

# Scottish Government Report to Parliament:

## Economic Condition of Crofting 2019 - 2022

The Scottish Government's report under section 51 of the Crofting Reform  
(Scotland) Act 2010



Report No. 4

16 December 2022

SG/2022/267

Ministerial Foreword	3
PART 1 - Analysis Of The Economic Condition Of Crofting Survey	5
PART 2 - Measures Taken To Support Crofting	28
Introduction	29
10. Croft House Grant Scheme	29
11. Cattle Improvement Scheme	30
12. Common Agricultural Policy	31
13. Pillar 1: Direct Payments	32
Basic Payment Scheme and Greening	32
Young Farmer Payment	33
Scottish Upland Sheep Support Scheme	33
Scottish Suckler Beef Support Scheme	33
14. Pillar 2: Scottish Rural Development Programme	34
Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme	34
LEADER	35
Less Favoured Area Support Scheme	37
Agri-Environment Climate Scheme	37
Rural Priorities	38
Scotland's Farm Advisory Service	39
Highlands and Islands Veterinary Services Scheme	42
Veterinary Services Programme	43
Forestry Grant Scheme	43
Small Woodlands Loan Scheme	45
Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund	45
Scottish Rural Network	48
Food Processing and Marketing	49
15. Support for Wildlife Management	50
16. Sustainable Agricultural Capital Grant Scheme	51
17. Farming Opportunities for New Entrants	52
18. Self-Build Loan Fund	53
19. National Transition Training Fund	53
20. Skills Action Plan for Rural Scotland	54
21. Commission to Review Land Based Learning	54
22. Rural Broadband	55
23. Digital Skills	56
24. COVID-19 Support	57
25. Highlands and Islands Enterprise	57
26. Crofting Commission	62
27. Registers of Scotland - Crofting Register	69
28. Scottish Land Court	71
29. Crofting Legislation	72
30. National Development Plan for Crofting	72
31. Future Measures	73

# Foreword

I am pleased to submit this report to the Scottish Parliament in terms of section 51 of the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010.

This report reflects the economic condition of crofting and the measures taken by the Scottish Ministers, the Crofting Commission and others to support crofting during the reporting period 2019 – 2022. The report builds upon the evidence base provided in the baseline report produced in 2010, and the Economic Condition of Crofting reports covering the 2011 – 2014 and 2015 – 2018 reporting periods.



In preparation of this report, the Scottish Government commissioned a survey which took place between July and September 2022, and sought the views of 4,000 crofters on a range of social and economic issues pertinent to crofters and crofting. Valuable evidence has been gathered from the survey responses and will be considered and used to help inform future policy development. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank all those crofters who completed the survey.

The first section of this report contains an analytical summary of the findings of the survey. The findings on household income indicate that the average crofting household income from non-crofting activities compares favourably to the average household income for Remote Rural Scotland in 2021.

I am happy to see that there is an increase in the number of crofters who have been crofting for less than five years. The Crofting Commission has reported there are approximately 500 new entrants into crofting each year. With the increase to its budget, the Crofting Commission will be able to continue its work in tackling absenteeism and neglect, which will help create further opportunities for new entrants. It will also help to improve the efficiency of regulatory application administration.

We all understand the importance of succession planning, and it is pleasing to note that there has been a significant increase in the proportion of crofters with a succession plan in place. It is also encouraging that the proportion of female crofters has continued to increase, and has more than doubled since 2014.

The Scottish Government recognises the potential for croft land to help address the climate change and biodiversity challenges. I welcome the inclusion of new questions to this year's survey relating to peatland restoration, biodiversity activities and forestry and woodland creation. These questions have been added to the survey to gain a better understanding of the number of crofters undertaking these activities on their croft and common grazings, and those that plan to in the future. Having this information will help the Scottish Government to develop policies in these areas.

During this reporting period we have undergone Brexit, a global health pandemic, the end of the 2014 – 2020 Common Agricultural Policy, and more recently the cost of living crisis with rising fuel and energy costs. All of which have had a real impact on

our rural areas and agricultural sectors, and we know that further challenges are ahead.

In March 2022, the Scottish Government published our Vision for Agriculture, outlining how we aim to transform how we support crofting and farming and food production in Scotland. This will sit at the heart of a robust and coherent framework which will underpin Scotland's future agriculture support regime from 2025 onwards.

The Scottish Government is committed to securing the future of crofting and continuing to support crofters to live productive and sustainable lives on our land, and retain vibrant rural communities across our Highlands and Islands. With 21,394 crofts and 16,527 crofters recorded in the Crofting Commission's Register of Crofts, it is clear that crofting contributes to population retention in our rural and island areas. I am proud to say that each year this Government approves and provides croft businesses with over £40 million through a number of support mechanisms including BPS and Greening, the beef and sheep schemes and the crofting specific schemes, the Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme and the Croft House Grant.

**Mairi Gougeon MSP**  
**Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands**

# Analysis of The Economic Condition of Crofting Survey 2019 – 2022

The Scottish Government recognises the contribution that crofting makes to the rural economy and rural communities, and is committed to securing the future of crofting. As part of this commitment to crofting, the Scottish Ministers are required (under Section 51 of the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010) to submit a report on the economic condition of crofting to the Scottish Parliament every four years. The last report covered the period 2015-2018, and was published in December 2018.

This report provides a detailed outline of the economic condition of crofting over the 2019-2022 period and builds on previous publications in 2014 and 2018. It also covers recent policy measures taken by Scottish Ministers, the Crofting Commission, and others, to assist the crofting sector, as well as measures planned for the future.

The majority of the information contained in part one of this report is taken from the results of a survey and report commissioned by the Scottish Government into the economic condition of crofting over the 2019-2022 reporting period. Broadly comparable with the previous surveys, the 2022 survey covered a wide range of social and economic issues such as the demographic composition of crofting households; activities on crofts; the employment status of crofters; the investments made and the income derived from crofts; and the outlook of crofting households. It also touched on crofters' views of support and information sources available to the crofting community, and the future of crofting more broadly. A new set of questions were included in the 2022 survey on the topics of peatland restoration, biodiversity activities, and forestry and woodland creation. The answers to these questions will provide a baseline figure on the activities, and will inform future work and help target support and information.

On behalf of the Scottish Government, Research Resource invited 4,000 crofters to participate in a survey via post, online or telephone during the summer of 2022. A total of 942 surveys were returned, giving a response rate of 24%. The 2018 survey received 739 responses, a response rate of 18%. In 2022, a digital first approach was used replacing the postal only approach used previously. In 2022, 49% responses were received by email, 42% were completed by post, 6% were submitted online, and 3% by telephone. The sample achieved is considered representative of the crofting population by local authority and tenure. The full report from that work, with explanations on how to interpret the data, is available on the Scottish Government website, and provides further detail of the methodology of the survey.

## **Key Findings**

The data from the 2022 report can be broadly compared with data from the 2018 and 2014 reports, providing a picture of how crofting has changed over the last four to eight years.

Overall, crofting remains economically challenging, with a third of respondents making no income from crofting activities in the last twelve months. The majority of crofters agreed that crofting is not economically viable without household members supplementing their income from non-crofting activities.

The median combined income from both crofting and non-crofting activities, minus business running costs, was slightly higher than in 2018, and higher still than the median Scottish household income. Just under half of crofters received an income from grant money and support schemes.

More crofters plan to invest in the coming years, which has increased over the last eight years. Livestock was the most common area for investment, as with the 2018 results. Other positive changes in crofting include the proportion of crofters with a succession plan in place, which has continued to increase with each survey. In addition, the proportion of female crofters has continued to increase since 2014.

### **Crofting background and demographic information**

- In general, crofters tend to be male, living in a two-person household and are aged over 55. However, the proportion of female crofters has continued to rise from 13% in 2014 and 26% in 2018, to 30% in 2022.
- Being brought up in a crofting family remains the most common reason for becoming a crofter. The proportion of respondents who have been crofting for 20 years or more has continued to decrease from 70% in 2014 and 65% in 2018, to 48% in 2022.

### **Income and Outgoings**

- The proportion of crofters who received no revenue from crofting increased from 25% in 2018 to 38% in 2022. While the number of crofters receiving an income of £10,000 or less from crofting-based activities has remained the same as 2018 (53%), the number earning more than £10,000 has decreased. The average income was £4,538.
- Over the last 12 months, 43% of crofters received an income from grants or support schemes.
- Eighty-two percent of crofters reported either no running costs relating to their crofting-based activities or running costs of under £5,001. The average was £5,145, which is similar to 2018.
- In terms of income from non-crofting activities, 61% reported an income of between £10,001 and £50,000, in line with the 2018 survey (64%). The median household income reported from non-crofting activities was £25,000, the same as the 2018 survey results (£25,000). Only 19% said that they expected their non-crofting income and business running costs to decrease in the coming 12 months.

- The median combined income from both crofting and non-crofting activities, minus business running costs, was £29,810, a slight increase from 2018 (£29,000), and higher than the median Scottish household income of £27,716. The average household income from non-crofting activities was reported as £30,412. This compares favourably to the average household income for Remote Rural Scotland in 2021 which was £29,000.
- More crofters are paying rent or mortgages, which has increased from 57% in 2018 to 64% in 2022. The average mortgage cost on croft houses in the last 12 months was £8,374. Where crofters paid annual rent, 61% paid less than £51 in the last year. The average annual rent was reported as £133.95 and the median value was £32.

## Croft Investment

- Although there has been a slight decrease in the number of crofters investing in their croft from 68% in 2018 to 61% in 2022, the number of crofters planning to invest in the future has increased from 48% in 2018 to 62% in 2022. One in ten of the crofters who had invested in their croft during the 2019-2022 period provided details of the additional income they received as a result of the investment. The average income has risen from £6,219 to over double at £13,035.
- Crofters were more likely to invest their own money (99.6%) than money received from grant or support schemes (39%), and crofters were more likely to invest in livestock (46%). The average amount invested from crofters' own money was £12,832 (£20,007 in 2018) and from public funding was £4,612 (£6,554 in 2018).
- Plans for investment in crofts have increased significantly since 2018 from 48% to 62% in 2022. Livestock was again the most common response in terms of the type of investment planned (52%), followed by crops (30%), and forestry and woodland creation (22%). The average planned investment figure was £6,503, down significantly from £16,450 in 2018.
- The most common reasons for not investing were that the financial cost or outlay of investing was too great (36%); no desire to do so (32%); and the uncertainty of the potential benefit of investing (29%). This is consistent with the reasons provided in 2014 and 2018.
- The proportion of crofters with a succession plan in place has continued to increase, from 46% in 2014 and 47% in 2018, to 60% in 2022.
- Most crofters were in agreement that crofting is not economically viable without household members supplementing their income from non-crofting activities (92%), consistent with the findings from 2018 (95%).

## Sources of information on crofting

- Just under a third of crofters had looked for advice or support on crofting activities in the last 12 months (30% in 2022 and 33% in 2018). The ‘Crofting Commission, Commissioner or local Crofting Commission Assessor’ was the most popular source of advice and support that crofters would use, an increase from 50% in 2018 to 60% in 2022.

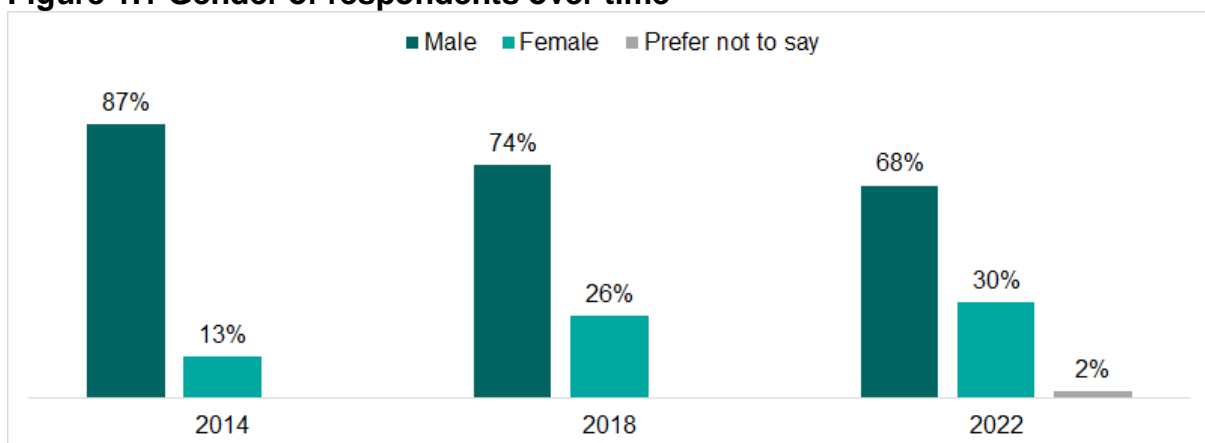
## Peatland restoration, biodiversity activities, and forestry and woodland creation

- A new set of questions was added to the 2022 survey on peatland restoration, biodiversity activities and forestry and woodland creation.
- The survey found that 28% of crofters had undertaken one or more of these activities in the reporting period, with a further 34% planning to carry out these activities in 2023-2026.
- The most common activities that were carried out were biodiversity activities on the croft (12%), and woodland or forestry creation on the croft (18%). These were also the two activities most likely to be carried out in the next four years.
- One in four crofters have used available schemes to either restore peatland, carry out biodiversity activities, or create forestry or woodland.
- The most common obstacles to undertaking these activities were a lack of information (38%) and uncertainty of the potential benefit (37%).

## Analysis of the Survey Findings

### 1. About Crofting Households / Background

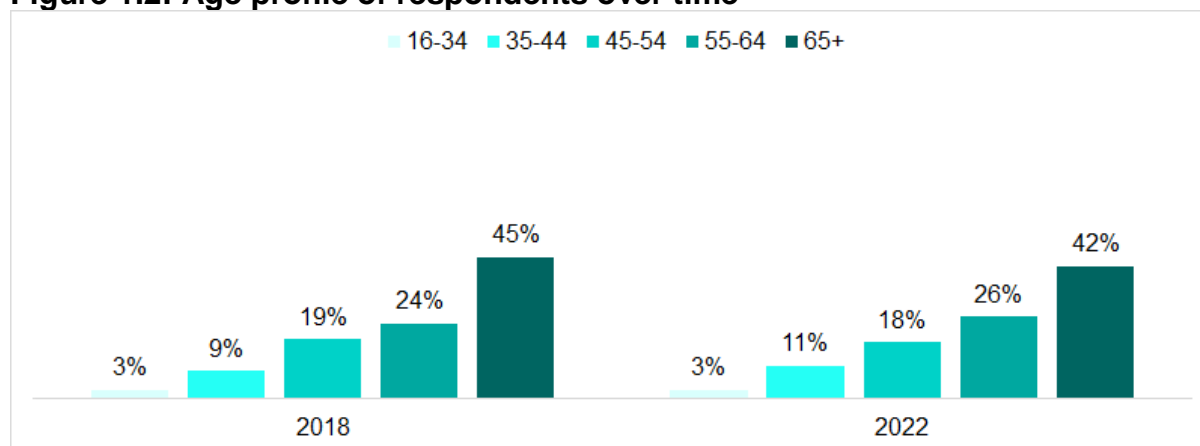
Figure 1.1 Gender of respondents over time





- 1.1. In line with the results from the 2014 and 2018 surveys, crofters were more likely to be male (68% in 2022) compared to the Scottish population<sup>1</sup> (49%). The proportion of female crofters has continued to increase from 13% in 2014 and 26% in 2018, to 30% in 2022. The 2021 Scottish Agricultural Census<sup>2</sup> shows that 40% of agricultural working occupiers are female.

**Figure 1.2: Age profile of respondents over time**



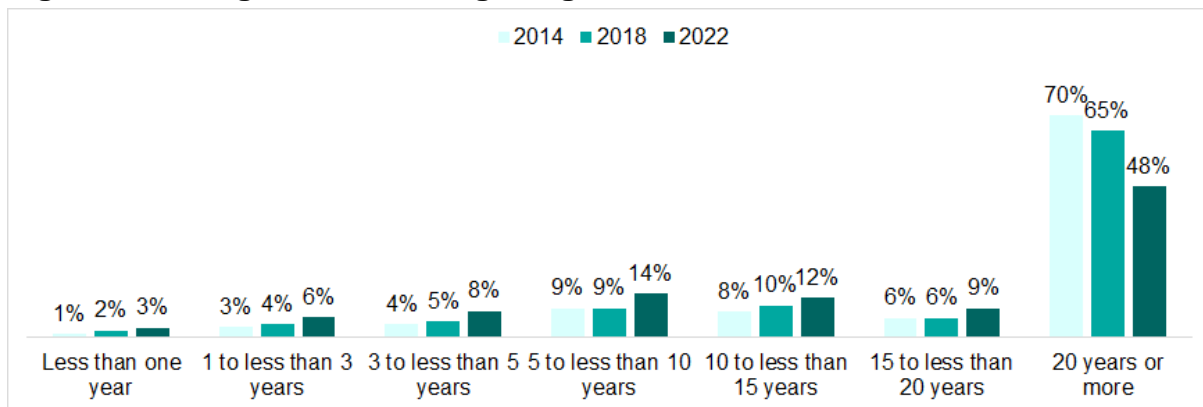
- 1.2. In terms of the age profile of respondents, 42% are aged 65 and over, while only 3% are aged under 35. The age profile of crofters does not vary significantly compared to the profiles from the 2014 and 2018 surveys.
- 1.3. It was more common for crofters to live in a two-person household (48%). 20% lived alone, 15% lived in a three-person household, 11% lived in a four-person household and 6% lived in a household with five or more people. These findings were consistent with the results from the 2018 survey where respondents were more likely to live in a two-person household (47%).
- 1.4. Respondents were asked a set of standard equalities questions in the survey. 18% of respondents said they had a physical or mental health condition or illness that was expected to last 12 months or more. In comparing crofters health to that of the general Scottish population (24%)<sup>3</sup>, crofters appear healthier. Most crofters said they belonged to the Church of Scotland (42%). The majority (90%) of crofters identified as being heterosexual. The majority of crofters said they were of white ethnic origin (90%) and of these individuals, 84% said they were 'White Scottish' and a further 14% said they were 'White other British'.

