



SCOTTISH LAND COMMISSION  
COIMISEAN FEARAINN NA H-ALBA

# **PIONEERING PRACTICE**

**SHAPING SCOTLAND'S**

**FUTURE THROUGH**

**INCLUSIVE LAND OWNERSHIP**

**Aviemore MacDonald Resort  
13 June 2024**

**#SLCConference24**

# Welcome

**Thank you for joining us for our 2024 conference, Pioneering Possibilities: Shaping Scotland's future through inclusive land ownership.**

The theme is particularly relevant in this time of change for Scotland's land, both on the ground and in policy and legislation. The conference is an opportunity to explore innovation in putting more inclusive ownership into practice and unlock progress on some of Scotland's most pressing challenges and ambitions, including housing, community wealth building, climate and nature action, and rural repopulation.

We are delighted to bring together a diverse group of speakers and participants, all of whom bring a wealth of experience, learning and ideas to share. Your presence and participation are vital to the success of this conference, and we hope that the discussions and connections made here will inspire and stimulate further action.

Our programme will explore many ways to reshape ownership and governance of land, drawing on longstanding experience including crofting and international parallels, as well as more recent and emerging practice in Scotland. We hope the event will help turn ideas into action, celebrate and learn from the innovative work already underway and accelerate progress.

Thank you for joining us. Please make the most of the day, connect with people and ideas and use it to shape further action.



Hamish Trench  
Chief Executive

**“We hope the event will help turn ideas into action, celebrate and learn from the innovative work already underway and accelerate progress.”**

Conference Agenda	Location	Timing
Arrival and registration	Foyer	09:00
Welcome from John Morrison	Peregrine Suite	09:50
Opening address	Peregrine Suite	10:00
Keynote	Peregrine Suite	10:15
<b>More inclusive land ownership – what are the opportunities?</b>	Peregrine Suite	10:30
Refreshments 	Peregrine Foyer	10:45
<b>Panel discussion</b> ————— p6 	Peregrine Suite	11:00
<b>Morning workshop and panel sessions</b>		<b>11:30</b>
<b>Panel discussion A</b> Peregrine Suite  ————— p8	<b>Workshop B</b> Alvie, Morlich & Glenmore Suite  ————— p11	<b>Workshop C</b> Strathspey Suite  ————— p13
Lunch 	Cafe	12:50
<b>Afternoon workshop and panel sessions</b>		<b>13:50</b>
<b>Panel discussion D</b> Peregrine Suite  ————— p15	<b>Workshop E</b> Alvie, Morlich & Glenmore Suite  ————— p18	<b>Workshop F</b> Strathspey Suite  ————— p20
Refreshments 	Peregrine Foyer	15:10
<b>Panel discussion</b> ————— p22 	Peregrine Suite	15:25
Closing remarks	Peregrine Suite	16:00
Conference Close		16:15

## PLENARY SESSION

### OPENING ADDRESS

#### Mairi Gurgeon

Cabinet Secretary for Rural  
Affairs, Land Reform and Islands



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Mairi was elected as MSP for Angus North and Mearns in May 2016.

Mairi joined the government in 2018 and became Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs in 2021. Previous roles have included Minister for Public Health and Sport, and Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment.

Before joining the government, Mairi was a councillor for Brechin and Edzell. She was convenor of the infrastructure services committee and chaired the East of Scotland European Consortium. Mairi represented COSLA at the Council of European Municipalities and Regions. She is a graduate of the University of Aberdeen.



The Scottish Land Commission would like to thank John Morrison, experienced broadcaster, and director of Morrison Media for chairing our conference.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

### Michael Russell

Chair of the Scottish Land Commission



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Michael Russell is Chair of the Scottish Land Commission and Honorary Professor in the College of Arts & Humanities at Glasgow University.

Michael served as a Scottish Government Minister and Member of the Scottish Parliament at various times between 1999 and 2021.

