



NEWS RELEASE

Use: Immediate

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Crofting Federation gathering on 'Access to Crofts' inundated

The Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) Young Crofters group hosted a session yesterday to find solutions to the difficulties in getting access to crofts and was inundated with the number of people wanting to participate and the range of ideas that were offered.

"There were no great surprises about the problems we are faced with," said the chair of the SCF Donald Mackinnon, "but it was very refreshing to hear people's ideas about how to solve them. I don't want to go into too much detail yet as we were so overwhelmed with response to the call that we are going to run a duplicate session on 4th March, so it would be premature for me to divulge what participants of last night's session thought.

"However, it gives nothing away to say that the problems explored included the very high prices being asked for crofts; lack of access to finance; crofts not being made available even when not being used; inadequacies of crofting law and administration, the obstacles young folk face just trying to stay in their locality and the lack of action on creating new crofts."

Mr MacKinnon concluded, "Crofting is stagnating. A radical and uniquely democratic system of land tenure that is a model, is not realising its potential. It is widely recognised that the number one priority for the survival of crofting is to reinvigorate succession – get crofts back into work and make crofts available to people who will croft. The huge response to our call to discuss this demonstrates how strongly people feel about it. It is clear that things have to change and we who do care about crofting must up the ante on our lobbying those who have the gift to make this happen – politicians, government, agencies and crofters. The message is clear – don't ignore this any longer; we need action."

END

Notes to editors

Please contact SCF office for high resolution photos