<sup>1</sup> [Mid-2021 Population Estimates Scotland | National Records of Scotland \(nrscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> [Results from the Scottish Agricultural Census: June 2021 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

<sup>3</sup> [Supporting documents - Scottish household survey 2019: annual report - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot) Excel tables, Chapter 2 – composition, Table 2.3

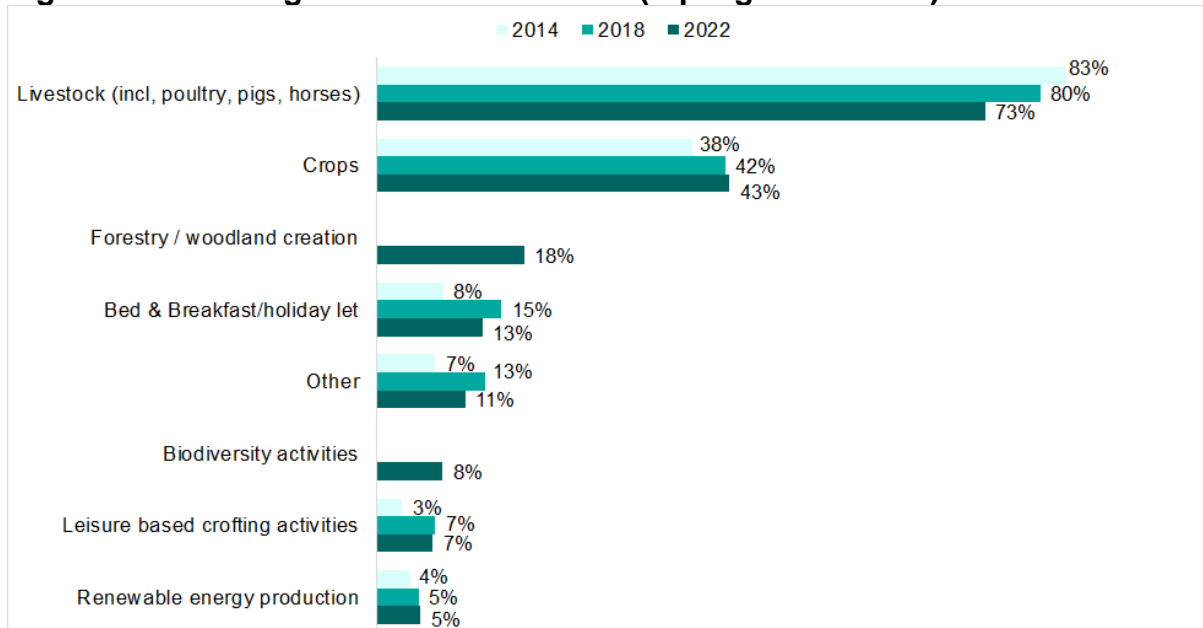
**Figure 1.3: Length of time being a registered crofter**



- 1.5. Although most crofters have been crofting for 20 years or more, the proportion of these respondents has decreased (70% in 2014 and 65% in 2018, to 48% in 2022). However, the proportion of respondents who have been crofting for less than five years has increased (8% in 2014 and 11% in 2018, to 17% in 2022).
- 1.6. Of those who sublet a croft or had a short-term lease, most said that their lease was for one year or less (40%) and only 1% said that it was for more than ten years. A further 7% of respondents said they had a seasonal let or a let for summer grazing, and 3% said they had an unofficial sublet.
- 1.7. Where respondents operated crofts as a tenant crofter, the number of crofts they currently operate ranged between one and ten crofts with an average of 1.41 crofts. Where crofts were owner occupied, the number of crofts they currently operate again ranged between one and ten crofts, with an average of 1.36. Those crofters that also identified as being a landlord of a croft, were the landlord of between one and four crofts, with an average of 1.31. For those who operated crofts as a sublet or short lease, the number of crofts they currently operate ranged from between one and six crofts with an average of 1.85 crofts.

## 2. Crofting Activities

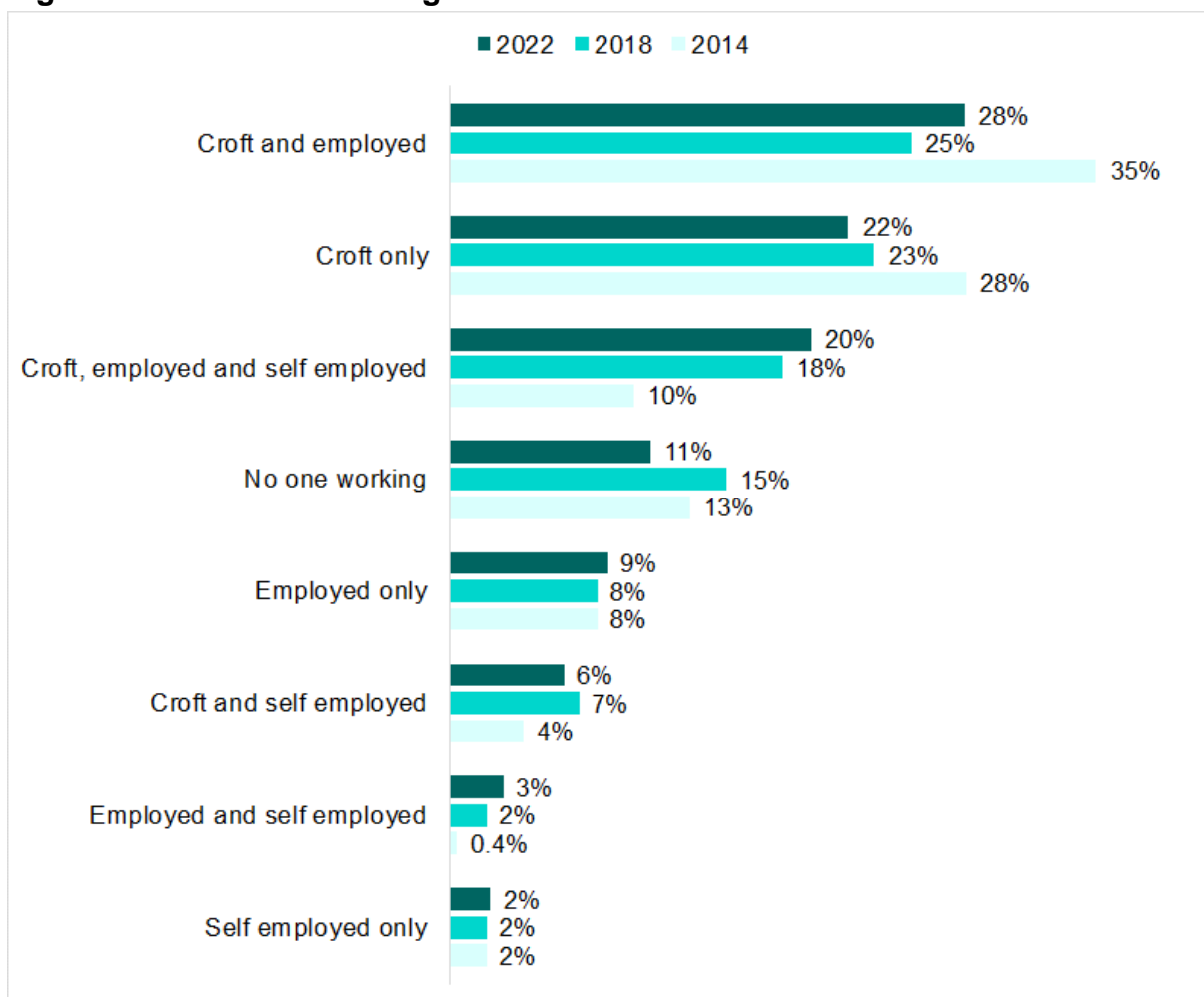
**Figure 2.1: Crofting activities undertaken (top eight activities)**



- 2.1. Raising livestock was by far the most common crofting activity undertaken by respondents in 2022 (73%), which was also the case in 2018 (80%) and in 2014 (83%), although the proportion of crofters doing so has continued to decrease in each reporting period. A further 43% grew crops on their croft (42% in 2018 and 38% in 2014). Several new activities were added to the 2022 questionnaire. These included peatland restoration (1%), biodiversity activities (8%), and forestry and woodland creation (18%). Raising livestock, growing crops and forestry and woodland creation remained the top three most common activities for respondents regardless of how long they had been a registered crofter.
- 2.2. The most notable differences in crofting activity by local authority were for bed and breakfast or holiday lets with, for example, 21% of crofters in Argyll and Bute carrying out this activity compared to just 2% of crofters in the Shetland Islands. Renewable energy activities were more common in the Orkney Islands (22%) than in all other local authority areas (between 3% and 6% for all other areas).
- 2.3. Females were more likely to run bed and breakfast or holiday let facilities (16%) than males (11%), and males were more likely to raise livestock (77%) than females (65%).
- 2.4. Crofters aged 55-64 were more likely to be involved in bed and breakfast or holiday let facilities (17%). Raising livestock was more common amongst crofters aged 16-44 (83%) and aged 45-54 (85%). Forestry and woodland creation was more likely to be undertaken by crofters aged 55-64 (21%).

- 2.5. Crofters were asked what proportion of their time each activity took. Raising livestock (with an average percentage of time of 75%), followed by bed and breakfast and holiday lets (with an average percentage of 53%) were the most time consuming.
- 2.6. Respondents were asked about the working activities of the adults in the crofting household. The most common response was from those actively working on the croft and working in paid employment outside crofting. The number of adults who actively worked on the croft ranged between one and five with an average of 1.68. The number of adults who worked in paid employment outside of crofting ranged from one to seven with an average of 1.79.

**Figure 2.2: Different working activities of household over time**

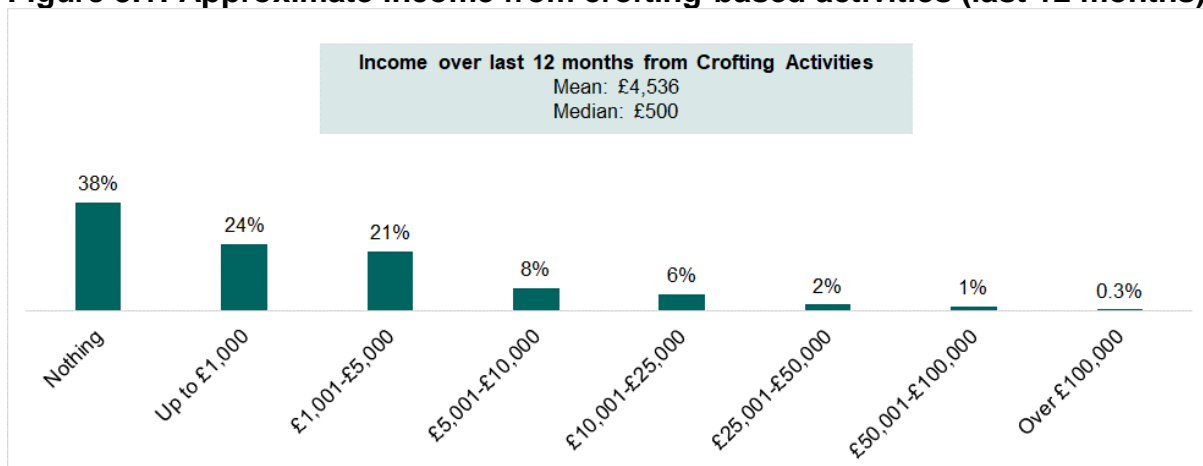


- 2.7. It was more common for at least one resident to work in employment outside of crofting, and this has continued to increase over the years (59% in 2014 and 62% in 2018, to 68% in 2022). Just over one in ten said that no one within their household was working in crofting activities, or elsewhere. Just under a quarter (22%) of crofters worked on crofting exclusively, consistent with the 2018 survey (23%).

- 2.8. Crofting households where at least one person actively worked on a croft, spent an average of 14 hours per week engaged in crofting activities, a decrease compared with 2018 (average of 22 hours per week crofting). The average number of hours for 2022 is consistent with the result from the 2014 survey (12 hours).
- 2.9. Where there was at least one household member who worked on non-crofting paid activities, an average of 32 hours was spent on these (a decrease from 40 hours in 2018 and 49 hours in 2014).

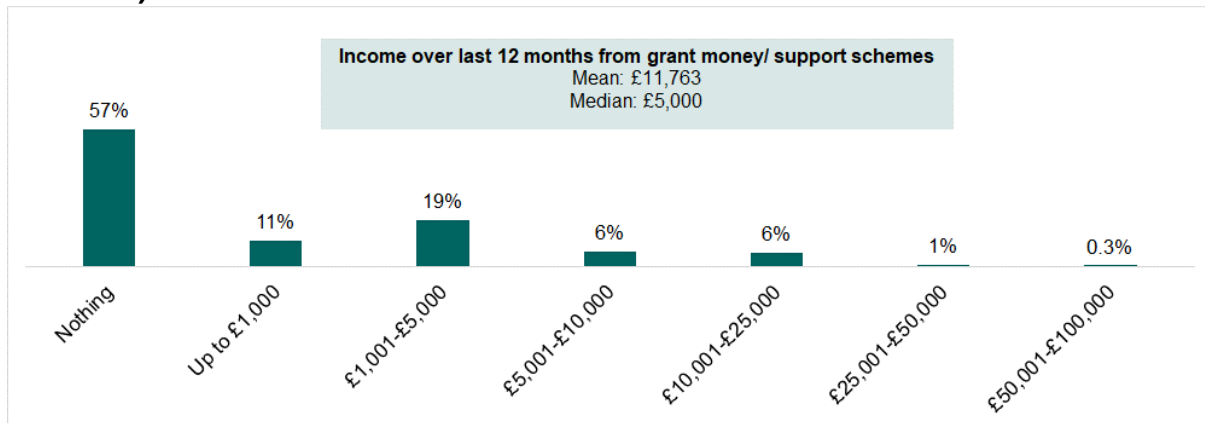
### 3. Income And Outgoings

**Figure 3.1: Approximate income from crofting-based activities (last 12 months)**



- 3.1. Crofters were asked to approximate their income from crofting-based activities in the last 12 months, including any income from grant money or support schemes and before deducting costs. As seen in figure 3.1, 38% made no income (25% in 2018), 44% made up to £5,000 (42% in 2018), 14% made between £5,001 and £25,000 (24% in 2018) and 4% made over £25,000 (6% in 2018). The average income reported was £4,538 (£13,095 in 2018).
- 3.2. The number of crofters receiving an income of £10,000 or less from crofting-based activities has remained the same as 2018 (53%).
- 3.3. Those who had been crofting between 10 and 20 years (average income of £7,795) and 20 years or more (average income of £4,260), had higher income levels than those who were newer to crofting (average income of £1,976 for those crofting for less than three years). The median value increases with length of time crofting from £0 for those who have been registered crofters for less than three years to £800 for those who have been crofting for 20 years or more.

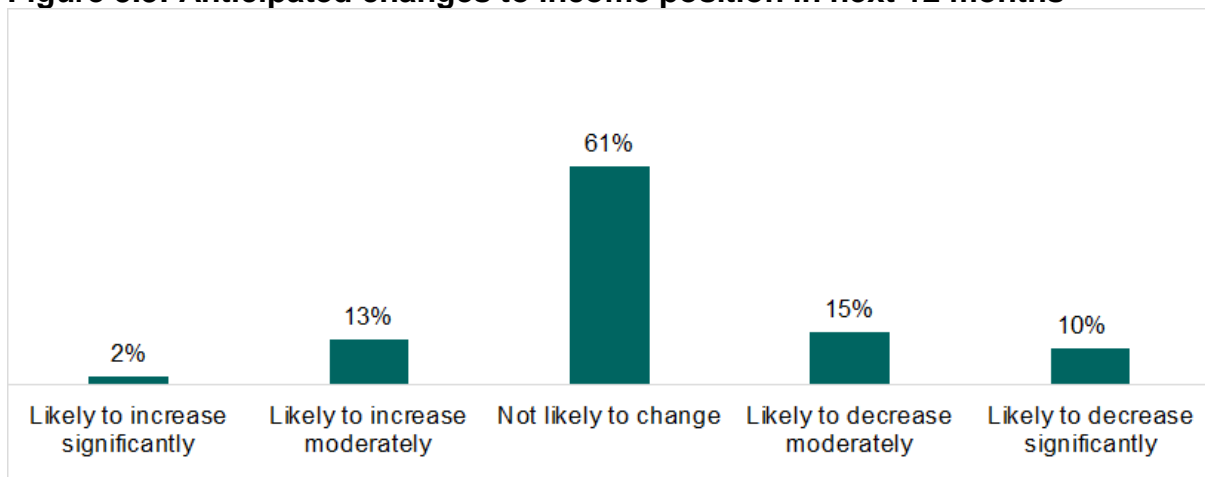
**Figure 3.2: Approximate income from Grant money/ support schemes (last 12 months)**



3.4. Over the last 12 months, 43% of crofters received an income from grants or support schemes. Just under a third (30%) had received up to £5,000 and 13% had received over £5,000. Those who had been crofting for the least amount of time (less than three years) were more likely to have received public funding (81%).

3.5. The average and median values have been calculated only for those who have received income from grant money or support schemes. The average value has been calculated as £11,763 and the median is £5,000. This was a new question in the 2022 survey.

**Figure 3.3: Anticipated changes to income position in next 12 months**

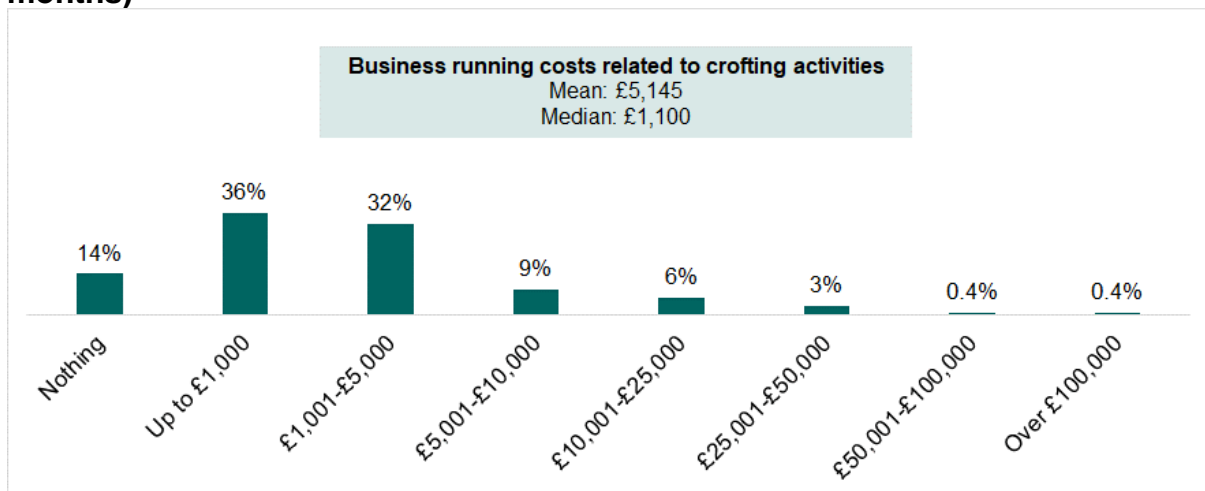


3.6. The majority of respondents felt their income position was not likely to change in the next 12 months (61%). This is less than was reported in 2018 (81%) and not significantly different from the 2014 survey (63%). More respondents were of the opinion their income was likely to decrease (25%) than increase (15%). The proportion of respondents expecting an increase in income is more than the 2018 survey (6%) and similar to the 2014 survey (14%). Those expecting a decrease in income has increased from 12% in 2018 and 22% in 2014.

3.7. Crofters were asked the reasons for their anticipated changes to their income position. The top response was regarding rising costs such as feed, transport, electricity, and materials (25%). One in ten respondents said they saw no change in their income position and a further 9% said their crofting activities do not generate a profit or income. A further 9% said their income would be dependent on funding and 9% said retirement or ill health may have an impact on their income from crofting activities.