He has had a long term involvement with land reform having been Environment Minister from 2007-2009 and a member of the Scottish Parliament Committee which scrutinised the Land Reform Bill in 2015.

## WELCOME ADDRESS

### Hamish Trench

Chief Executive of the Scottish Land Commission



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### More inclusive land ownership – what are the opportunities?

Hamish is Chief Executive and accountable officer of the Scottish Land Commission.

He is a former chartered surveyor with experience of land policy, management and research in the public and private sectors.

Hamish's previous roles include director posts at the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Deer Commission for Scotland, and working for a national firm of property consultants.



# Emerging experience and supporting innovative approaches

This panel session will explore the opportunities for more inclusive land ownership and governance in practice, emerging experience and what's needed to support more innovation.

## Ailsa Raeburn

Chair of Community Land Scotland  
and Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust



FEARANN | COMMUNITY  
COIMHEARSNACHD | LAND  
NA H-ALBA | SCOTLAND

Ailsa Raeburn is Chair of Community Land Scotland and Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust.

She has worked in the community land sector for many years. As head of the Community Assets Team at Highlands and Island Enterprise (HIE), she developed and managed the Scottish Land Fund, in partnership with Big Lottery Scotland.

At Community Land Scotland, Ailsa works to support communities across Scotland to acquire and develop locally important assets. She also supports policy development, focusing on legislative opportunities to further change for communities. Ailsa is on the boards of HIE and Crown Estate Scotland.

## Patrick Colquhoun

Director and Assistant CEO of  
Luss Estates Company



Patrick Colquhoun is a Director and Assistant CEO of Luss Estates Company, a diversified rural estate on Loch Lomond.

Patrick returned to the family enterprise in 2017 to advise on Land and Property matters for the estate. He completed an MBA at Strathclyde University and is involved in all aspects of estate management. Patrick has recently taken up a position as Vice Chair – Policy for Scottish Land & Estates (SLE), providing a member perspective on policy matters within SLE.



## Dr Sally Reynolds

Land Commissioner at the  
Scottish Land Commission



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Sally sits on the board of the Scottish Land Commission and is an Agricultural Consultant with a PhD in mathematical ecology.

Sally worked for eight years within the Community Land Sector as Development Manager with Carloway Estate Trust (Urras Oighreachd Chàrlabhaigh).

She is an active crofter and contributes to a number of activities which benefit the community. Sally currently works in a business development role with Stornoway Port.

# Collaborative approaches for improving access to land for small-scale land management and use

At this panel session you will hear from those directly involved in the creation of new small-scale land opportunities through collaboration between public, private and community landowners and (prospective) land users.



**Ian Davidson**  
OBE, MRICS, ARAgS, FRSA

**Independent Advisor for the Scottish Land Matching Service**

Ian joined Scottish Government in 1991 holding various positions throughout an extensive career including Principal Agricultural Officer for Southeast area and Head of Agriculture Development before retiring in 2019.

In September 2019 Ian set up and managed the Scottish Land Matching Service, a free service offering independent advice and facilitation of joint framing and crofting ventures.

Ian is the Vice Chairman of Waverley Housing and a Scottish Enterprise representative on the Farriers Registration Council for Great Britain.





## **Cllr Heather Anderson**

**Councillor, Dundee City Council**

Cllr Heather Anderson is the Convener of Climate, Environment and Biodiversity in Dundee City Council, which includes responsibility for food and community growing. Prior to being elected in Dundee in May 2022, she was an organic farmer running a diversified food business in the Scottish Borders and an environmental campaigner for the over a decade. She has long had an interest in land use and land reform.



## **Alison Anderson**

**Greenspace Team Leader, Dundee City Council**

Originally an ecologist, Alison's role has expanded to include responsibility for biodiversity, outdoor access, countryside ranger service and community allotments, as well as policy and development for the city's green and open spaces.

She is a keen gardener and allotmenteer, who commutes along the Tay from Carnoustie to Dundee on her electric bike.



