



## NFUS Manifesto 2016

### Crofting – 12 Point Plan

NFU Scotland has an active Crofting Highlands & Islands Committee and a crofting membership in excess of 750 members. In the run up to the Scottish Parliamentary elections the Committee have drawn up the following 12-Point Plan that has been presented to all the parliamentary candidates. This sets out the key issues that NFU Scotland would like to see delivered to benefit crofters and crofting in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

For the well-being of some of our more remote, rural and island communities, it is in all interests to see a vibrant crofting sector, to identify the opportunities that can be created for crofters and to develop a crofting system that is productive and fit for purpose in the 21st century. Active crofters deliver a wide range of benefits to the rural communities that they form part of. Crofting supports population retention and growth, contributes significantly to the local economy, both directly through agricultural production and indirectly through employment and businesses, as well as maintaining and conserving nationally important habitats and species.

NFUS calls on the next Scottish Government to:

1. Start with a clean slate in relation to crofting legislation, to develop a framework that is fit for the wants and needs of modern-day crofting,
2. Identify a lead body to support crofters and the development of new opportunities.
3. Develop financial incentives through Pillar 1 and 2 CAP support that will have a positive impact on crofting.
4. Develop policies that will maintain a critical mass of livestock producers and the capacity for livestock production within crofting communities.
5. Acknowledge the unique contribution that active management of common grazings can make to the delivery of climate change and natural heritage targets and simplify the legislation and management of common grazings.
6. Develop a crofting specific new entrant scheme that supports and encourages new crofters while, at the same time, helping those contemplating retirement.

7. Support the creation of new crofts, particularly on Scottish Ministers' Estate land and the development of Woodland Crofts.
8. Explore and promote ways in which the proper and productive use of crofts can be given greater encouragement and that crofters are supported in their responsibilities.
9. Take a fresh look at how crofters are made aware of available support measures and the application procedures, to encourage access to the Crofting Agricultural Grants Scheme (CAGS) and affordable advisory support.
10. Increase affordable housing through delivery of the new Croft House Grant Scheme (CHGS) and the development of an associated Croft House Loan system, which will do more to help access to crofts in rural and island communities.
11. Ensure the delivery of superfast broadband and mobile phone coverage to all crofting communities to ensure connectivity and maximise employment opportunities.
12. Ensure that any new woodland planting on croft land is appropriate in scale and location and does not negatively impact on continued livestock production in the crofting areas, whilst also ensuring that issues such as local community consultation and deer management are fully addressed.

For further information please contact:

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