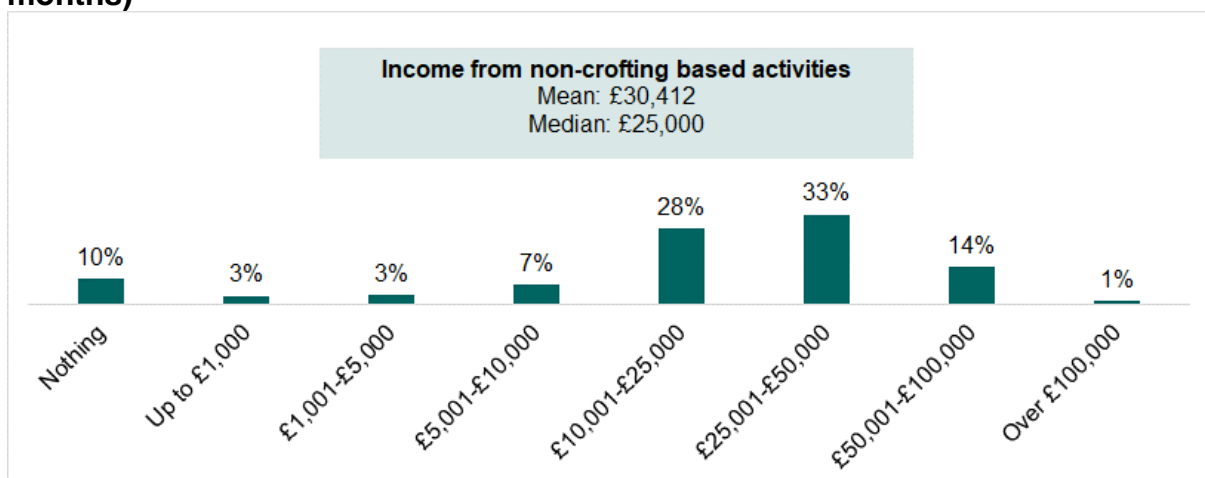
#### 4. Business Running Costs And Household Income

**Figure 4.1: Business running costs related to crofting-based activities (last 12 months)**



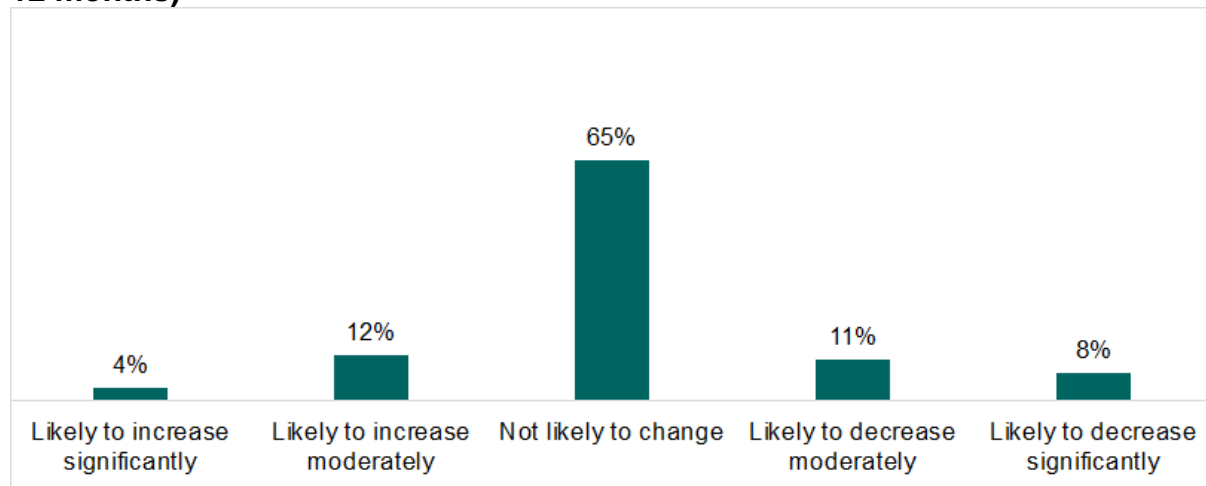
4.1. The majority of crofters reported no running costs relating to their crofting-based activities or running costs of under £5,001 (82%), which is higher than was reported in the 2018 survey (73%). The average was £5,145 which is down from £8,385 in 2018.

**Figure 4.2: Total household income from non-crofting activities (last 12 months)**



- 4.2. Crofters were also asked about their total household income from all non-crofting activities in the last 12 months, including all sources of paid employment, pensions, benefits and interest on bank deposits and investments.
- 4.3. For 2022, 10% of respondents reported no income from non-crofting based activities (6% in 2018). The majority of respondents (62%) reported their non-crofting income as between £10,001 and £50,000 (64% in 2018), and 15% said it was over £50,000 (16% in 2018). Of the respondents, 7% said their income was up to £5,000 (7% in 2018) and 7% said it was between £5,001 and £10,000 (7% in 2018).
- 4.4. The median household income reported from non-crofting activities was £25,000, which is the same as in 2018, and slightly higher than the 2014 figure of £21,000. Despite the spread of income being similar, the average value was reported as £30,412, less than the £41,760 reported in 2018. Crofters in Orkney received an income from non-crofting activities of over £100,000. It should be noted that the proportion of respondents who had a household income from non-crofting activities of over £100,000 has decreased from 5% in 2018 to 1% in 2022, which may explain the reduction in the average income for 2022.
- 4.5. The median combined revenue from both crofting and non-crofting activities, minus business running costs was £29,810, higher than the result from 2018 survey (£29,000), and the median Scottish household income of £27,716<sup>4</sup>.

**Figure 4.3: Change to non-crofting income and business running costs (next 12 months)**



- 4.6. The majority of respondents said their non-crofting income and business running costs were not likely to change in the next 12 months (65%), 16% said it was likely to increase and 19% said it was likely to decrease. The

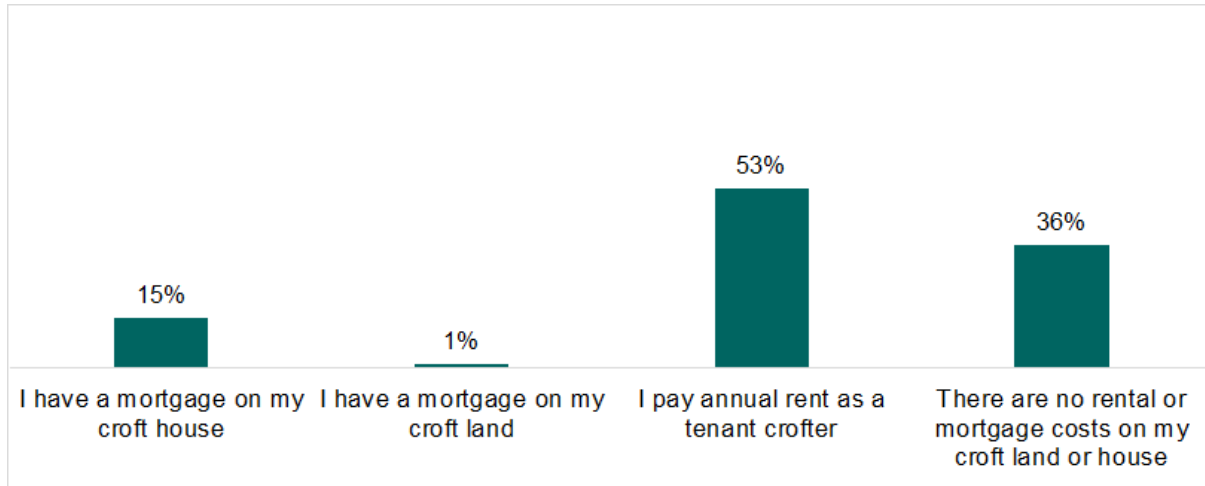
<sup>4</sup> [Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20 \(data.gov.scot\)](https://data.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2017-20/) It should be noted that the figure for crofting households does not take into account household composition.



main reasons given for any changes were due to pension funds or retirement (23%), rising costs and inflation (22%) and career progression or promotion (8%).

## 5. Rent/ Mortgage Costs And Rent Reviews

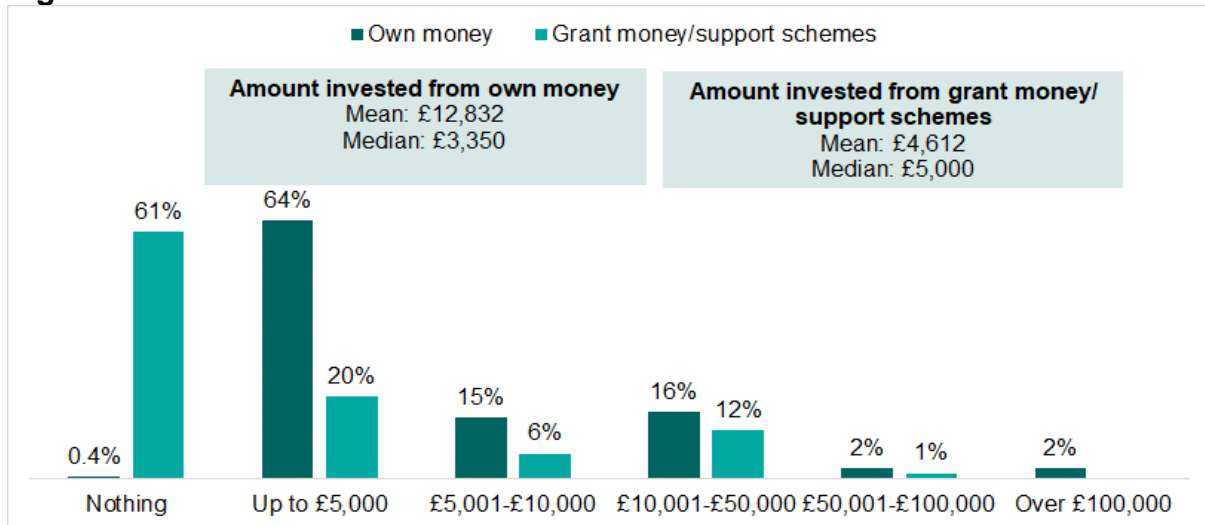
Figure 5.1: Tenure types



- 5.1. When asked about rent or mortgage costs for both croft land or housing, 64% of respondents (57% in 2018) reported having rental or mortgage costs, (to note, respondents could select both mortgage and rent as options). Among those who did, it was more common for respondents to pay annual rent as a tenant crofter (53%).
- 5.2. Those who had rental or mortgage costs were asked what their costs for housing were in the last 12 months. Just under half said their mortgage costs were between £5,001 and £10,000 (46%), 38% said they were under £5,001 and 15% said they were over £10,000. The average value was calculated at £8,374 and a median of £6,000. No comparison has been made to this question as the 2018 survey combined mortgage and rent costs in the one question whereas they have been separated in the 2022 survey. Five crofters said they had a mortgage on croft land.
- 5.3. Of those crofters who paid annual rent, 61% said they paid less than £51 in the last year, 25% paid between £51 and £100, and 14% paid over £100 per year. The average annual rent was reported as £133.95 and the median value was £32.
- 5.4. Of those who pay annual rent, 76% said their rent is reviewed, with over one in four respondents (27%) stating this is done annually. This question has not been compared to the 2018 survey due to changes to the wording of the question and the options provided.

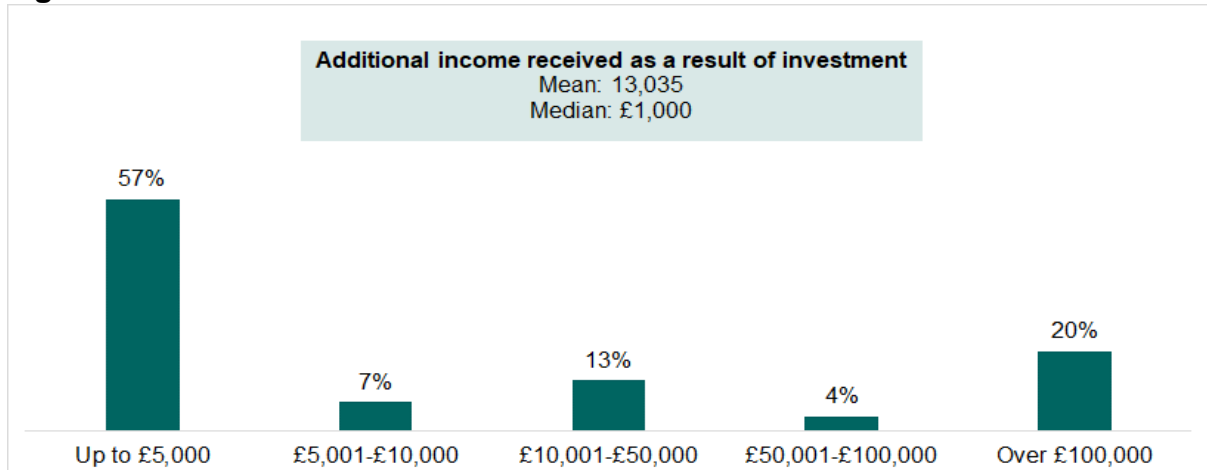
## 6. Investments In Crofts And Looking To The Future

**Figure 6.1: Total invested in croft 2019-2022**



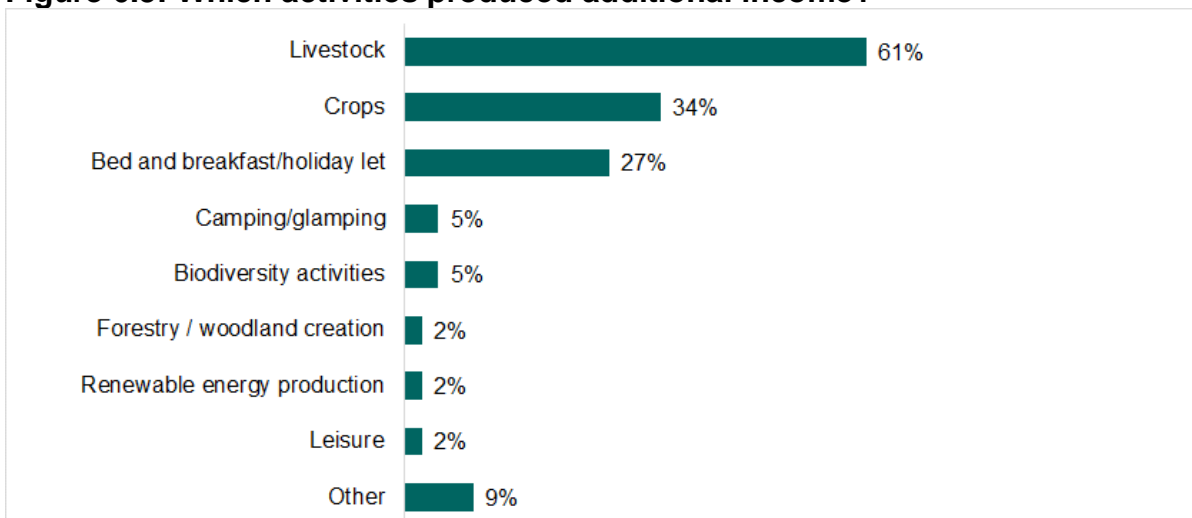
- 6.1. In terms of investment from crofters' own money, the median figure was £3,350 (£5,000 in 2018), and the average was £12,832 (£20,007 in 2018), as shown in figure 6.1. The majority had invested up to £5,000 (64%) of their own money with an additional 15% investing between £5,001 and £10,000 and 21% investing over £10,000.
- 6.2. Just over a third (39%) of crofters had invested money from grant money or support schemes in the last three years, an increase from 24% in 2018. The median amount invested from public funding was £5,000 (£1,000 in 2018), while the average investment was £4,612 (£6,554 in 2018).
- 6.3. Just under half (46%) said the money was invested in livestock, 27% said it was for fencing or gates, 24% said it was for crops, and 15% said it was for forestry or woodland creation.
- 6.4. Nineteen crofters (2%) said they had used a secured loan for their investment and 15 crofters (2%) said they had used an unsecured loan. With regard to secured loans the average was £12,705 and for unsecured loans the average amount received was £23,213.

**Figure 6.2: Additional income received as a result of investment made in croft**



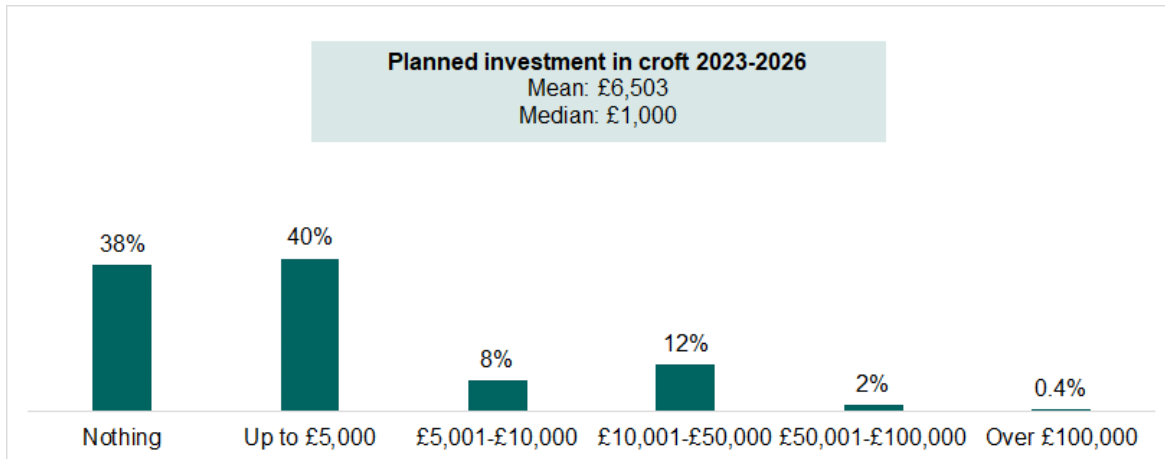
- 6.5. One in ten crofters who invested in their croft during the 2019-2022 period provided details of the additional income they received as a result of the investment. This is less than in the 2018 survey where 16% reported that they had received additional income. The average income has risen from £6,219 in 2018, to over double at £13,035 in 2022.
- 6.6. The majority of respondents did not anticipate there being any change in their income as a result of the investment made to their croft, while 17% said it was likely to increase (12% in 2018) and 11% said it was likely to decrease (4% in 2018).
- 6.7. When asked to provide their reasons for any anticipated change in their income from investment, 14% said that the improvements made were not to make profit and that they were, for example, to make processes easier, and carry out repairs or improving the ground. A further 11% mentioned rising costs, and 10% said that increased productivity would mean a change to their income in the next 12 months.

**Figure 6.3: Which activities produced additional income?**



6.8. Livestock (61%) was the greatest contributor to additional income, which was also the case in the 2018 survey (63%). This was followed by crops (34%) and bed and breakfast and holiday lets (27%).

**Figure 6.4: Planned investment in croft 2023-26**

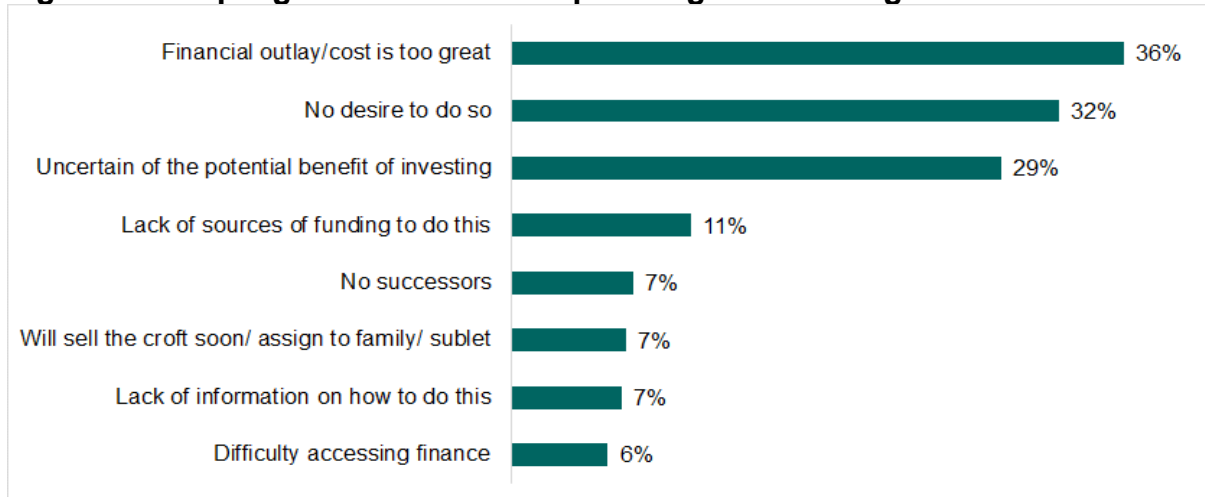


6.9. Crofters were asked about their planned investment for 2023-26. The number of crofters planning to invest in the future has increased from 48% in 2018 to 62% in 2022. The median planned investment was £1,000, down from £2,000 in 2018, and the average figure was £6,503, down from £16,450 in 2018 and £9,100 in 2014.

6.10. At 52%, livestock was the most common response when asked about how crofters plan to invest between 2023-26, followed by crops (30%) and forestry or woodland creation (22%). In 2018 the three most common responses were livestock (57%), crops (28%) and bed and breakfast / holiday let (16%).

6.11. Planning to invest in livestock was more common in crofters aged 16-44 (65%) and 45-54 (63%), than those aged 55-64 (46%) and 65 and over (40%). Crofters aged 65 and over were the least likely to plan to invest in camping or glamping facilities (2%). The nature of the planned investment does not vary significantly by gender.