## **Kate Treharne**

**Community Allotment Officer, Dundee City Council**

Kate comes from a background of scientific research, via Occupational Therapy to work for Dundee City Council promoting food growing across the city.

Now heavily involved in facilitating the Campy Growers as the largest food-growing project in the city, her priority is the empowerment of everyone to grow their own fresh, healthy food.





## Jamie McIntyre

### Contractor, Woodland Crofts Partnership

Jamie McIntyre has nearly 30 years' experience of community development in the Highlands in both paid and voluntary capacities, including employment as woodland crofts officer for Forestry Commission Scotland & Highlands and Islands Enterprise supporting the development of woodland crofts.

Now self-employed, he is main contractor for the Woodland Crofts Partnership which continues this work.

His voluntary roles include Chair of Strontian Community School Building and director of Sunart Community Renewables in his own community.



## Huw Connick

### Managing Director, Connicks

Huw Connick has lived in Dumfries and Galloway for nearly 25 years, originally hailing from a family hill farm in the South Wales Valleys.

He is the owner of Connicks, a small team delivering environmental, ecological, and land-based services across Scotland to government organisations, non-governmental organisations, and private landowners.

With a focus on Holistic Land Management (HLM), Huw is a student of the Savory Institute's foundation training and incorporates these principles into his work.



This panel discussion will be facilitated by Dr Miranda Geelhoed, Land Governance Advisor at the Scottish Land Commission, and chaired by Bob McIntosh, Tenant Farming Commissioner.

## WORKSHOP B

11.30  
Alvie, Morlich and Glenmore Suite



# Community collaboration in governance

This workshop will hear from examples of current and emerging experience in ways that communities are involved in collaborative approaches to ownership and decision-making, for example shared ownership, governance agreements and partnerships. The session will discussing shared learning and how these approaches can be put into practice more widely.



### Doug Flint

**Senior Outreach Partner, Woodland Trust Scotland**

Doug has 30 years' experience in public, private and charity sector roles in Scotland, Africa, and South America. His skills lie in catchment management, climate change and sustainability. Since 2021, he's worked with a team of specialist Woodland Trust Scotland advisors, supporting a range of landowners and managers, including 2 landscape-scale collaborative projects in the Assynt and Langholm communities. Doug actively supports land management in Comrie too, where he lives with his family.



This workshop will be facilitated by Hamish Trench, Chief Executive of the Scottish Land Commission, and chaired by Lorne Macleod, Land Commissioner.



## Elaine Macaskill

### Landscape Partnership Manager, Woodland Trust Scotland

Elaine Macaskill is the Landscape Partnership Manager for the 'South Assynt Project' – a Collaboration between Assynt Foundation (Community Land owner) and the Woodland Trust. Elaine has worked across the private, public and now charity sector of Forestry since studying Forestry at Bangor University. Prior to the South Assynt Project, she worked as the Woodland Manager for the NLHF - Coigach and Assynt Living Landscape Project, involving 14 mainly Community and eNGO based partners.



## Faye Macleod

### Chartered Accountant & Firm Principal of Campbell Stewart MacLennan & Co and Co-founder of SkyeWind website

Faye runs an accountancy practice on the Isle of Skye. She has built up experience in the charities and communities sector undertaking feasibility studies and financial projections supporting community buyouts, asset transfers and development projects, including renewable energy developments. Faye is co-founder of the SkyeWind website.



## Martin Mellor

### Chair of Tayvallich Initiative

Martin Mellor is Chair of Tayvallich Initiative (TI), an organisation with charitable status that was born from news in May 2022 that Tayvallich Estate was to be sold. An early community survey to gather thoughts and concerns has shaped the focus and drive of TI. Leading on from a series of community meetings, TI was instrumental in developing a Memorandum of Understanding with Highlands Rewilding, the new owners of Tayvallich Estate.





# Innovative governance to support housing delivery

This workshop will hear from three experts who have used innovative governance models to deliver homes across the country.



