reduced rate for vehicles which are a necessity of rural life.

SCF Chair Norman Leask said, "For many crofters, a 4-wheel drive vehicle is a necessity, making it possible to get to and from the house and the croft in bad weather. Those for whom owning a 4x4 is a luxury or a lifestyle choice may well not consider this additional tax to be a burden; however it will impact on people in rural areas who need 4-wheel drive vehicles simply to get about. This is summed up very eloquently in a letter I received recently.

My correspondent said, "I have a Landrover Defender that I use only as a crofting vehicle. I use it to tow my trailer full of Shetland ponies to the sales, and to the ferry. I use it to take feed and water into the hill to one of my crofts - there is no track to this croft and no water either. I have to off-road to keep my animals alive.

I do not own a tractor and rely on my Landrover to do the work. I also live down a track (1/4 mile long) and get snowed in regularly. Last year it took two of us 3 hours to dig the Landrover out. To be taxed higher for having a vehicle that is essential to my crofting life seems very unfair. I deliberately saved my pennies and bought a small secondhand Toyota Yaris to run about in and only use the Landrover where no other car will do."

We wrote yesterday to all MPs in the crofting areas asking them to explore the possibility of a reduced rate of road tax on 4x4 vehicles which are owned and used as a necessity"

ENDS

Ends Contact: Norman Leask, SCF Chairman Tel. 07957 936831
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Notes to editors

Picture can be found at: <http://www.croftingfoundation.co.uk/contact.shtml>