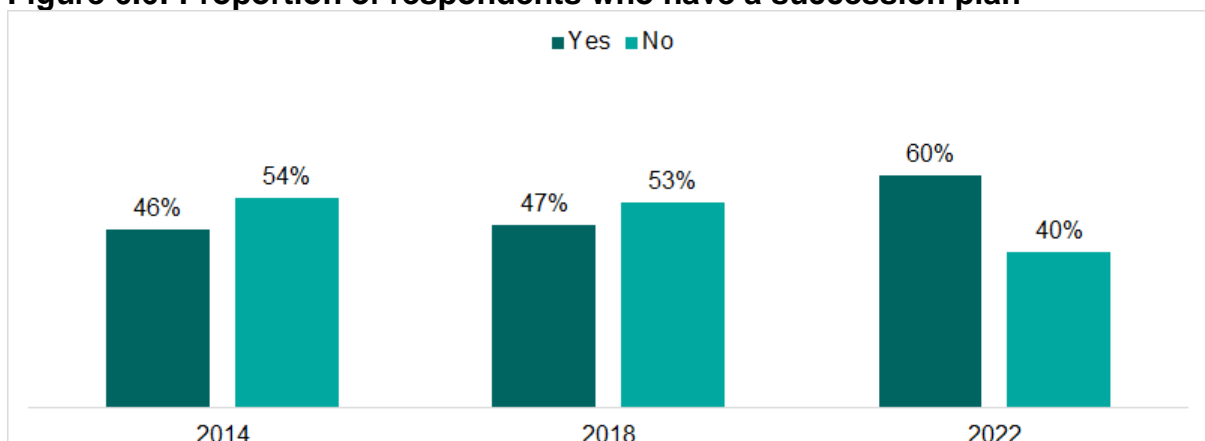
**Figure 6.5: Top eight reasons for not planning on investing 2023-2026**



6.12. Just under 36% of respondents did not plan on investing in their croft during 2023-2026. The most common reasons were that crofters believed the financial outlay or cost would be too great (36%); they had no desire to do so (32%); or they were uncertain of the potential benefit of investing (29%). These were also the top three reasons cited in 2018.

6.13. Crofters aged 65 and over were the most likely to have no desire to invest in their croft (40%), while those aged 55-64 were more likely to say the financial outlay or cost prevents them from investing in their croft. Crofters aged 16-44 were more likely to say that a lack of sources of funding prevents them from being able to plan any investment (29%). A lack of information was cited by significantly more crofters aged 55-64 (21%) than those aged 65 and over (5%).

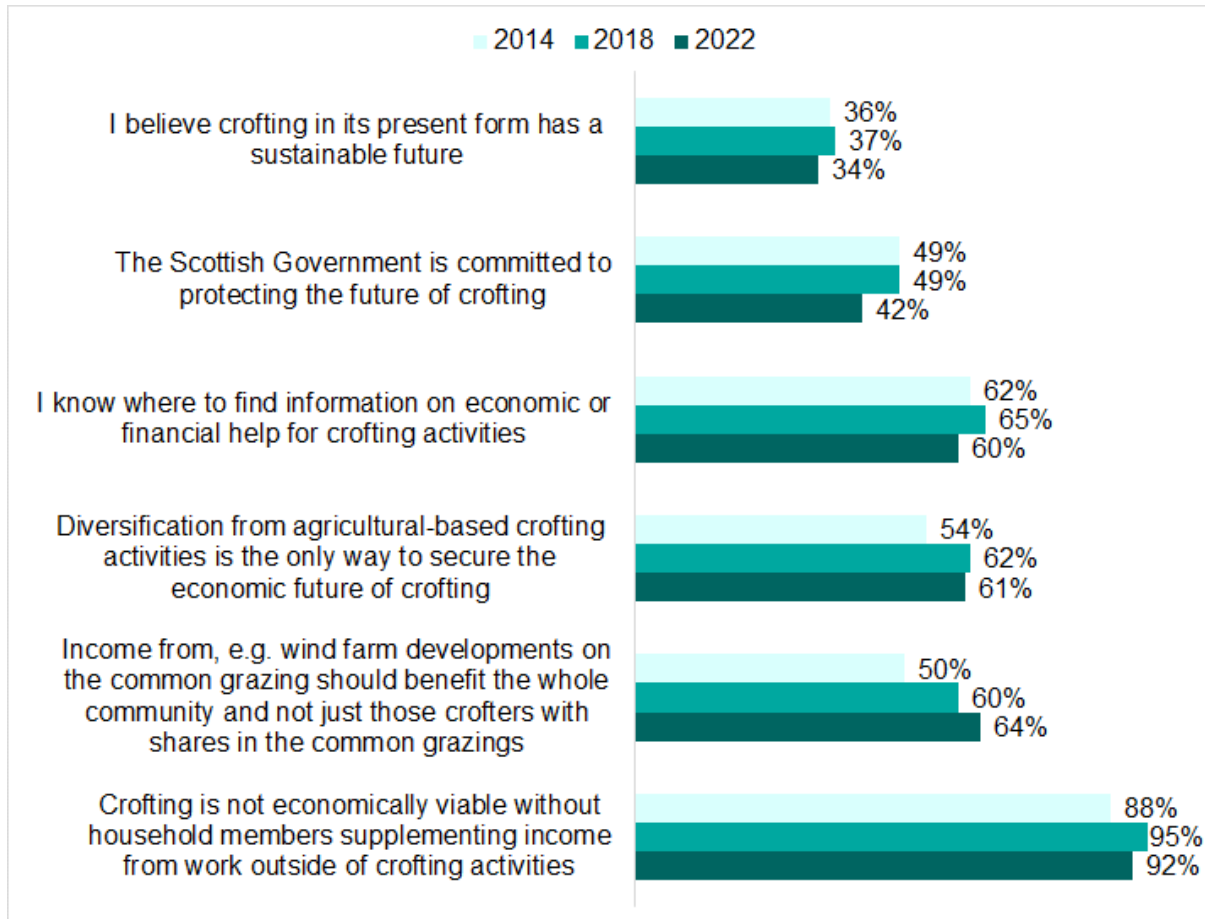
**Figure 6.6: Proportion of respondents who have a succession plan**



6.14. As illustrated in figure 6.6, the proportion of crofters with a succession plan in place has continued to increase with each survey, from 46% in 2014 and 47% in 2018, to 60% in 2022. Of those who had been crofting for 20 years or more, 71% reported to have a succession plan in place, compared to 44% of crofters who had been crofting for less than three years.

- 6.15. Of those who did not have a succession plan in place the most common reason was that respondents did not have a potential successor (33%). This was followed by those whose children or successors were not interested in crofting, and those that had no interest in making a succession plan, both of which came in at 18%.

**Figure 6.7: Agreement with statements about crofting (% strongly agree/agree)**



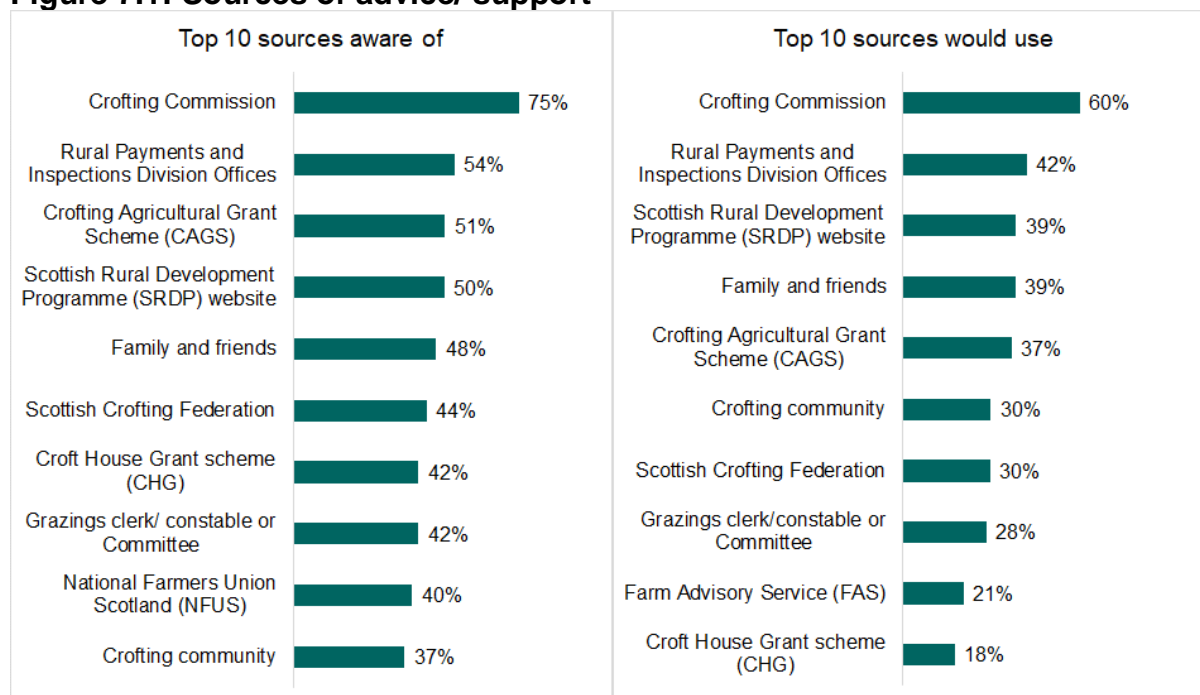
- 6.16. Crofters were asked to consider the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements about the longer-term outlook and future role of crofting in Scotland.
- 6.17. Almost all crofters were in agreement that crofting is not economically viable without household members supplementing their income from work outside of crofting activities (92%), which is consistent with the 2018 (95%) and 2014 results (88%).
- 6.18. There is an increase in the number of respondents who agreed that income from, for example, wind farm developments on the common grazing, should benefit the whole community - from 50% in 2014 and 60% in 2018, to 64% in 2022. The majority (61%) of crofters expressed the view that it was necessary for crofting to continue to diversify from agricultural-based activities in order to secure its economic future, which is consistent with the

2018 survey. Furthermore, 60% of crofters know where to find information on economic or financial help for crofting (65% in 2018 and 62% in 2014).

- 6.19. Analysis by age reveals that respondents aged 65 and over were more likely to agree that the Scottish Government is committed to protecting the future of crofting (46%), compared to those aged 45-54 (35%). Furthermore, 63% of respondents aged 65 and over and 64% of respondents aged 55-64 were in agreement that diversification from agricultural-based crofting activities is the only way to secure the economic future of crofting, compared to 52% of respondents aged 45-54.
- 6.20. The level of agreement does not vary significantly by age with the exception of knowing where to find information on economic or financial help for crofting activities, where those aged 65 and over were more likely to agree (76%).
- 6.21. Crofters were given the opportunity to make any further comments regarding their croft or the future of crofting in Scotland. One in five took the opportunity to do so. The most common themes mentioned by crofters were:
- A perceived lack of financial support available to crofters (19%);
  - A perception that crofting is dying out and that more needs to be done to encourage crofting (15%);
  - Succession plans (10%);
  - More support needed from the Crofting Commission to support crofters (7%); and
  - More needing done to attract younger people to crofting (7%).

## 7. Sources of Information on Crofting

**Figure 7.1: Sources of advice/ support**

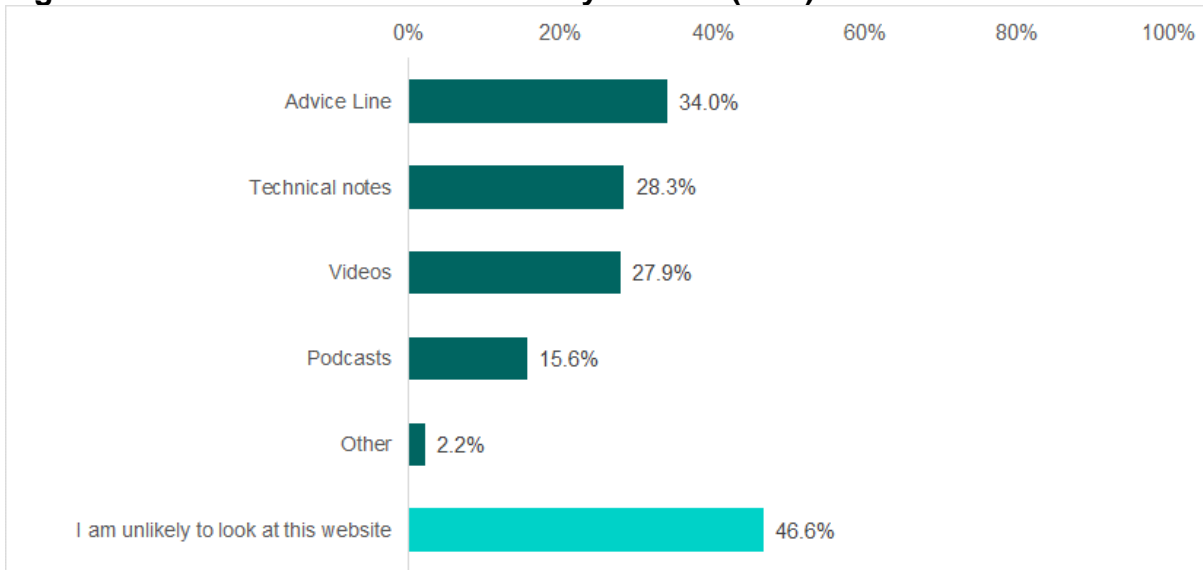


- 7.1. The majority of respondents were aware of the Crofting Commission, Commissioner or local Crofting Commission Assessor (75%) as sources of support. Those who had been crofting for over 20 years were twice as likely (23%) to be aware of the Crofting Cattle Improvement Scheme than those who had been crofting for less than three years (10%). The general awareness of support sources decreased with age, for example, 63% of crofters aged 16-44 were aware of the Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme (CAGS) compared to 41% of crofters aged 65 and over.
- 7.2. In terms of the sources that crofters would use for advice and support on crofting activities, the Crofting Commission, Commissioner or local Crofting Commission Assessor was the top response (60%), followed by Rural Payments and Inspections Division offices (42%), the Scottish Rural Development Programme website (39%) or family and friends (39%). Those who had been crofting for less than three years were more likely to use all sources of advice and support. Generally, respondents aged 65 and over were less likely to use sources of advice and support. Those who were newer to crofting were more likely to have looked for advice and support (51%).
- 7.3. Almost a third (30%) of crofters had looked for advice or support on crofting activities in the last 12 months, which is consistent with the 2018 report (33%).
- 7.4. Respondents were asked to select from a list of options what they would like to see on the Farm Advisory Service website. An advice line was the



most popular response (34%), followed by technical notes (28%) and videos (28%). Just under half of crofters (47%) said they would be unlikely to look at this website.

**Figure 7.2: Priorities for Farm Advisory Service (FAS) website**

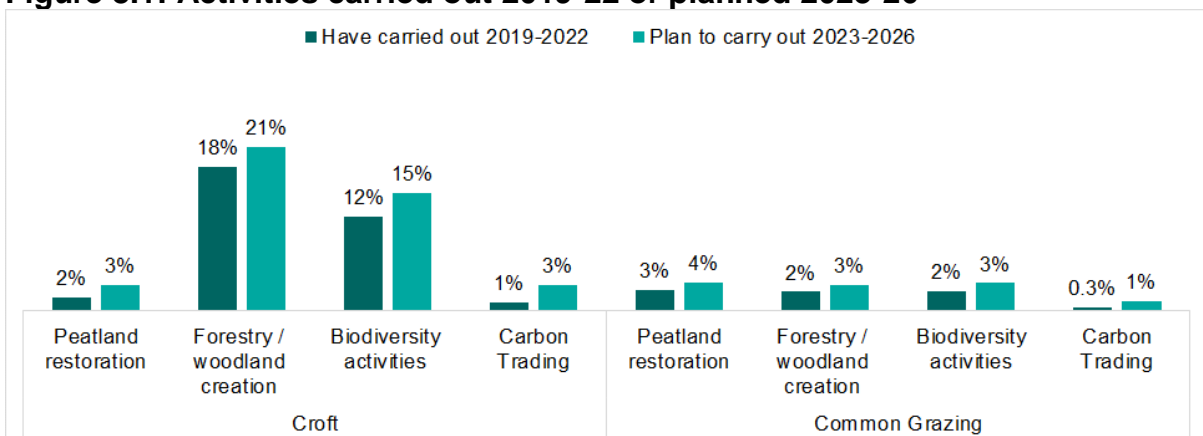


7.5. Respondents aged 65 and over were more likely to say they would be unlikely to look at the FAS website (61%). Podcasts (26%) were more popular with those aged under 45 (26%).

## 8. Peatland Restoration, Biodiversity and Forestry or Woodland Creation

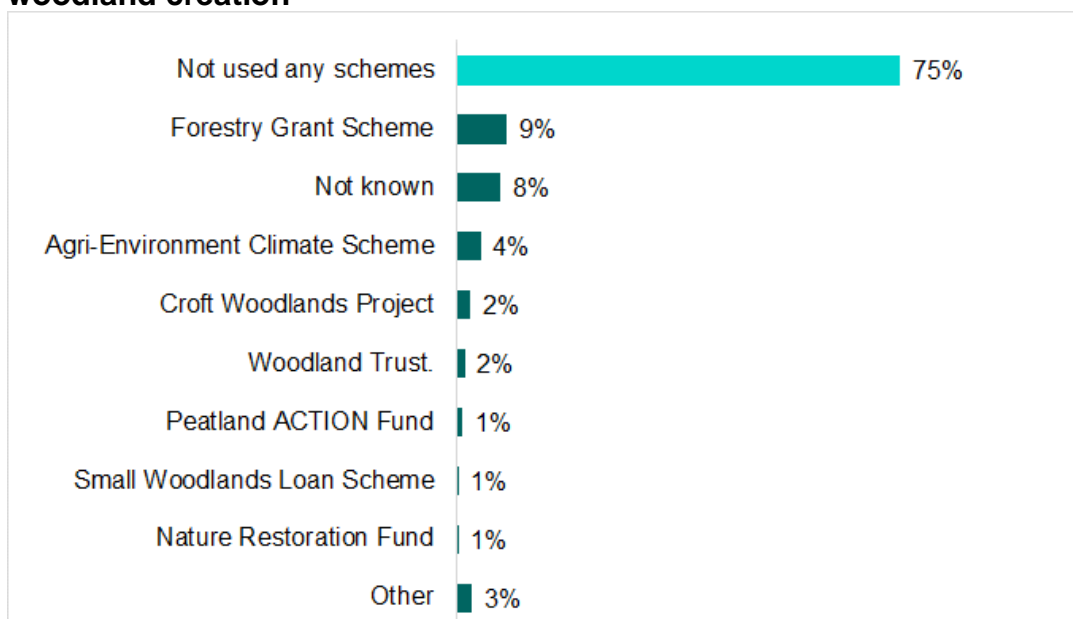
8.1. A new set of questions were included in the 2022 survey on the topics of peatland restoration, biodiversity activities and forestry and woodland creation. This is in order to create a baseline figure on these activities, inform future work, and help target support and information. Crofters were asked if they had undertaken any of these activities between 2019-22 and whether they intended to carry out these activities between 2023-26.