## John Boyle

**Director of Research & Strategy, Rettie**

John leads the Rettie Research Team, providing research and consultancy services. His work informs clients on sales, lettings, investment and development opportunities. He also analyses the status of property markets and how they are likely to change. Over the last 20+ years, he has worked for all the major housebuilders in Scotland, the Scottish Government, many local authorities and investors. He sits on Homes for Scotland's Policy Advisory Group and is a member of RICS.



This workshop will be facilitated by David Stewart, Policy and Practice Lead at the Scottish Land Commission, and chaired by Michael Russell, Chair of the Scottish Land Commission.



## Gail Matheson

### Chief Executive Officer, Highland Housing Alliance

Having first joined Highland Housing Alliance (HHA) in 2006, Gail Matheson became chief executive officer of HHA in 2012. Gail is responsible for the delivery and management of over 400 homes within HHA's portfolio, which includes mid-market and private rent tenures. As the largest mid-market rent developer in the Highlands, HHA plays an integral role in creating high-quality and well-priced homes for people living in rural communities where large housebuilders are often absent.



## Mike Staples

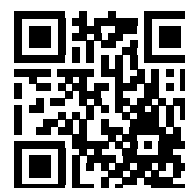
### Chief Executive of South of Scotland Community Housing

Mike is Chief Executive of South of Scotland Community Housing (SOSCH), the community-led housing enabler working across Southern Scotland. SOSCH provides long-term support to community organisations around the development and planning of community-led housing projects that are responsive to locally identified needs and contribute to sustainability and place. Prior to joining SOSCH, Mike has had a career in urban regeneration and housing across Scotland and the UK. He is also a Board Member of Community Land Scotland.



**The shortage of housing across Scotland is a huge issue, with market failure in many rural areas and in our changing town centres. Land reform plays an important role in addressing the challenges and helping to deliver well-planned sustainable communities in places people want to live at prices they can afford.**

The Land Commission are involved in several significant pieces of work that may help provide solutions to the challenge of market failure including a complete review of progress with re-use of Vacant and Derelict Land with Ryden. We will publish the review over the next few months, together with a briefing highlighting progress in land re-use and recommending ways to accelerate development and re-use of brownfield land. If you would like to receive a copy of this report when it is published, scan the QR code to sign up to our mailing list.





# Land Governance: Challenges, innovation, and international experience

This panel will explore some of the big ideas, challenges, and opportunities around land governance, drawing on public, private, and international knowledge and experience.



## Charlie Murphy

**Researcher, Centre for Local Economic Strategies**

Charlie is a Researcher at the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and has expertise on community engagement, sustainable finance, and economic development. His work at CLES focuses on developing community wealth building and has recently been involved in research with the Scottish Land Commission analysing approaches to securing public value from natural resources. He has also been involved in a range of research work with local, regional and national governments.



This panel discussion will be chaired by James MacKessack-Leitch, Policy and Practice Lead at the Scottish Land Commission.

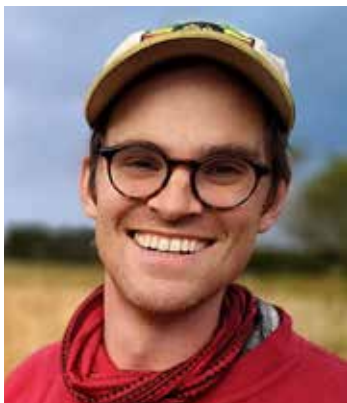


## **Katie Alexander**

### **Community Land Accelerator Manager, Crown Estate Scotland**

Katie Alexander is a Community Land Accelerator Manager at Crown Estate Scotland, where she has spent two years primarily delivering strategic engagement and enabling projects with community and third sector organisations on and around the Scottish Crown Estate.

She is currently working full time on the development of the Community Land Accelerator in partnership with the Scottish Land Commission. Previously Katie had spent over 12 years working to support community/ third sector organisations with The National Lottery Community Fund and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.



