



SCOTTISH LAND COMMISSION
COIMISEAN FEARAINN NA H-ALBA

Community Land Leadership Group

Tuesday 2nd May 2023, 2pm, Online

Summary of meeting

Attendees: Lorne Macleod (Chair, SLC), Hamish Trench (SLC), Gemma Campbell (SLC), Rebekah Dundas (National Lottery Community Fund), Linda Gillespie (DTAS), Sandra Holmes (HIE), Kirsten Logue (SoSE), Morven Lyon (Community Shares Scotland), Ailsa Raeburn (CLS) Fiona Taylor (Scottish Government), Dave Thomson (Scottish Government)

Terms of Reference

This first meeting of the group considered the terms of reference of the leadership group. The group agreed the proposed purpose and scope:

The Leadership Group's purpose is to provide a collaborative forum to guide alignment of activity to support the development of community ownership and governance of land and assets.

The scope of the group's focus should include:

- *Development of community land ownership as currently achieved through community rights to buy, asset transfer, and negotiated transactions;*
- *Use of and potential for other hybrid governance models that enable community ownership and control;*
- *Sharing experience, ideas, opportunities and lessons learned to inform collective policy and practice;*
- *Development of collaborative and partnership approaches.*

Discussions clarified that the scope should include post-acquisition matters in terms of the overall viability and sustainability of the sector, and that links to relevant policy and bills beyond land reform should be considered where appropriate. It was also agreed the group should be able to discuss specific examples in confidence where necessary.

It was agreed that the group will retain a core participation and invite others to join for particular meetings in order to draw on specific experience and knowledge.

Programme of topics for consideration

The following topics were suggested for the programme of meetings to consider:

- Rights to Buy

- Community Asset Transfer
- Further sessions on finance
- Governance and widening community involvement
- Capacity and support
- Large scale acquisitions

Discussion noted the relevant issues may vary considerably between types of land and asset acquisition, for example between individual buildings and large land holdings.

Discussion topic: finance options to support community ownership

Discussion took as its starting point the Commission's 2022 report 'Community Ownership Financing: Options to Complement the Scottish Land Fund'. The group also heard from Community Shares Scotland about the Democratic Finance Programme led by CSS and Scottish Communities Finance.

Key issues considered in the discussion include:

- The role of philanthropic giving
- The role of the Scottish Land Fund
- Challenges in grant financing larger land holding acquisition including high land values and changes in state subsidy regime
- Supporting 'foundation assets' that build community confidence and capacity
- UK Government Community Ownership Fund
- Diversity of experiences in urban/rural contexts
- Community capacity challenges in cost of living crisis
- Challenge in fast pace of market and need to create time and space for communities to build case and secure finance
- Role of Scottish National Investment Bank
- Need to evolve governance models alongside finance options

Discussions highlighted the benefit of increasing cross-referrals and alignment of activity, the potential benefits of packaging a range of options in easier to access ways, the need for early stage capacity and the potential to better align different finance options.

Next meeting

The next meeting will focus on the context of large-scale community land acquisition.