**Figure 8.1: Activities carried out 2019-22 or planned 2023-26**



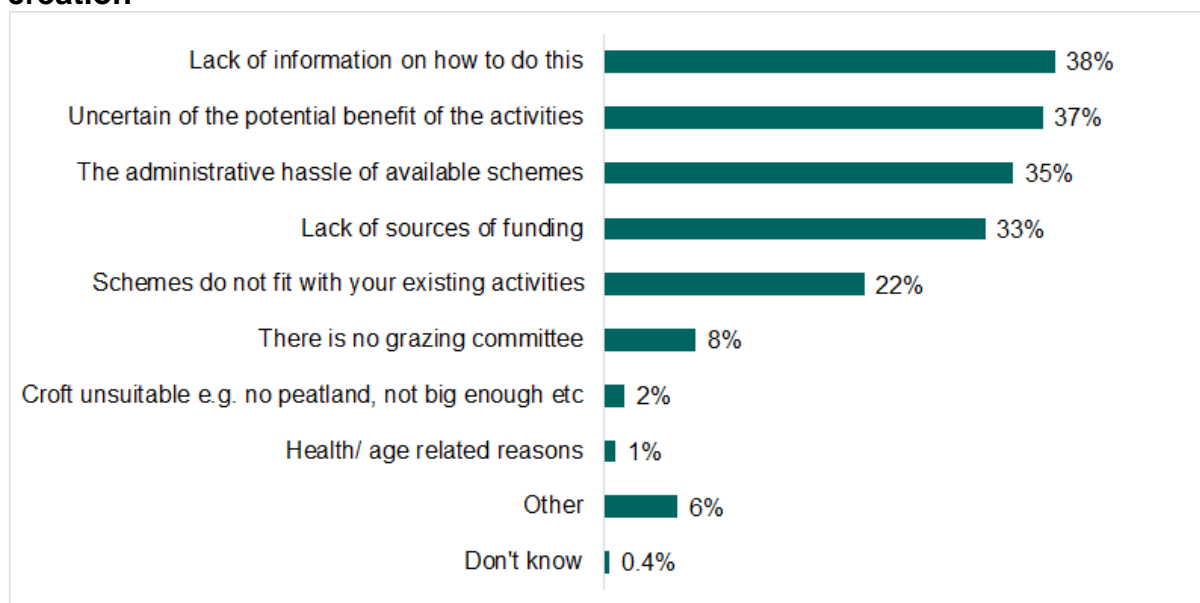
- 8.2. Just over a quarter (28%) of respondents had carried out these activities in the 2019-22 period and 34% plan to carry out these activities in the period 2023-26. Where these activities were carried out, the most common types of activities were biodiversity activities on the croft (12%), and woodland or forestry creation on the croft (18%). These were also the most popular types of activities to be carried out in 2023-2026.
- 8.3. Forestry and woodland creation have been carried out by significantly more crofters who have been crofting between three and ten years (25%). These crofters were also more likely to have undertaken biodiversity activities on their croft. Younger crofters were more likely than all other age groups to have said they have undertaken at least one of these activities (48%).

**Figure 8.2: Schemes used to restore peatland, biodiversity or forestry/ woodland creation**



- 8.4. Respondents were asked to identify any schemes, if any, they had used to either restore peatland, carry out biodiversity activities, or create forestry or woodland. The majority (75%) had not used any schemes. Where respondents had used schemes, the most popular responses were the Forestry Grant Scheme (9%) and the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (4%).

**Figure 8.3: Obstacles to peatland restoration, biodiversity, forestry/ woodland creation**



8.5. The most common obstacles preventing crofters from undertaking these types of activities on their croft or common grazing is a lack of information on how to do this (38%), followed by the uncertainty of the potential benefit of the activities (37%), the administrative hassle of available schemes (35%), and a lack of sources of funding (33%).

## 9. Conclusions

- 9.1. Overall, this report reflects a varied position for crofting, in terms of investment, income and outgoings, and crofting activities.
- 9.2. In addition to traditional agricultural activities, crofts are used for a variety of other activities such as growing trees, bed and breakfast and holiday let accommodation, and renewable energy production. After the more traditional activities of raising livestock and growing crops, diversified activities such as woodland and forestry creation, and owning bed and breakfasts and holiday lets are becoming more common.
- 9.3. The results of the survey show that the majority of crofters work away from the croft on non-crofting activities, in addition to their crofting activities. The majority of crofters agreed that crofting is not economically viable without household members supplementing income from non-crofting activities.
- 9.4. The number of female crofters has continued to increase, and new activities such as forestry and woodland creation, biodiversity activities, glamping and camping, and peatland restoration were all noted in 2022, and these activities are more likely to be carried out by younger crofters. The proportion of crofters who have a succession plan in place is also

continuing to rise. There is also an increase in the number of crofters planning to invest on their croft in the next four years.

# Measures Taken To Support Crofting

## Introduction

The Scottish Government is committed to the future of crofting and recognises the role crofting has to play in helping make rural communities socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. Crofting is widely regarded as an important system of land tenure, for the sense of identity that it provides, the landscape it creates and protects, and the systems of communal working it supports.

The Scottish Government recognises that our croft land is a key asset and by optimising its use we can produce food more sustainably, help address the climate change and biodiversity challenges, and enhance our natural environment. The Scottish Government has a track record of investing in crofting, and will continue to support ways that improve the economic condition of crofting.

Throughout this reporting period, 2019 – 2022, there have been a number of support mechanisms made available to crofters by the Scottish Government. These include access to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Pillar 1 direct payments, and all the relevant Scottish Rural Development Programme CAP Pillar 2 schemes, including those targeted specifically at crofters such as the Croft House Grant, Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme and the Cattle Improvement Scheme. Summary details of the support mechanisms put in place by the Scottish Government are provided below.

## 10. Croft House Grant Scheme

- 10.1. The Croft House Grant (CHG), which was launched in 2016, is a Scottish Government scheme that provides grants to active tenant crofters and owner-occupier crofters to help them build and improve their main crofter residence.
- 10.2. The scheme provides grants of up to £38k, with the aim of attracting and retaining people within the crofting areas of Scotland, and helping them to achieve the full potential of their crofts while generating economic activity. Across the crofting counties, over 158<sup>5</sup> croft houses have been built or improved during this reporting period.
- 10.3. A formal selection mechanism was introduced in response to a public consultation, which allows the Scottish Government to prioritise delivery of funding support to those most in need and to those who would not be able to build or improve their home without grant support.

---

<sup>5</sup> Application rounds from March 2019 up to September 2022.

**Table 10.1 provides details on the number of eligible applications and the value of grants approved each year.**

Year	Eligible Applications		% Approved	Value Approved	Value Spent
	Received	Approved			
2018-19 <sup>6</sup>	13	9	69%	£0.292m	£210,630
2019-20	65	53	82%	£1.757m	£1,183,846
2020-21	50	39	78%	£1.183m	£1,392,377
2021-22	56	41	73%	£1.193m	£924,060
2022-23 <sup>7</sup>	30	22	73%	£0.664m	£1,053,580

- 10.4. Funding under the CHG is provided retrospectively in up to three stages. For this reason, funding committed in any financial year can be claimed by applicants and paid in both the current and following two to three financial years.
- 10.5. Officials continually monitor the scheme and have carried out an annual review in each year of the reporting period to ensure that all checks and balances remain reasonable, that assessment of applications stand up to scrutiny and offer a sufficient degree of flexibility. The Scottish Government has a track record of investing in croft housing since 1912. Since January 2007, the Scottish Government has approved grant payments of over £24 million, helping to build and improve over 1,090 croft homes.

## **11. Cattle Improvement Scheme**

- 11.1. In April 2013, the Scottish Government completed its £3 million renovation of the stud farm facilities at Knocknagael in Inverness. The modernised stud facility provides quality accommodation for the bulls, optimising their welfare and enabling crofters to continue to benefit from access to high quality, healthy bulls and the supply of quality calves to the beef industry throughout Scotland and beyond.
- 11.2. Despite the level of investment by the Scottish Government, the hire costs of the bulls have only been increased in line with inflation. The scheme continues to subsidise bull hire by groups of crofters, by up to 60% of the full cost. The annual net cost for running the bull stud is approximately £410,000 per year. Table 11.1 below provides statistics on the number of bulls hired, the number of groups of crofters involved, and the number of beneficiaries.

<sup>6</sup> From 1 January 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

**Table 11.1 Cattle Improvement Scheme**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Bulls Hired</b>	<b>No. of Participating townships</b>	<b>No. of Crofters Benefitting</b>
2018-19	115	117	492
2019-20	118	127	503
2020-21	117	137	494
2021-22	115	120	485
2022-23 <sup>8</sup>	116	136	466

11.3. The scheme continues to supply bulls to the areas where no practical alternative means of service are readily available. Scheme staff are able to offer advice and guidance on all matters relating to the husbandry and welfare of the bulls, their mates and progeny. Some townships have returned to the scheme, citing that it is their best option to obtain a good quality sire for their cattle. Approximately 3,500 calves are sired annually by Scottish Government bulls, from which home-bred replacement heifers are retained and the surplus sold on.

11.4. The scheme helps crofting communities in a number of ways, such as:

- Economically – the bulls purchased for the scheme are chosen using Estimated Breeding Values (EBV) as one of the criteria when choosing the animals to be purchased. All bulls purchased are in the top 50% of EBV for the breeds, producing a quality progeny to sell or to breed replacement heifers from.
- Environmentally - it encourages producers to keep cattle in environmentally sensitive areas, which helps with keeping these areas in good condition and encouraging local wildlife.

## **12. Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**

12.1. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is a European programme of funding and support that Scottish farmers and crofters, as well as rural businesses and communities, have accessed through the Scottish Government. Funding has supported environmental, economic and community development across Scotland in a number of areas. This includes food and drink production, local community and tourism projects, forestry, and rural business developments.

12.2. Over the reporting period, funding was allocated in two ways (Pillars):

<sup>8</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

- **Pillar 1** – direct payments that farmers, crofters and land owners may be entitled to, based on the size and type of their farm and the livestock they keep.
  - **Pillar 2** – Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP), which develops rural Scotland through a range of grants and support for rural communities, rural businesses, farmers, crofters and other land managers.
- 12.3. The last Scottish Parliament unanimously passed the Agriculture (Retained EU Law and Data) (Scotland) Act 2020 to enable the continuation of CAP schemes from 2021, while future agriculture policy is being co-developed. The Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB) was subsequently established to contribute to the development of Scottish Government new proposals for sustainable farming support that delivers climate mitigation and adaptation, nature restoration and high quality food production, whilst at the same time remaining aligned to the key objectives of the EU CAP. The Scottish Government set out how it will support farming and food production in Scotland to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture in the Vision for Agriculture, published in March 2022.

## **13. Pillar 1: Direct Payments**

### **13.1. Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and Greening**

- 13.1.1. The Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) supplements main business income. To qualify for this support, claimants must actively farm their land. Support under the BPS is available to those who are allocated payment entitlements. Farmers and crofters can apply for entitlements based on the land they farm and the activity they undertake.
- 13.1.2. The scheme also delivers environmental and other benefits by requiring claimants to meet certain practices and farm in a sustainable way. Together, these are called Agricultural Practices Beneficial for the Climate and the Environment but is more commonly called “Greening”. Greening is paid on top of the BPS.
- 13.1.3. When considering the implementation of the Greening requirements in Scotland, a balance was reached regarding the transfer of funds from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2, and the activities to be undertaken to meet the Greening requirements.
- 13.1.4. Since 2015, Greening requirements have included:
- Permanent grassland;
  - Crop diversification; and
  - Ecological Focus Areas.



- 13.1.5. Under reform of the CAP, it is mandatory for applicants to the BPS to comply with Greening requirements on their land, where relevant. In return for this, an additional Greening payment will be made.

## **13.2 Young Farmer Payment**

- 13.2.1. If a business qualifies for the Basic Payment, the beneficiary may also receive the Young Farmer Payment (YFP). They will receive this if they:
- Submit a Single Application Form;
  - Farm a minimum of three hectares in Scotland;
  - Are a sole trader or head of the farm business; and
  - Are under 41 years of age on 31 December of the first year they apply for the Basic Payment Scheme.
- 13.2.2. The level of YFP is based on a maximum of 90 eligible hectares and the rate is 25% of the average value of payment entitlements held for the scheme year concerned. For businesses where the young farmer is classed as head of the farm business, this means *that* person is the main shareholder/partner in the business; takes the majority share of any profits; and makes the key business decisions. The YFP is made to eligible applicants for a maximum of five years from the date of their first application submission.

## **13.3 Scottish Upland Sheep Support Scheme (SUSSS)**

- 13.3.1. This scheme was introduced in 2015 and gives direct support to help maintain sheep flocks in farm businesses who are reliant on poorer quality rough grazing found in Scotland's Basic Payment Region Three.
- 13.3.2. It has an annual budget of approximately £7 million. Businesses that rely on poor quality rough grazing are defined as those which have: a) 80 per cent or more of their agricultural land in Scotland's Basic Payment Region Three; and b) no more than 200 hectares of good quality agricultural land in Scotland's Basic Payment Region One. The scheme aims to maintain the environmental and social benefits that arise from extensive sheep grazing on the Scottish hills and uplands.

## **13.4 Scottish Suckler Beef Support Scheme (SSBSSM (Mainland) and SSBSSI (Islands))**

- 13.4.1 This scheme was introduced in 2015 and gives direct support to specialist beef producers. It has an annual budget of approximately £34 million for Scottish mainland claims, and approximately £6 million for claims from the Scottish islands.
- 13.4.2 The scheme aims to maintain sufficient critical mass in the Scottish beef industry, and the environmental and social benefits that arise from extensive beef suckler herds on the Scottish mainland and islands.

**Table 13.1 - Pillar 1 Number of businesses funded which declared a common grazing on their Single Application Form.**

Year	BPS & Greening	YFP	SSBSSM	SSBSSI	SUSSS
2018	3,829	177	483	660	690
2019	3,789	195	475	656	731
2020	3,791	191	470	660	767
2021	3,745	187	454	660	720
2022 <sup>9</sup>	3,333				

**Table 13.2 Pillar 1 Funding Amounts provided to businesses which declared a common grazing on their Single Application Form (£).**

Year	BPS & Greening	YFP	SSBSSM	SSBSSI	SUSSS
2018	£24,671,636	£112,634	£969,898	£1,703,425	£1,619,149
2019	£25,810,147	£112,454	£982,139	£1,752,357	£1,636,820
2020	£26,755,303	£102,641	£951,750	£1,741,041	£1,682,748
2021	£26,892,731	£87,727	£984,811	£1,755,845	£1,641,410
2022 <sup>10</sup>	£23,259,059				

## **14. Pillar 2: Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP)**

14.1.1. The Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2014 - 2020 delivered Pillar 2 of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). It funded economic, environmental and social measures for the benefit of rural Scotland. The key purpose of the SRDP 2014-2020 was to help achieve sustainable economic growth in Scotland's rural areas. The main priorities were:

- Enhancing the rural economy;
- Supporting agricultural and forestry businesses;
- Protecting and improving the natural environment;
- Addressing the impact of climate change; and
- Supporting rural communities.

14.1.2. All of the schemes were open to crofters.

### **14.2 Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme**

14.2.1. Crofting exists in areas where agricultural production and investment costs are traditionally high. The Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme (CAGS)

<sup>9</sup> The BPS & Greening figure is up to 31 October 2022. The figures for the other four schemes will not be known until early 2023.

<sup>10</sup> The BPS & Greening amount is up to 31 October 2022. The amounts for the other four schemes will not be known until early 2023.

provides grants to tenant and owner-occupier crofters, including sub-tenants, towards the costs of a range of agricultural operations. It is a very popular scheme, attracting on average 950 applications each year.

- 14.2.2. The CAGS is designed to aid and develop agricultural production on crofting businesses, thereby sustaining the economic basis of crofting, and helping retain people in rural and island communities. Funding supports crofters in carrying out individual or collective investments that reduce production costs, improve quality, preserve and improve the natural environment, and hygiene conditions and animal welfare standards.
- 14.2.3. Throughout the reporting period the CAGS has funded a variety of projects, including the erection or improvement of agricultural buildings and shelters for out-wintered livestock, and works associated with agricultural buildings (including yards, hard standings and silos), investment in land management, arterial and field drainage, and provision or improvement of equipment for the handling and treatment of livestock.
- 14.2.4. Since 2016, over £22m in CAGS funding has been approved, helping over 5,000 crofters with their businesses.

**Table 14.1 Number of CAGS applications and the value of grants approved each year.**

Year	Applications		% Approved	Value Approved	Value Spent
	Received	Approved			
2018-19	932	714	77%	£4.278m	£3.366m
2019-20	1,027	788	77%	£4.424m	£3.569m
2020-21	1,118	834	76%	£4.414m	£3.627m
2021-22	749	571	76%	£3.654m	£4.013m
2022-23 <sup>11</sup>	385	230	60% <sup>12</sup>	£1.402m	£2.342m

### 14.3 LEADER (Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale)

- 14.3.1. The LEADER programme, which ran from 2014 to 2020 and closed on 31 December 2021, aimed to promote economic and community development in rural areas, and covered 95% of rural Scotland and included all of the remote rural areas. Crofters, like other members of rural communities, could qualify for grant funding if their application was eligible against the local development strategy for their area.
- 14.3.2. LEADER enabled innovative approaches to rural problems, including small business and farm diversification. New ideas, co-operation, capacity-

<sup>11</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

<sup>12</sup> The 385 applications received as at 31 October 2022, have not been fully processed and the percentage figure will increase.

building and community empowerment were the central principles behind the bottom-up LEADER approach to decision-making.

- 14.3.3. Twenty-one Local Action Groups (LAGs) delivered LEADER funding under the SRDP. LAGs are a local partnership of mostly local public agencies working in the rural field and private socio-economic individuals or businesses. Local Authorities act as the Lead Partner for most of the LAGs, responsible for holding and accounting for the LEADER funds, and employing LAG staff.
- 14.3.4. Table 14.2 below details LEADER LAGs and their indicative allocations, alongside their farm diversification and enterprise actual spend from which projects from crofters could have applied.

**Table 14.2 Final Indicative Allocations of LEADER Funding**

<b>Local Action Group (LAG)</b>	<b>LAG Indicative Allocation</b>	<b>Farm diversification and enterprise Actual Spend</b>
Argyll & Islands	£3.98m	£1.38m
Cairngorms	£3.05m	£1.30m
Highland	£8.96m	£3.49m
Moray	£3.52m	£2.83m
Orkney	£2.60m	£1.24m
Outer Hebrides	£3.23m	£1.78m
Shetland	£2.56m	£1.09m
<b>Total</b>	<b>£27.9m</b>	<b>£13.1m</b>

- 14.3.5. An example of a supported crofting project is the ‘Outer Hebrides - Shared Steps for Common Grazings’. The project undertook innovative work on designing results-based approaches for supporting common grazings management, thereby opening up the possibility for crofting communities to improve their sustainability through reward for the provision of ecosystem services. This project:
- Built cooperation between LAGs in Scotland;
  - Provided means by which the natural heritage could be enhanced;
  - Provided means by which climate action could be undertaken in the form of encouraging the better management of peatlands; and
  - Supported crofting, specifically by developing ways by which latent community assets could be transformed into natural capital providing an enhanced income to the managers of common grazings.

LEADER Funding £80,312  
Total Project cost £89,236

## 14.4 Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS)

- 14.4.1. Agricultural holdings cover 75% of Scotland’s total land area, approximately 5.8m hectares; of this agricultural area, 85% is classed as less favoured. The Less Favoured Area Support Scheme (LFASS) provides essential income support to over 10,800 farming and crofting businesses in remote and constrained rural areas. The current scheme will continue until 2024.
- 14.4.2. The principal objective of LFASS is to compensate land managers in less favoured areas for the particular disadvantages that they face, and thereby sustain farming and crofting in these areas. This provides the associated economic, social and environmental benefits that are dependent on continued active farming/land management in these areas. A significant proportion of croft land falls within the less favoured area and therefore receives additional support.
- 14.4.3. Funding is used to:
- Allow farmers and crofters to continue to operate as viable businesses;
  - Avoid the risk of land abandonment;
  - Help maintain the countryside by ensuring continued agricultural land use; and
  - Maintain and promote sustainable farming systems.

**Table 14.3 LFASS funding provided to businesses with common grazing**

Year	Number of crofter recipients	LFASS Funding
2018	3,514	£9,477,851
2019	3,471	£7,841,184
2020	3,491	£4,198,671
2021	3,467	£9,580,104

## 14.5 Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS)

- 14.5.1. The Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) is a competitive scheme that promotes land management practices which protect and enhance Scotland’s magnificent natural heritage, improve water quality, manage flood risk and mitigate and adapt to climate change. AECS also helps to improve public access in rural areas and preserve historic sites.
- 14.5.2. Since 2015, the Scottish Government has invested around £242 million through the AECS to support farmers and crofters to protect and enhance biodiversity, restore nature, improve soil and water quality and to mitigate climate change. This scheme has helped fund and deliver:
- The [Scottish Biodiversity Strategy](#) by supporting appropriate management for vulnerable and iconic species and habitats,

- strengthening ecological networks, controlling invasive non-native species and enhancing the condition of protected nature sites;
- Contributes to Scotland’s world-leading climate change targets by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture and securing carbon stores in peatlands and other organic soils;
- Meets obligations to improve water quality under the Scotland River Basin Management Plan by reducing diffuse pollution;
- Controls flooding through natural flood risk management;
- Supports organic farming;
- Preserves the historic environment; and
- Improves public access.