## **Col Gordon**

### **Director and Trustee of The Shielling Project**

Col is based on his family's farm, Inchindown, in the Gàidhealtachd, where he grows heritage grains and helps his father raise livestock. He narrated and co-produced the podcast series "Landed" with Farmerama Radio, which investigates the past, present and future of the family farm model through the lens of colonialism and is a director/ trustee of The Shielling Project, Highland Good Food Partnership, The Landworkers' Alliance, and Invergordon Development Trust.



## **Katie Boyle**

### **Professor of Human Rights Law and Social Justice, University of Strathclyde**

Katie Boyle is Professor of Human Rights Law and Social Justice at the University of Strathclyde and previously qualified as a constitutional lawyer with the Government Legal Service for Scotland. Her research examines the legalisation of human rights, specifically economic, social and cultural rights (ESC rights) in different constitutional settings.



## Professor Deb Roberts

### Land Commissioner at the Scottish Land Commission

Professor Deb Roberts is Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Science at the James Hutton Institute. Deb trained as an agricultural economist and, prior to moving into her current position, her research focussed on understanding how agricultural and environmental policies affect economic development and social wellbeing in rural areas. She holds an Honorary Chair in Real Estate at the University of Aberdeen.



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## Learning from international experiences with natural resources

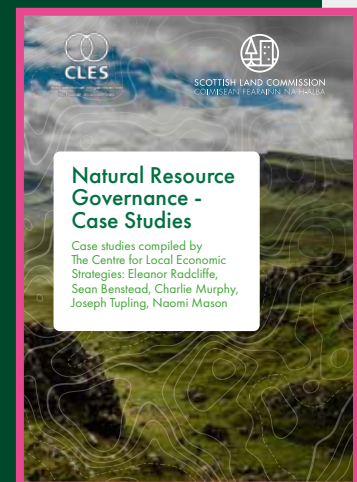
Land is our most important natural resource. The emerging value associated with carbon and natural capital in Scotland's land is a key driver of change, raising new questions and presenting risks and opportunities.

Understanding its implications for land ownership, management, use, wealth flows, and how the potential benefits can be harnessed in the public interest is a key focus for land policy and practice.

The principle set out by the Scottish Government that investment in natural capital and emerging value should benefit local communities and wider society is an important one. At this early stage of development, there is no one-size-fits-all approach, but there is plenty to learn from international experiences of natural resource management.

From sovereign wealth funds at the national level, to community wealth building approaches at a regional scale, to governance structures enabling local democratic accountability and community agency.

The Scottish Land Commission is working with The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) to understand how different approaches to natural resource management can deliver public and community value, and what lessons and principles from international examples could underpin new approaches in Scotland.



Scan the QR code to download a copy of our international case studies that form phase one of this research partnership.



# Community benefits, land and natural capital

This workshop will explore how we can ensure that communities benefit from natural capital, hearing from speakers with experience of public and private sector nature finance projects.



## Ed Heather-Hayes

**Head of Development, Fife Coast & Countryside Trust**

Ed Heather-Hayes is Head of Development at the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust. His role is to build capacity and resilience across all areas of the organisation by driving revenue generation and funding. Ed also develops existing work areas, exploring new projects, partnerships and opportunities that will support the trust in delivering its vision for people and the environment.



This workshop will be facilitated by Emma Cooper, Head of Land Rights and Responsibilities, and Gemma Campbell, Land Rights and Responsibilities Manager, at the Scottish Land Commission.



**The Scottish  
Government**  
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## Fran Eatwell-Roberts

### Project Lead for Nature Finance, Scottish Government

Fran Eatwell-Roberts is the Project Lead for Nature Finance in the Scottish Government's Future Environment Division, where he is leading development of the Nature Market Framework.

Fran has an extensive background in public health having held roles in NHS Scotland and as a National Coordinator for Obesity Action Scotland at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow.



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## Dr Craig Mackenzie

### Land Commissioner at the Scottish Land Commission

Dr. Craig Mackenzie is a member of the board of the Scottish Land Commission and a Senior Lecturer at the University of Edinburgh Business School where he helped launch carbon management and climate finance MSc programs.