14.5.3. AECS is delivered jointly by the Scottish Government’s Rural Payments and Inspections Division (RPID) and NatureScot (formerly SNH).

14.5.4. The first AECS round opened in 2015, and there is one application round each year. The 2022 AECS results will be announced late 2022. It is the intention to offer future rounds of the scheme up to and including 2024, subject to budgetary availability. AECS contracts usually run over a five-year term.

**Table 14.4 Total AECS funding provided per Claim Year to business with common grazing**

Year	Croft Businesses	Total AECS Commitments
2019	465	£3,665,677
2020	532	£3,980,149
2021	521	£3,518,006
2022 <sup>13</sup>	388	£2,541,232

## 14.6 Rural Priorities (RP)

14.6.1. The Rural Priorities (RP) scheme, which closed to new applications in 2013, is an integrated funding mechanism established to aid the delivery of the five key outcomes of the SRDP (2007-2013):

- Business viability and competitiveness;
- Water quality;
- Adaptations to mitigate climate change;
- Biodiversity and landscapes; and
- Thriving rural communities.

14.6.2. RP contracts usually run over a five-year term for Agri-Environment activities, and up to 20 years for Forestry activities. Therefore, despite the

<sup>13</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

scheme being closed, the Scottish Government continues to make payments to scheme beneficiaries, which benefits the rural economy.

**Table 14.5 Total RP funding provided**

<b>Year</b>	<b>RP Businesses</b>	<b>Total Committed</b>
2019	132	£717,870
2020	79	£154,023
2021	78	£149,843
2022 <sup>14</sup>	77	£147,312

## **14.7 Scotland's Farm Advisory Service**

14.7.1. Scotland's Farm Advisory Service (FAS) features two distinct components: a One-to-Many advisory service delivered by SAC Consulting, and a One-to-One advisory service delivered by Ricardo AEA. In terms of FAS funding, the Scottish Government has provided a total of £13.9 million between 1 January 2019 and 31 October 2022, over £3.6m per annum.

### **FAS One-to-Many**

14.7.2. The One-to-Many service is a customer-focussed programme which supports crofters and farmers and other rural land managers to improve efficiency, increase biodiversity, and prepare for and mitigate climate change. A key component of the FAS One-to-Many service is the provision of an advisory subscription for crofters as well as a range of free advice and information through workshops, events, and meetings, supported by numerous publications, podcasts, videos and a website.

14.7.3. The subscription for crofters is delivered by advisors based in Lerwick, Kirkwall, Stornoway, Balivanich, Portree, Thurso, Inverness and Oban, ensuring local delivery on a diverse range of technical, community and business issues. Advisors also hold drop-in clinics in island communities and other remote areas. The subscription service provides bespoke advice to crofters on crofting and agricultural topics, and national expertise and support.

**Table 14.6 Crofter Subscribers Number and Support**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Subscriptions</b>	<b>Support</b>
2019	2,042	£277,264
2020	2,026	£275,513
2021	2,066	£286,140
2022 <sup>15</sup>	1,836	£269,355

<sup>14</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

14.7.4. Events and publications are themed each year to meet trending topics and demand, and always with climate change, food security and biodiversity in mind.

### **Croft and Small Farms**

14.7.5. The FAS website contains a ‘Croft and Small Farms’ topic, which provides advice in a way that is tailored to meet the needs of crofters and small farmers. This includes events, advice line support, podcast, videos, case studies and peer-to-peer groups. It aims to increase understanding and use of the Crofting Commission processes, and provide practical solutions to increase efficiency, reduce emissions and support biodiversity net gain.

14.7.6. From 1 January 2019 to 31 October 2022, a total of £519,015 has been spent on crofting support for the Croft & Small Farms topic, comprising events, meetings, publications, and videos. Table 14.7 below, contains the outputs for the ‘Croft and Small Farms’ topic, from 1 January 2019 to 31 October 2022.

**Table 14.7 Croft and Small Farm Attendees**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Videos</b>	<b>Podcasts</b>	<b>Online Tools</b>	<b>Publications</b>
2019	404	19	7	2	0	4
2020	255	15	17	7	5	38
2021	326	27	13	6	1	11
2022 <sup>16</sup>	150	8	12	6	2	1

14.7.7. Examples of Support:

- In 2019, there was an emphasis on showcasing expertise which improved productivity and efficiency.
- Crofters’ Question Time events were a chance for crofters to engage with local experts, including the Scottish Government’s Rural Payments and Inspections Division, NatureScot, local vets, ecologists, SAC advisors, Crofting Commission, the Scottish Crofting Federation and National Farmers Union Scotland.
- The video ‘Bliadhna air a mhachair’ was developed, highlighting good practice in growing machair crops. Produced with the help of local crofters, Scottish Natural Heritage, and RSPB Scotland, this video explored best practice in the management of machair, to ensure a balance between production of important outputs and the protection of nesting birds and valued plant species. Focussing on key dates and cultivation practices, the video explained the reasons why these factors matter.

<sup>16</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.



- To encourage occupation of crofts and young people into crofting, 2020 saw the start of a cartoon film series aimed at explaining crofting regulation, including crofter duties, letting, subletting and assignments.
- Guidance leaflets for new entrants were produced in English and Gaelic, outlining steps to register a new agricultural and crofting business along with explanations of terminology and support organisations.
- In conjunction with the Crofting Commission's new Development Team, an assignment tool was developed, to take crofters step by step through the process of transferring the tenancy of their croft.
- Also in conjunction with the Crofting Commission, two series of events were held for common grazings: one on dealing with disputes, and one on managing finances.
- Online courses were developed to demonstrate to common grazings committees how to use programmes such as Zoom and Skype.
- During the years when face-to-face engagement became impossible due to COVID-19, videos and online meetings became an ever more important aspect of the One-to-Many programme output. For crofting areas, virtual meetings overcame some of the barriers to knowledge transfer imposed by distance and off-croft employment.
- In 2021, an online series helped crofters who wanted to capitalise on the push to 'buy local' and sell their own products. Resources covered topics such as Marketing, Breeding for Success, and Meeting the Regulations, that involved industry partners, Quality Meat Scotland and Food Standards Scotland.
- In 2022, with the move to online IACS Single Application Form (SAF) applications, a webinar and video were both produced to help new entrants and those using the online system for the first time.
- A new magazine style show, 'FAS TV' is hosted on the FAS website and YouTube channels, recreating the 'farm visit' and allowing viewers to visit farms and crofts from the comfort of their own home, whilst gaining knowledge and advice from their peers.
- Podcasts are increasingly popular as a medium for knowledge transfer. 'Crofting Matters,' was added to the podcast portfolio in 2022, joining earlier podcasts on hill cattle, cropping, muirburn, insect protein, and cattle handling on common grazings.

### **FAS: One-to-One**

- 14.7.8. The One-to-One contract facilitates access to high quality one-to-one consultancy support. This includes advice to: improve biodiversity; increase

awareness of habitat and carbon sequestration benefits of woodland planting; promote climate change adaptation and mitigation opportunities; improve business management and efficiency; encourage inclusivity by supporting new entrants and women in agriculture; and helping to support the industry and Scottish Government to evolve to meet future challenges.

14.7.9. Crofters are entitled to the following one-to-one support services and funding:

- Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMP) - Up to £1,200 per plan;
- Specialist advice – up to £1,000 funding;
- Carbon audits - up to £500 per audit, available per annum<sup>17</sup>
- Mentoring for new entrants to crofting - up to four days one-to-one with a personal mentor.

**Table 14.8 FAS One-to-One Support<sup>18</sup>**

<b>FAS Support</b>	<b>Crofter Beneficiaries</b>	<b>Value</b>
Integrated Land Management Plans	65	£78,000
Specialist Advice	127	£127,000
Carbon Audits	106	£53,000
Mentoring Service	32	£32,000

## **14.8 Highlands and Islands Veterinary Services Scheme (HIVSS)**

14.8.1. The aim of the Highlands and Islands Veterinary Services Scheme (HIVSS) is to ensure the provision of suitable veterinary services. This is to prevent, identify and eradicate animal disease for all animals kept for agricultural purposes where no other provisions are available on the market.

14.8.2. It is necessary to support large animal veterinary practices in some remote areas of the Highlands and Islands, because without them, crofters and their animals would be completely without practical veterinary cover. It is important to ensure these practices continue to provide cover for remote areas as they play a vital role in prevention and identification of animal disease.

14.8.3. In practical terms, this means that crofters and other eligible persons can arrange a visit by a participating veterinary surgeon for a modest maximum charge. This charge is supplemented by a grant to the veterinary practice which covers the costs of a visit when a vet is called out to take preventative and eradication measures for animal disease.

<sup>17</sup> Due to high demand, since 28 July 2022 FAS has exceeded its available capacity to offer carbon audits during 2022/23, however the National Test programme currently provides support for carbon audits.

<sup>18</sup> From 1 January 2019 to 31 October 2022.

- 14.8.4. The annual budget for the scheme is £760,000, and there are currently 23 veterinary practices participating in the scheme.

**Table 14.9 Total HIVSS funding provided Year Grant Expenses**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Grant</b>	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Total</b>
2019	£672,726	£64,769	£737,496
2020	£674,349	£71,532	£745,881
2021	£680,467	£89,954	£770,421
2022 <sup>19</sup>	£673,810	£78,967	£752,777

## **14.9 Veterinary and Advisory Services**

- 14.9.1. SRUC Veterinary Services provide the farm animal disease surveillance for Scottish Government under the Veterinary Advisory Services (VAS) programme. It consists of post-mortem and diagnostic services plus expert advice and is delivered to Scottish livestock producers through their veterinary practitioners.
- 14.9.2. Those using the service pay for a proportion of the cost of the service. Livestock keepers who are identified as crofters benefit from a further 50% reduction in fees for the diagnostic services provided under this funding. In 2021 there were 622 submissions from crofters, and this generated £22,174 of additional subsidy.
- 14.9.3. In addition, training and continuing professional development events are held for the veterinary practitioners who serve Scotland's crofters; this is also supported under the VAS programme.
- 14.9.4. SRUC Veterinary Services also initiated a programme to improve biosecurity and control of BVD (Bovine Viral Diarrhoea) on croft land where animals graze. The Scottish Government has seen the benefits of this initiative in terms of a reduction in BVD prevalence across all the crofting areas of Scotland.

## **14.10 Forestry Grant Scheme**

- 14.10.1. Scotland's woodlands and forests are a vital national resource and play an important role in rural development and sustainable land use. As well as helping to reduce the impact of climate change and providing timber for industry, our forests enhance and protect the environment, and provide opportunities for public enjoyment. Scotland's woodlands and forests are a vital national resource and play an important role in rural development and sustainable land use. As well as helping to reduce the impact of climate change and providing timber for industry, our forests enhance and protect the environment, and provide opportunities for public enjoyment.

<sup>19</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

14.10.2. The Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) supports:

- The creation of new woodlands, contributing towards the Scottish Government target of 18,000 hectares of new woodlands per year from 2024/25; and
- The sustainable management of existing woodlands.

14.10.3. Through the SRDP, the FGS has seen an increase in funding year on year, paying for the additional national targets to create new woodland. The £62.8m Woodland Grants budget figures for 2021/22 was an increase of £6 million from 2020/21.

14.10.4. Grant support is available under eight categories:

- **Two for the creation of woodland:**
  - Woodland Creation
  - Agro Forestry
- **Six for the management of existing woodland:**
  - Capital Woodland Improvement Grant
  - Sustainable Management of Forests
  - Tree Health
  - Harvesting and Processing
  - Forest Infrastructure
  - Forestry Co-operation

14.10.5. Within some of these categories, there is a range of funding options which relate to specific types of project or work.

14.10.6. Since it opened to applicants in March 2015, crofters have been able to apply for any of the grants, provided they meet the required eligibility criteria for each option. Due to the nature of crofting not all options under each of the categories will be appropriate. However, there are many that are suitable. For example, under Woodland Creation, there is the option to plant Scots Native Pine, where the minimum block size is 0.25 hectares in any one year. There is an initial planting payment and an annual maintenance payment for five years. There are also a range of capital grants available for operations such as fencing and tree protection.

14.10.7. There is a specific target area for the planting of small native woodlands within the crofting counties, providing these new woodlands meet the eligibility criteria of the 'Native Broadleaves in Northern & Western Isles' woodland creation option and are within areas defined as preferred or potential within the relevant local authority woodland strategy. If a new croft woodland meets the relevant criteria then this provides an increased grant contribution of £840 per hectare more than the standard option rate.

## **14.11 Small Woodland Loan Scheme**

- 14.11.1. In the face of the current Climate Emergency the Scottish Government has committed to significant tree planting targets. Being able to access grant funding for woodland creation projects has been identified as an important factor in delivering the goal of increasing afforestation to 18,000 hectares per year.
- 14.11.2. One of the key issues identified as a barrier to entry when considering small scale afforestation is the cost of planning and implementation, with small woodland creation proposals generally being the most expensive to implement on a pounds-per-hectare basis. This can result in high initial outgoings and a fragmented cash-flow that make proposals unviable for smaller businesses.
- 14.11.3. Scottish Forestry has introduced the Small Woodlands Loan Scheme (SWLS) to support the costs of land managers during the implementation of small-scale woodland creation proposals that have been approved under the Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS). The loan payment assists in bridging the costs of implementation once an applicant has an agreed FGS contract.
- 14.11.4. Since the introduction of the SWLS in April 2021, there has been four successful loan cases in respect of croft land, with a total loan value of £22,300, creating 5.39 hectares of new woodlands<sup>20</sup>.

## **14.12 Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund (KTIF)**

- 14.12.1. The KTIF opens periodically to assess projects seeking either innovation or knowledge transfer funding. The scheme has been part of the SRDP since 2015, and has supported 45 projects at a total cost of £7.5 million.
- 14.12.2. The scheme has two main aims. Firstly, it provides financial support to non-Governmental organisations to promote vocational training, skills development and knowledge transfer projects focused on agriculture and crofting. This is delivered through workshops, training courses, coaching, information dissemination actions, and farm visits. The Fund helps Scotland to take advantage of its strong performance in research and development, and makes sure that all the learning can be transferred to on-the-ground improvements in Scottish agriculture.
- 14.12.3. Secondly, the scheme funds eligible innovation projects designed to support projects that introduce innovative approaches which enhance competitiveness, enhance ecosystems, promote resource efficiency, and shift to low carbon climate resistant economy. They include agricultural demonstration or benchmarking and similar types of projects (eg Monitor Farms); and experimental and pilot projects that aim to introduce new and innovative approaches in agricultural practice.

---

<sup>20</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

14.12.4. Specific crofting projects (eight in total) supported under KTIF (years 2019 – 2022):

- **Project name** – Agroforestry in Action ii (facilitated by Soil Association Scotland)  
**Funding amount** – £18,862.00  
A total of 126 people participated in these events, including crofters, land managers and industry stakeholders. The project was delivered in partnership with Scottish Forestry and focussed on delivering specific and practical knowledge transfer events; supporting the creation of regional networking groups on agroforestry; and continuing to consolidate resources and knowledge from across Scotland on our Agroforestry Web Hub.
- **Project name** – Agroecology: Facilitating Mindset Change (facilitated by Nourish Scotland)  
**Funding amount** – £43,575.00  
The aim of the project was to widen the understanding of agroecology and to support the shift towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in the agriculture, food and forestry sectors. The partners delivered this through a peer-led farmer-to-farmer and crofter-to-crofter co-operative learning programme. Fifteen learning events were held, with 28 land managers (including crofters) being supported to host the events with 305 Scotland based participants.
- **Project name** – Crofters & Smallholders Skills Boost <sup>21</sup>(facilitated by the Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF))  
**Funding amount** – £267,618.00  
The 2016 to 2019 Crofters and Smallholders Skills Boost training project, managed by the SCF, addressed a lack of non-accredited vocational training in the Highlands and Islands. Its intention was to increase skills and improve the viability of crofting agriculture providing associated economic, social and environmental benefits to rural communities. The project reached a total of 1,646 people over 1,792 training days. Of those that participated, 56% were female and 39% were aged 40 or under.
- **Project name** – Farming with Nature (facilitated by Soil Association Scotland)  
**Funding amount** – £160,470.00  
Farming with Nature was a three-year knowledge transfer, skills development and innovation programme designed to work with farmers, crofters and environmental practitioners to support nature-friendly farming by integrating profitable agricultural production with biodiversity and ecosystem service objectives. The programme focused on using organic, agroecological and High Nature Value production methods,

---

<sup>21</sup> The majority of the training under the Crofters & Smallholders Skills Boost took place in the previous reporting period of 2015-2018.

which have a sound scientific evidence-base for protecting and enhancing the natural environment. A total of 28 events were delivered for 594 individual farmers, crofters, and others.

- **Project name** – Farming for the Future (FFF) (facilitated by Soil Association Scotland)  
**Funding amount** – £208,720.00  
The purpose of FFF was to support farmers and crofters across Scotland interested in productive and profitable farming and land use, using low-input and sustainable approaches to build financial and environmental resilience in a changing climate. FFF focused on low-input and sustainable farming and land-use covering four broad themes: soil management; crop and grassland management; animal health and productivity; woodland creation and management; and organic farming a SRDP National Priority. A total of 840 farmers, crofters, land managers and other people working in agri-food businesses and services participated in 41 FFF events.
- **Project name** – ParkLife project (facilitated by Shetland Agri-Environment Group)  
**Funding amount** – £40,381.14  
The aim of the project was to empower the farming and crofting community to take a leadership role in managing its environmental resources for the benefit of biodiversity. It focused on trialling participation in the monitoring of breeding waders and their habitats. The project supported the creation of a Wader Grassland scorecard that measures habitat quality and incentivises beneficial management practices. The leaflet ‘Farmland waders in Shetland – A best practice guide for farmers and crofters’ was also produced and widely distributed in local agricultural community.
- **Project name** – Farming for Biodiversity (facilitated by Soil Association Scotland)  
**Funding amount** – £57,774.00  
A key objective of the project was to increase the environmental and business performance of agricultural businesses by enabling farmers, crofters, and land managers to respond and adapt to climate change; help restore biodiversity and ecosystem health; meet growing demand for nature and climate friendly food; and be a key driver for Scotland’s ‘green recovery’. The project focused on the practice of ‘mob grazing’ to increase biodiverse habitat – unimproved grassland – within enclosed farmland and deliver management practices which can be translated into effective action and replicated across different types of farming enterprise and biogeographical and climatic settings in Scotland.

## **14.13 Scottish Rural Network**

14.13.1. The Scottish Rural Network (SRN) is funded by the Scottish Government as part of the SRDP. The SRN encourages rural development by sharing information, ideas and good practice. The SRN works with and for anyone who lives, works or has an interest in rural Scotland.

14.13.2. The aims of the SRN are to:

- Get more people from rural communities, businesses and the wider public involved in policy developments that affect them;
- Help improve the delivery of the SRDP and wider agri and forestry schemes including the National Test Programme and the future Agriculture Reform Bill;
- Inform crofters, farmers, rural businesses and communities about policy and funding opportunities; and
- Encourage innovation in agriculture, food production, forestry and rural areas.

14.13.3. The SRN provides support to the crofting community by promoting funding and learning and development opportunities through its communication channels and by directly funding projects specific to the development and sustainability of crofting.

### **Organised Crofting Events Promoted**

14.13.4. Since 2019 the SRN has promoted a number of crofting events, many of which are of popular interest amongst the crofting community and stakeholders, including:

- Women in Crofting;
- Virtual Crofting Course – preparing for staycations,
- Integrating woodland on new entrant farms and crofts;
- Crofting the Brand – Adding Value;
- Highlands and Morayshire Regional Agritourism, with a Focus on Crofting;
- Crofting and Grazing - Using NoFence Collar Technology; and
- The Green Bowl' - Running a Crofting Township Food Hub.

### **Online Promotion**

14.13.5. The SRN continues to promote crofting through various means including news articles directly related to crofting, which have been published on the SRN website. It also promotes numerous advisory and support opportunities such as SRDP, the Farm Advisory Service and its 'Croft and Small farm Subscription' service, Rural Innovation Support Service, and the numerous crofting related funding opportunities made publicly available via the SRN/SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) funding search tool.



14.13.6. In addition to its website, SRN uses various social media platforms to promote crofting, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo and Flickr and has also commissioned two crofting focussed podcast episodes of OnFarm.

### **Project Funding**

14.13.7. Crofting projects that received SRN funding to promote and support crofting include:

- £33,000 provided to the Woodland Croft Partnership over two years to support and promote the development of woodland crofts;
- £18,650 grant award to Orkney Local Action Group for a Orkney Farm/Croft Diversification and Biodiversity Officer; and
- Funding was provided to the Rural Innovation Support Service 2019-2021 that supported a number of projects which are relevant or relate to crofting, including Veg Box Group, Skye Mutton Project, Access to abattoirs in Argyll and the PolyProduce Project.

## **14.14 Food Processing, Marketing and Co-operation**

14.14.1. The Scottish Government is committed to supporting investment and expansion in Scotland's food and drink sector. Croft businesses that are involved in the processing and marketing of agricultural produce into food products, can apply for support from the Food Processing, Marketing and Co-operation (FPMC) scheme. This includes individual croft businesses, groups of croft businesses (constituted groups), companies that process agricultural products into food products, market their own produce or are involved in collaborative working within the food chain.

14.14.2. The FPMC scheme provides grant funding to:

- develop or create food processing facilities, including buildings and equipment;
- market products in home and export markets;
- run pilot projects and feasibility studies; and
- to run co-operative ventures to ensure more value is retained by both farmers and growers and to improve supply-chain efficiency.

14.14.3. In 2022-23<sup>22</sup> a total of 33 businesses, large and small, received grants ranging from £16,000 to £1.4 million from the FPMC grant scheme. A total of £10 million was awarded.

---

<sup>22</sup> The FPMC closed to applications in June 2022. Further updates on the scheme will be provided by the Scottish Government in 2023.

## **15. Support for Wildlife Management**

### **15.1 Sea Eagles**

- 15.1.1. The Scottish Government recognises the success of the reintroduction of sea eagles to Scotland. However, it is acknowledged that, in some locations, predation of lambs by sea eagles can have an impact on croft businesses.
- 15.1.2. The Sea Eagle Management Scheme, administered by NatureScot, offers advice and support for adapting livestock management and prevention measures that can reduce the impact of sea eagles on hill sheep. The scheme was revised in 2020 in response to the concerns of crofters and farmers. The revised scheme offers more flexibility to tailor options to suit individual crofts and farms. The overall scheme budget increased in 2020, to £350,000 per annum and support available to individual applicants for enhanced measures has also increased.

### **15.2 Geese**

- 15.2.1. Scotland is internationally important for the conservation of wintering geese, hosting around 60% of the global population of Greenland Barnacle Geese and 25% of the global population of Greenland white-fronted geese. Although this is a conservation success story, this success brings problems in regard to the impact high densities of geese have on agriculture land.
- 15.2.2. Over the last few years, NatureScot has been working with the Local Goose Management Groups on Orkney, Tiree and Coll and on Uists and Lewis and Harris to manage the population of breeding greylag geese. NatureScot will continue to work with stakeholders to balance conservation of geese with reducing and preventing agricultural damage, and is currently undertaking a review of goose management policy that will set out the framework for future management approaches.
- 15.2.3. The Scottish Government spends approximately £1.2 million each year on goose management across Scotland.

### **15.3 Deer**

- 15.3.1. The Scottish Government recognises that red deer are an iconic Scottish species. However, wild deer can impact the environment through overgrazing, trampling vulnerable habitats, preventing young trees from growing, and damaging crops. An independent review of wild deer management in Scotland by the Deer Working Group, gave consideration to the impact of Scotland's deer populations, including those specific to crofting communities. In order to progress the recommendations made by that review, the Scottish Government has established a Deer Management Strategic Board under the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy Programme.

- 15.3.2. Allied to this, a number of pilot projects have been launched to support community deer management. NatureScot, in conjunction with the Scottish Government, has launched a pilot community deer management scheme at Creag Meagaidh National Nature Reserve, a 4,000 hectare property at Kinlochlaggan that is managed by NatureScot.
- 15.3.3. The pilot scheme brings together a number of local people who are involved in the design of a community scheme to deliver sustainable deer management, including access to deer stalking opportunities. In May 2022, the scheme was advertised locally and was offered to those resident in local Community Council areas. This will support the delivery of site management objectives through the sustainable management of deer, with the associated biodiversity and climate benefits. For those that are interested but have little to no experience in deer stalking, they will be supported by a training and experience pathway to allow them to progress to harvesting wild food for their own consumption.

## 16. Sustainable Agriculture Capital Grant Scheme

- 16.1. The Sustainable Agriculture Capital Grant Scheme (SACGS) was established to facilitate the provision of support for the agricultural sector to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve efficiency and enhance Scotland's natural environment through this period of transition. The items selected for inclusion in the SACGS 2022 scheme were chosen for their effectiveness in reducing harmful ammonia emissions and adverse impacts on water quality resulting from the storage and spreading of livestock slurry and digestate.
- 16.2. The lack of availability of some items of equipment, due to the impact of COVID-19 on manufacturing, meant that the pilot scheme was extended by a year and the total expenditure for the SACGS pilot scheme was £12.8m.
- 16.3. SACGS 2022 has been allocated a budget of £5 million, and crofters, farmers and agricultural contractors based in Scotland, were able to apply for this grant if they store and/or spread slurry or digestate. They were also required to have, or agree to obtain, a carbon audit or a nutrient management plan by the point of claiming grant.

**Table 16.1 Funding Amounts provided to businesses which declared a common grazing on their Single Application Form.**

Scheme	Crofters	Amount
SACGS Pilot Scheme <sup>23</sup>	246	£712,639
SACGS 2022 <sup>24</sup>	22	£191,375

<sup>23</sup> Paid between March 2021 and April 2022.

<sup>24</sup> Applications approved, with payments anticipated between October 2022 and March 2023.

## 17. Farming Opportunities for New Entrants (FONE)

- 17.1. Attracting new entrants to Scottish farming and crofting is crucial to the ongoing vitality, resilience and competitiveness of the sector. Finding a way into agriculture can be a daunting prospect, particularly if the prospective new entrant does not come from a farming background. Even in agricultural families, the business might not be of sufficient scale to support a new entrant. The Scottish Government recognises that there are considerable challenges to entering the sector, access to finance, land, advice, training and skills are all potential barriers, and has therefore put in place a number of initiatives to help with entry.
- 17.2. The Scottish Government set up the FONE Group in late 2016 to provide a co-ordinated approach to developing opportunities for new entrants. Up to 31 October 2022, FONE has helped provide 122 land opportunities across 7,440 hectares of land, allowing 82 new entrants into the agricultural sector.
- 17.3. The FONE Group identified the potential of a Scottish Land Matching Service (SLMS) to develop opportunities for new entrants, and at the same time develop options for established farmers and crofters to reduce their input whilst still retaining an active interest.
- 17.4. The SLMS was launched in October 2019, in response to industry concerns about the lack of opportunities for new entrants to farming and crofting, and the availability of land and the difficulty in accessing capital funding. The SLMS is a free service connecting those in farming and crofting throughout Scotland.
- 17.5. The website [Scottish Land Matching Service](#) provides a simple platform for interested parties to register with the SLMS and starts a process of engagement with the Independent Advisors who offer guidance and advice on options available, and hopefully find connections that will lead to successful joint ventures.
- 17.6. In 2022, a new priority was introduced to further extend the crofting involvement in the SLMS. This will involve working closely with the Crofting Commission and stakeholders to help make the best use of crofts and attract new entrants. More details can be found on the FONE website: [Farming Opportunities for New Entrants Group](#).
- 17.7. The Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Division (RPID), which is responsible for the management of the Scottish Ministers crofting estates and land holdings, and has landlord responsibility for approximately 1,500 tenanted crofts, also works closely with the FONE Group. One of the priorities in the National Development Plan for Crofting (published in March 2021) was to increase the active use and occupancy of crofts, as well as attracting new entrants. Encouraging the uptake of vacant and underutilised crofts by new entrants is also a Programme for Government commitment. RPID has launched a Duties project that will seek to increase the active use and occupancy of crofts on Scottish

Ministers estates, and has written to all its tenants to inform them of this project. The project will initially focus on the residency duty with officials contacting any tenant who is believed to be in breach. RPID will work with the tenant to find a solution to the breach.

## **18. Self-Build Loan Fund**

- 18.1. Self-build is a traditional form of housing supply in many parts of rural mainland Scotland and the islands, and is at times the only form of housing supply.
- 18.2. Following a successful pilot, the Self-Build Loan Fund (Fund) was launched nationally in September 2018. Initially, the £4 million Fund was to run for three years, ending in August 2021, but was continued to 31 August 2022 with an additional £2 million in funding to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on borrowers. To date<sup>25</sup>, the Fund has delivered 41 loans with a value of £6.2 million over 13 local authority areas.
- 18.3. The Fund is not intended to replace market lending and provides short-term bridging loans of up to £175,000 to borrowers who have exhausted all other funding options available, and are unable to access self-build finance. The Fund can also be used in conjunction with the Croft House Grant scheme.
- 18.4. The focus of the Fund is on supporting projects with the necessary consents in place to allow work to commence quickly, delivering new homes, adding to housing supply, reducing pressure on existing housing stock, and delivering good quality energy efficient homes particularly, but not exclusively, in rural and island areas.
- 18.5. The Fund relaunched on 21 November 2022, and is anticipated to run for a five-year period, up to August 2027.

## **19. National Transition Training Fund**

- 19.1. The National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) was introduced in October 2020, to respond to the changing circumstances in the labour market brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. The NTTF operated for two years and supported individuals who had been made redundant, or were at risk of redundancy, to retain their jobs and develop the skills required to move into sectors with the greatest potential for future growth and job opportunities. It also supported sectors affected by EU exit and the transition to net zero.
- 19.2. During the operation of the NTTF around 30,000 training opportunities were delivered. In its second year, with support extended to a broader range of

---

<sup>25</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

sectors with greater emphasis on the provision of green skills, the Scottish Crofting Federation successfully bid for an award of £49,772 to deliver its Crofting Skills for Local Food project.

19.3 The Crofting Skills for Local Food project ran from July 2021 to March 2022 and offered twenty-two practical face-to-face and online courses, with 220 participants. These free courses were aimed at those aged 25 and over, and who were either unemployed or at risk of redundancy, or required upskilling and retraining. The project supported the following outcomes:

- Development of core primary and secondary production skills relevant to local food production;
- Development of knowledge and confidence in a range of marketing options and the benefits or suitability of each for a particular situation;
- The ability to develop small scale food production activities, thus improving the diversification and income generation potential of the croft;
- The opportunity to explore and implement appropriate diversification opportunities suitable to time, skills, and land, to help generate more income from primary and secondary production; and
- Provision to local communities of a greater variety and quantity of local croft produce, which is nature friendly and helps reduce the carbon impact by lowering food miles and improves community resilience and security in food supply.

## **20. Skills Action Plan for Rural Scotland**

20.1. The Skills Action Plan for Rural Scotland set out the strategic approach to support the skills-needs of the rural economy by addressing skills shortages, talent retention and attraction, and demographic challenges through enhanced work-based learning pathways, and by increasing access to education and skills provision in rural areas.

20.2. The Plan has a clear focus on collaborative action and bring skills demand and supply closer together across rural Scotland. The Plan seeks to ensure the development of the skills and talent needed in order for Scotland's rural economy and communities to flourish and grow.

## **21. Commission to Review Land-Based Learning**

21.1. In August 2021, the Scottish Government established the Commission for the Land-based Learning Review (the Commission) to provide independent, evidence-based advice to the Scottish Ministers<sup>26</sup>.

---

<sup>26</sup> Final recommendations are expected to be delivered by end-December 2022.

- 21.2. Since 2021, the Commission has undertaken a root and branch review of learning in Scotland’s land-based and aquaculture sectors from early years through to adulthood. The objective is to provide opportunities and qualifications to enable more people, and specifically more women, to work with and on the land, particularly in green skills. This will be delivered through school, college, university and work-based learning, including apprenticeships. The intention is that the Commission’s recommendations will inform an action plan to create more opportunities for employment in these sectors. This will contribute to retaining more people in rural areas and islands, support sustainable communities, and increase contribution of the land-based sectors to the rural economy.
- 21.3. The work of the Commission will support the Scottish Government’s ambitions of delivering a just transition to net-zero, by ensuring Scotland’s learning system equips people with the skills and knowledge needed to work in the land-based sectors as well as any new and emerging green occupations in land-based sectors.

## **22. Rural Broadband**

- 22.1. The Programme for Government 2016/17 set out the Scottish Government’s commitment to “extend superfast broadband access to 100% of premises across Scotland”. This became known as the ‘Reaching 100% (R100)’ programme. The R100 programme builds on the success of the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband programme, that delivered broadband connectivity to over 950,000 properties across Scotland.
- 22.2. The 100% commitment is being delivered through three strands of activity – the £600 million R100 contracts, the R100 Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme (SBVS) and continued commercial coverage. The R100 contracts were awarded in three geographical lots – North, Central and South. The £83m Central and £133m South contracts were awarded in December 2019, with the £384m North contract awarded a year later. In total, the contracts are expected to connect over 112,000 properties, with over 59,000 of those connections being delivered through the R100 North contract. The R100 North contract is also delivering 16 subsea cables to 15 Scottish islands, providing resilient, future-proofed digital connectivity to some of Scotland’s most remote and rural communities for decades to come.
- 22.3. All of the R100 contract build in the North lot, will be fibre to the premises (FTTP) capable of delivering download speeds of 1,000 megabits per second. FTTP is the most future-proofed broadband technology available at present and this outcome will put rural Scotland ahead of the curve, even compared to many urban areas. As at 31 October 2022, 3,363 properties have been connected through the R100 North contract, with a further 3,539 connections in build.

- 22.4. The R100 SBVS is a demand-led scheme, offering up to £5,000 per property, ensuring that those who will not benefit from superfast broadband through R100 contract build or commercial coverage could still benefit from a superfast broadband connection. As at 1 November 2022, 1,489 connections have been delivered in the R100 North contract area through utilisation of vouchers through the R100 SBVS, with a further 467 vouchers issued and another 10 requested.
- 22.5. In some cases, rural properties may also be eligible to combine the R100 SBVS voucher with the UK Government's Gigabit Voucher, which can provide up to £1,500 for homes and up to £3,500 for businesses.
- 22.6. We are now starting to see situations where the R100 SBVS is being used to deliver transformative island-wide broadband projects. For example, on the Orkney Islands, local supplier CloudNet are utilising vouchers to deliver connections to every eligible property on the island of Papa Westray. And on the Shetland Islands local supplier Shetland Broadband LLP is utilising vouchers to deliver connections to every eligible property on the island of Fetlar.

## **23. Digital Skills**

### **23.1 Scottish Tech Ecosystem Review (STER)**

- 23.1.1. As an emerging high growth area, technology is forecasted to be our fastest growing sector in Scotland between now and 2029, and the economic opportunities are vast. In May 2020, the Scottish Government commissioned a short-life review into how Scotland's technology sector can contribute to Scotland's economic recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 23.1.2. The recommendations of the Review aim to elevate Scotland's technology ecosystem to a world class level by creating a pipeline of profitable, scalable tech businesses that will attract inward investment and create job opportunities. The Scottish Technology Ecosystem Review (STER) programme is well underway with various work streams covering the 34 recommendations and spanning infrastructure, people, education, and investment. The Scottish Government has committed £60 million so far to the implementation of the STER recommendations.

### **23.2 Digitalisation**

- 23.2.1. Following the publication of the National Development Plan for Crofting in March 2021, the Scottish Government has increased digital support to businesses of all sectors and in all regions of Scotland. The Scottish Government has committed £100 million to support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to digitalise and improve their digital skills.



- 23.2.2. Since the initial Digital Development Grant funding in September 2020, the Scottish Government has invested almost £50 million to help digitalise SMEs with over 500 of these grants supporting businesses within the crofting counties to improve their digital capacity and capabilities.
- 23.2.3. This is in addition to the DigitalBoost national programme, led by Business Gateway, and the Scottish Government's Digital Development Loan that businesses can still access to support digital transformation.

## **24. COVID-19 Support**

- 24.1. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on Scottish businesses and the overall economy. Given the pace and scale of the collapse in economic activity in some sectors, the Scottish and UK Governments introduced a significant package of business support measures aimed at helping businesses survive and maintain employment during the crisis.
- 24.2. Since spring 2020, over £4.7 billion in business support was used across Scotland to help mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic. Financial Support for the self-employed and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) included Universal Credit, The Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, and the Self-employment Income Support Scheme.
- 24.3. Data indicates that 32% of businesses<sup>27</sup> in Scotland received Scottish Government grant support. With 11% of businesses having received sector-specific grants from the Scottish Government. A higher proportion of SMEs (34%) received Scottish Government grant support than larger businesses (10%), reflecting the targeting of Scottish Government grant support at smaller businesses.

## **25. Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)**

### **25.1 Work with communities**

- 25.1.1. The legislation that set up the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) (and its predecessor organisation, the Highlands and Islands Development Board) recognised the importance for the development of communities when seeking broader economic development objectives - stronger communities delivering the confidence for business start-ups and business growth. This is particularly applicable in crofting communities. It is therefore in this context that HIE's support for crofting communities contributes positively to the economic condition of crofting. HIE recognises the importance of crofting communities in attracting people to live and work in these areas, creating opportunities for housing development, while also

---

<sup>27</sup> Data from the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS).

creating local employment opportunities. HIE works with whole inclusive crofting communities, including those with and without direct access to crofting.

- 25.1.2. Through each of HIE's eight area teams<sup>28</sup>, the agency works directly with a broad range of local communities to support community-led development. HIE's role is as an enabler, providing advice, connections to other relevant supporters, investors and enablers, and its own investment. HIE recognises that each community is different but also resourceful, and many face similar issues such as demographic change, housing, service provision and employment opportunities.
- 25.1.3. HIE, in conjunction with the Scottish Government, is funding the employment of over 40 local project delivery officers who help deliver prioritised projects which make a real and practical difference. Crofting is widely practiced in the vast majority of the supported communities. These projects are invariably led by the communities themselves, and typically contribute to the economy through generating income as well as providing services and jobs.

## **25.2 Local Energy**

- 25.2.1. Over the reporting period, HIE has supported routes to energy resilience for some of the remotest off-grid islands in the region. HIE is also collaborating with Community Energy Scotland as joint partners in the Horizon2020 funded project, Responsible Research and Innovation Policy Experimentations for Energy Transition (RIPEET). In the Highlands and Islands context this involves working with a range of relevant stakeholders from across the Outer Hebrides (OH) to develop a vision of energy transition and enable early project progress towards that vision. The most urgent energy need in the OH, identified by a team of stakeholders from across the OH, is to: *“Explore solutions to reduce household energy costs by better utilising locally generated energy”*. On 15 September 2022, HIE launched an open call for a pilot project to address this need. A decision on the pilot project is expected by the end of December 2022.