Over his 20-year career, Craig has shaped good practice standards on corporate environmental and social responsibility, serving on advisory boards for the Global Reporting Initiative, the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and FTSE.



In 2023 the Scottish Land Commission published new **Guidance on Delivering Community Benefits from Land**. The guidance sets out a definition of community benefits and opportunities to deliver through ownership and governance of land; socially productive use of land and buildings; and financial benefit to communities. Since then, the Commission has been supporting others to put this guidance into practice by advising land owners, communities and project developers, supporting development of advisory capacity, contributing to development of standards and certification and convening the Community Benefits Advisory Group.



# Governance for collaboration: Common grazings

This workshop will explore with the Crofting Commission the unique governance of common grazings and it will look to the future how new opportunities can be realised.



## Heather Mack

**Head of Policy, Development and Grazings,  
Crofting Commission**

Heather has a PhD in earth sciences and has worked for the Crofting Commission for 12 years. She has been involved with different areas of work in the Commission including GIS and mapping, grazings and croft registration, operational management and crofting development. Her current role involves policy, development, grazings and communications.



This workshop will be facilitated by Dr Miranda Geelhoed, Land Governance Advisor at the Scottish Land Commission, and Dr Sally Reynolds, Land Commissioner.



## Lynne Hendry

### Development Officer, Crofting Commission

Lynne has worked for the Crofting Commission for 14 years. Her current role is as a Development Officer based and covering mainland Highland, prior to this role (apart from secondment to a crofting landlord charitable NGO) she worked as a Grazings Officer. Lynne has a Bachelors of Law Degree from The University of Edinburgh and a MA Social Science Honours Degree(Politics) from The University of Glasgow.



## Finlay Beaton

### Grazings Manager, Crofting Commission

Finlay has served with the Crofting Commission for 10 years where he was tasked with encouraging and promoting the active use of common grazings.

He also currently leads on the Commissions statutory consultee role within the planning process.

Prior to the above role, he worked with Rural Payments both in the Western Isles and Inverness for 20 years.





# Reflections on the day

Our closing panel will allow the opportunity for reflections on the day, synthesising some of the key thinking that has emerged from our workshop and panels and looking ahead to what comes next.



## Catriona Mallows

**Research Associate, University of the Highlands and Islands**

Catriona is a Research Associate with the Centre for Mountain Studies at the University of the Highlands and Islands. She grew up in Cromarty and has interests in community development, the politics of ecological challenges and rural policy. With a background in the social sciences and environmental studies, she has worked for organisations including Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions and Scottish Rural Action.



This panel discussion will be chaired by John Morrison.



## Kirsty Tait

### Director, Food, Farming and Countryside Commission

Kirsty Tait is the Director for the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission in Scotland.

Working together for a world where healthy food is everyone's business, farming and crofting are forces for positive change, the countryside works for everyone and resources flow to where the work is needed.

She has held previous positions with the Nature Friendly Farming Network, the Scottish Land Commission and Carnegie UK Trust. Passionate about storytelling, she works through filmmaking, photography and creative writing.



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## Lorne Macleod

### Land Commissioner at the Scottish Land Commission

Lorne is a member of the board of the Scottish Land Commission. He was a founding director and, latterly, was the Chairman of Community Land Scotland, and has been a director of the community land buyout groups in Eriskay, South Uist & Benbecula, and the Isle of Gigha.

He was Highlands & Islands Enterprise's first Director of Strengthening Communities, and prior to that was Chief Executive of Skye & Lochalsh Enterprise.

He is a chartered accountant, and director of a retail and distribution business in the Isle of Skye.

# People Power Prosperity

Land is at the heart of Scotland's identity, economy and communities. The Scottish Land Commission is driving a programme of land reform spanning both urban and rural land, to create a Scotland where land is owned and used in ways that are fair, responsible and productive.



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