## **25.3 Crofting stakeholder collaboration**

- 25.3.1. HIE works in partnership with several other bodies which support individual crofters and crofting activity, to ensure that crofting communities continue to thrive, and become more resilient and able to meet opportunities and challenges. Much of the work is done through the Crofting Stakeholder Forum, involving public partners including the Crofting Commission, the Scottish Government, local authorities, Registers of Scotland and NatureScot, and sector related partners including the Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF), Scottish Agriculture College, NFUS, and Scottish Land

---

<sup>28</sup> Shetland; Orkney; Caithness and Sutherland; Moray and Inner Moray Firth; Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross; Outer Hebrides; Argyll and the Islands.

and Estates. Over the period, the focus has been the Scottish Government's National Development Plan for Crofting, and work on crofting law reform.

- 25.3.2. HIE and the Crofting Commission have also recently started discussions around potential areas for deeper collaboration.

## **25.4 Community land ownership**

- 25.4.1. HIE has a long track record of investment in community asset acquisition and is a core source of advice and support for crofting communities contemplating land ownership. HIE also continues to work in partnership with the BIG Lottery Fund across Scotland to deliver the SG funded Scottish Land Fund, which creates significant opportunities for crofting communities and others to grow through owning and managing their own assets.

## **25.5 Crofting resilience in transition**

- 25.5.1. As the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic became clear in 2020, the SCF approached HIE for support to bring forward a nine-month programme of training to enhance crofting resilience in the transition to the 'new normal'.
- 25.5.2. The project was focused on supporting crofters to enhance skills to recover from COVID-19 challenges and to take advantage of new opportunities to diversify, for example, through enhanced local food supply chains or taking advantage of tourism opportunities as well as becoming more aware of opportunities to get involved in climate change mitigation and greening of the rural economy. The aim of the project was to deliver interim training and support packages based on evidence collected through the SCF's previous training evaluation, together with supporting policy and demand-led evidence of needs that arose as a direct result of COVID-19.
- 25.5.3. In order to avoid the risk of spreading the virus, the training was delivered virtually by the SCF, which has significant experience in virtual training amongst its network of instructors. This enabled an easy transition to the virtual method of delivery.
- 25.5.4. The training focused on sustaining, diversifying and growing crofting activities. This in turn supported the promotion and adoption of diversified activities for a more rapid economic recovery and growth of innovative practice at a very localised level, leading to longer term more sustainable practice and resilience. Themes were drawn from local food production, micro enterprises, marketing produce online and croft tourism staycations. The rationale being to support and grow key areas within diversified crofting business models and to increase skills, knowledge and capacity to reach new markets as a direct response to COVID-19 and the subsequent economic recovery efforts.

25.5.5. The programme of courses for practical crofting skills was developed to meet the needs of crofters (through consultation), drawing on popular historically delivered topics, but with an emphasis on the kinds of skills that would assist crofters to recover from the impact of the pandemic and take advantage of available opportunities going forward.

25.5.6. Following a successful development phase in July 2020, events began in August 2020 with a *Planning for Staycations* course run by the Chief Executive of the Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers. The eleven participants that signed up for the virtual event also had access to the '*Landlord's Little Helper*' course as part of the fee. The course supported the safe opening of self-catering/B&B units within COVID-19 cleaning guidance.

25.5.7. Other examples of courses include:

- How to start a food hub - looked at developing localised food networks
- Fantastic Food from Local Producer Markets - demonstrated how to organise and set up local producer markets
- Crofting the Brand - looked at the benefit of producer marks in terms of getting products to market
- Beekeeping for Beginners

25.5.8. Given the COVID-19 recovery nature of the programme, HIE was able to support the work at an intervention rate of 94%, the remainder being funded by tuition fees kept at a modest level to encourage participation.

## **25.6 Woodland croft creation**

25.6.1. HIE has supported partnership working between the Glengarry Community Woodlands with the Communities Housing Trust (CHT) and the Woodlands Croft Partnership to realise the purchase of a 47 hectare forest from Forestry and Land Scotland. A successful application was made to the Scottish Land Fund and the acquisition of the woodlands was completed in September 2022. The acquired land will enable a total of four woodland crofts to be created, allocated and developed.

## **25.7 Demographic challenges in crofting communities**

25.7.1. HIE has been working with partners to look at methods to enhance the prospects for balancing and reinvigorating the demographics of a crofting community on Skye. This has involved nurturing a local crofting community's considerations, supported by targeted consultancy and legal assistance to clarify and compare collective governance options as well as to explore opportunities including creation of crofts and housing and other infrastructure to support employment and collaborative activities. Ownership of the common grazings is in the process of being clarified and regularised on a sound footing, as the basis for enabling the community's aspirations for reinvigoration.

## **25.8 Rural Food Tourism Places**

- 25.8.1. Following the success of the Scottish Enterprise (SE) 18-month pilot agritourism monitor farm project between March 2014 and August 2015, and the follow up workshops in March 2018, the Scottish Government, SE and HIE sought to use this concept with additional agri-food-tourism businesses in different geographical areas of Scotland.
- 25.8.2. In the Highlands and Islands context, HIE chose to pilot the above general approach, through a slightly broader place-based approach, involving tourism, food and drink, and croft and farm businesses, with a common interest in knowledge exchange and innovation that realises collaborations that can enhance the food tourism economy of that place.
- 25.8.3. A consortia of crofting, farming, food and drink and tourism business stakeholders demonstrated a desire to collaborate through this type of facilitated approach, and identified the Uists and Northmavine/Delting area on the Shetland mainland as the two pilot areas.
- 25.8.4. The aim is to highlight opportunities for crofting and farming businesses to collaborate with the food & drink and tourism business sectors to enable diversification to improve the resilience, collaboration and commercial impact of agri-food-tourism businesses, by developing the skills and knowledge of owners, managers and key staff through discussion, experience, example and evidence. It provides practical support to crofters and farmers that are considering diversification into agri-food-tourism, those who are seeking to consolidate their business, and those who wish to grow existing agri-food-tourism businesses.
- 25.8.5. Aided by a facilitator (procured and funded through HIE), the stakeholders have set the agenda to explore collaborations that lead to improved profitability, productivity and sustainability of the stakeholders over the three years of the project<sup>29</sup>. The concept allows stakeholders to share experiences, explore collaborations, find out how others have tackled problems and adopt best practice.
- 25.8.6. Initiatives arising out of this work include an online marketing portal for food and drink from the Hebrides, croft experience tours, development of local food and craft markets, and the development of a crofting area tour supported by an App highlighting the crofting culture and stories of the area being visited.

## **25.9 Supply chain for nature-based solutions**

- 25.9.1. HIE is a partner in Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation programme, which seeks to enable private investment in

---

<sup>29</sup> From May 2019 to March 2022.

natural capital markets. That work has six interdependent workstreams covering:

- Investment Finance;
- Pipeline projects (of scale);
- Rules and governance (the codes that enable markets to evolve);
- Supply chain (people and organisations doing the work, groundworks, scientific, monitoring, project management, etc.);
- Data (for baselining and verification of schemes); and
- Community benefits.

25.9.2. It is recognised that the most developed markets for natural capital are currently around woodland creation and peatland restoration, both of which have carbon codes that support the creation and trading in carbon credits.

25.9.3. There are opportunities in peatland restoration for crofters to contribute to national climate change targets. Many crofters are familiar with the landscape and have associated, practical transferable skills, some may even have their own machines, or are already working for contractors involved in peatland restoration work. There are also opportunities for crofters, who either have or could develop scientific skills, in monitoring and scheme verification, in order to take advantage of opportunities in their locality.

## 26. Crofting Commission

26.1.1. The Crofting Commission (Commission) is a Non Departmental Public Body that operates on a day-to-day basis independently of the Government, but for which the Scottish Ministers are ultimately responsible.

26.1.2. The Commission is funded by the Scottish Government. In April 2022 the Commission received an increase in its budget, having been awarded £3.965 million for 2022-23.

**Table 26.1 Crofting Commission Budget Allocation**

Year	Budget Allocation <sup>30</sup>
2019-2020	£2.70m
2020-2021	£3.02m <sup>31</sup>
2021-2022	£3.25m
2022-2023	£3.90m

<sup>30</sup> An additional allocation of £65k was also provided for each financial year for non-cash costs such as depreciation and amortisation.

<sup>31</sup> This figure includes the additional funding of £325,000 awarded in July 2020 to enable the Commission to increase its crofting development activities.

- 26.1.3. The Commission consists of six Commissioners elected by crofters and three Commissioners appointed by the Scottish Government, with one of the Commissioners appointed as Convener. The Commission is supported by about 70 staff, led by a Chief Executive (who is appointed by the Scottish Ministers in consultation with the Convener of the Commission). The Commission is further supported by 20 volunteer ‘assessors’ across the crofting counties, who have assisted and advised the Commission since their recruitment in 2018. The next recruitment exercise is scheduled for 2023.
- 26.1.4. The Commission’s principal functions are regulating crofting, re-organising crofting, promoting the interests of crofting and keeping under review matters relating to crofting. The Act also places a duty on the Commission to investigate reports of breaches of duty by both tenant crofters and owner-occupier crofters. The Commission can advise Ministers on matters relating to crofting and it can also collaborate with other bodies for the economic development and social improvement of the crofting counties.
- 26.1.5. The Commission therefore contributes to the economic strength and sustainability of remote and rural communities in several ways. First and foremost, the Commission seeks to protect the crofting system for future generations so that the crofting areas will continue to benefit from the economic, social, cultural and environmental activity that comes from having a sustained population base rooted in each area. Alongside this, the Commission seeks to take regulatory decisions that support economic activity, allowing appropriate developments within the context of the crofting system, and supporting innovation and diversification as well as traditional agricultural crofting. In addition, the Commission uses its enforcement powers to help sustain an active population across the crofting counties and to promote productive use of crofting land; it helps grazings committees and shareholders to organise their use of common land; and it encourages a culture of innovative, thriving crofting activity.

## **26.2 Regulation of Crofting**

- 26.2.1. The Commission processes around 2,000 regulatory applications and notifications each year, the most common being decroftings, assignations and sublets. The Commission’s decisions have to be made in accordance with crofting legislation and can be challenged in the Scottish Land Court.
- 26.2.2. Over the reporting period the majority of applications received were for assignation, decrofting (part croft), decrofting (house site and garden ground), and bequest (notifications).
- 26.2.3. The vast majority of valid applications are approved (sometimes after modifications), with historically fewer than 3% being refused in a typical year. The most common refusals are applications to decroft an entire croft, and applications for consent to be absent: in 2019-2022, the Commission refused about half of the applications for whole-croft decrofting. Other types of refusal are less common, but may occur, particularly where there

are objections to the application from the local crofting community. Applicants can maximise their chances of approval by following the decision making 'parameters' (principles) that are set out on the Commission's website.

26.2.4. Between 2019 and 2022, examples of regulatory decisions with a very direct impact on the economic condition of the crofting areas included:

- Decrofting which supported the provision of housing in rural communities included:
  - 40 affordable homes and 5 market value homes in Port Charlotte, Islay;
  - 36 dwelling Houses in Tingwall, Shetland;
  - 8 dwelling Houses in Kingussie; and
  - 8 dwelling Houses in Port Charlotte, Islay.
- Decrofting which supported commercial and employment opportunities included:
  - Additional bonded warehouses for Harris distillery;
  - An industrial storage unit in Tingwall, Shetland;
  - Offices, storage yard and parking area for a local employer in Tomich, Kilmorack; and
  - Industrial Units in Snizort in Skye.
- Decrofting which supported diversification into tourism related developments included:
  - Tourism/site management and protection of Rogie Falls;
  - Inn, caravan and campsite site, glamping pod site at Farr, Sutherland;
  - Campsite and glamping pods at Lochcarron, Ross-shire;
  - Site for a restaurant at Kilninian, Isle of Mull;
  - Site of a farm shop/Café and parking area at Cunningsburgh, Shetland; and
  - Holiday chalets and campervan pitches at Portnahaven, Islay.
- Decrofting for environmental purposes and the generation of energy included:
  - Wind Turbines at Dunnet, Caithness;
  - Site of Micro Hydro Schemes at Ardnamurchan & Sunart and Durness, Sutherland;
  - Water storage tank and pumping station at Lerwick, Shetland; and
  - Weather Station and Tidal Energy Testing Facility at Eday, Orkney.

- **New Crofts**

The Commission approved applications to create 17 new crofts from non-croft land, including 16 from within the former crofting counties from Argyll to Shetland, as well as the first croft created in Moray (being one of the



areas outwith the traditional crofting counties, designated by Scottish Ministers for the purpose of the creation of new crofts). Nine of these crofts will primarily be engaged in the planting of trees and use of the land as woodland crofts. Each of these applications has had to demonstrate that there would be social and economic benefits expected as a consequence of constituting the non-croft land as new crofts.

- **Croft terminations and subsequent letting of the vacant crofts**

The Commission has terminated 10 croft tenancies due to the tenants being in breach of the statutory duty to be resident on, or within 32 kilometres, of their croft. This has to date resulted in four of these crofts being let to tenants who are in a position to comply with the statutory duties relating to residence and land use, three of these new tenants being new entrants to crofting. The tenants have set out plans to undertake a number of investment activities in maintaining their crofts including fencing works, repairing ditches, improving drainage and spraying rushes. They also have plans to engage in cropping activities and plans to engage in livestock stock management activities on the crofts.

## **26.3 Enforcing Residency and Land Use**

26.3.1. The Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 made substantial changes to the powers of the Commission to enforce the requirements for crofters to reside on or near their croft and to cultivate it or put it to another purposeful use. Among these changes were that each crofter is now required to complete an 'Annual Notice' confirming whether they are complying with these duties. This information is collected by the Commission in an annual exercise commonly known as the crofting census. The first such 'census' was conducted in 2014-15.

26.3.2. Since 2018, the Commission has been expanding its systematic approach to addressing breaches of duties that are highlighted by members of crofting communities, through census returns, or through our day to day interactions with crofters through casework. The Commission corresponds with hundreds of crofters, explaining the statutory requirements and giving them options and timescales for resolving their breach.

26.3.3. From the four censuses from 2017 to 2020, the RALU team has written to 616 tenant crofters who had admitted a breach of duty. To date this work has led to the permanent or temporary resolution of 341 breaches, as follows:

- 85 crofters are now resident on the croft;
- 59 have obtained Commission consent to assign the croft tenancy;
- 4 have obtained Commission consent to let the croft tenancy;
- 3 have renounced their croft tenancies;
- 3 have transferred ownership of their crofts.
- 53 have obtained consent to be absent from their croft; and

- 134 have obtained Commission consent to sublet their croft.

26.3.4. The Commission is expanding this work to include following up on those crofters who are not using their crofts despite being in residence; selected owners of vacant crofts who do not make use of the land; and some of the crofters who have not returned their census form. In addition, the Commission is often involved in cases of intestate succession, ensuring that crofts pass securely into the hands of a crofter who can fulfil the duties.

26.3.5. In all these ways the Commission delivers its responsibility to encourage crofters to reside on or near their crofts and to cultivate the land or put it to another purposeful use, so that population and community strength are upheld and the land is utilised.

## **26.4 Facilities for online regulatory applications**

26.4.1. From 2022, the Commission has been rolling out a system for crofters, or their agents or solicitors, to make regulatory applications online rather than on paper forms. The system has been warmly welcomed by those who have already used it, though not all application types are available for all users as yet. The system guides the applicant through the stages of making and submitting an application, helping to eliminate the mistakes that are sometimes made in paper forms, and ensuring that a complete and correct application finds its way to Commission staff quickly and directly.

## **26.5 Supporting Common Grazings**

26.5.1. Common Grazings are an important feature of crofting's agricultural system in terms of rearing livestock but can also be used for forestry and other purposes, including renewable energy. The need for co-operation in the management of a communal resource has traditionally been of importance both for the productive and economic use of the land, and for the development of the crofting community's identity and cultural heritage. There are a reported 1,050 common grazings covering an area of over 530,000 hectares of land in the crofting counties.

26.5.2. Common grazings are managed by grazings committees appointed by the shareholders. For many years there had been a steady decline in the number of common grazings with a committee in office, which by 2019 was as low as 418. Since 2019, the Commission has encouraged the continuation of existing committees and the formation of new ones, and the number of committees has increased to over 500.

26.5.3. The Commission also supports common grazings committees who wish to modernise their regulations or update and correct their list of shareholders and provides bespoke support to committees facing specific issues.

## 26.6 Development of Crofting

26.6.1. In 2021 the Commission established a Development Team, to expand its work of “promoting the interests of crofting” and to fulfil the Commission’s responsibilities within the Scottish Government’s *National Development Plan for Crofting (NDP)* (2021), including:

- Encouraging diversification of the use of common grazings;
- Encouraging a culture of succession and turnover of crofts;
- Ensuring that entry to crofting is more accessible; and
- Providing better information to crofters.

26.6.2. Based on these, the Development Team has adopted as its top aim the imperative of increasing the active use of croft land, in accordance with the following quote from the NDP:

*“One of our top priorities is to establish an increase in the active use of croft land. We need to establish greater occupancy of crofts, attract new entrants, and encourage new common grazings committees into office”.*

26.6.3. In support of that aim, the Development Team has undertaken a range of outreach and stakeholder engagement activities including:

Website development	The team has gathered a significant amount of information about current and emerging opportunities, some of it linked to the climate change mitigation measures. This information has been added, along with the relevant organisations’ contact details, to the Crofting Commission website, to create a central portal where crofters can find information or be signposted to further information from other sources. Being clearer about the positive options available to crofters and grazings committees is part of the Commission’s strategy for encouraging compliance with the duties.
Assessor engagement	The team has engaged with the 20 assessors to plan for an expanded role for assessors in support of the Commission’s development responsibilities.
Landlord engagement	The team has held meetings for crofting landlords to highlight their role in the management of croft land.
Crofter education and training	Along with colleagues from the grazings team and the Farm Advisory Service, the team has held several training events for grazing committees, both virtually and in various locations across the crofting counties.
Outreach at agricultural shows	The Commission welcomed the return of agricultural shows following the pandemic, and had a presence at several. The staff covered a number of topical issues including living succession, the benefits of grazings committees, apportionments and digital applications to the many visitors.

## **26.7 New Entrants to Crofting**

- 26.7.1. Like any other sector of society, crofting needs new entrants. These may be within traditional crofting families, taking on the family croft or a neighbouring croft, or may be from another background. The ideas that new entrants bring, complement the established skills and experience of longstanding crofters.
- 26.7.2. The Commission encourages a culture of succession, whereby crofts that are not being actively used are passed on to others, who may be new entrants to crofting. Alternatively, they may be an existing crofter adding to their holding. In a typical year there are around 500 new entrants to crofting. In the period 2020/21 – 2021/22, there were 1,006 new entrants to crofting, just under half of whom were female, and a quarter were under 41 years of age.
- 26.7.3. The Commission has highlighted the benefits of arranging for living succession to crofts, through contact with crofters at the shows, the Assessor network and an informative video on the Commission website. The survey results have suggested that this engagement is working, as there has been an increase in each reporting year of the number of crofters who have a succession plan in place.
- 26.7.4. In recent years, the high price of crofts has become a significant barrier for those aspiring to enter crofting, particularly in certain crofting areas. The Commission does not control the price of crofts, but by ensuring that those who take on crofts understand the statutory duties and responsibilities required of them, the Commission seeks to ensure that entrants, from whatever background, become active crofters.

## **26.8 The Register of Crofts and the Crofting Register**

- 26.8.1. Since 1961, the Commission has been responsible for maintaining an up-to-date Register of Crofts, recording the status of the croft, its extent, and the identity of the crofter and the owner.
- 26.8.2. Since August 2017, much of this information has been made publicly available online, including copies of decrofting directions since 2019, and more recently some apportionment orders. This resource has been widely used by crofters, agents and solicitors, making it easier for them to check the status of the land before any purchase involving croft land. Having this information available directly to the public has improved the Commission's service to its customers.
- 26.8.3. The Crofting Register<sup>32</sup>, held by Registers of Scotland, complements the Commission's Register of Crofts.

---

<sup>32</sup> See Chapter 27 for the Crofting Register.

## **26.9 Crofting Elections**

- 26.9.1. The quinquennial Crofting Commission elections were held on 17 March 2022, by a postal ballot, and the votes were counted on Friday 18 March. The constituencies were the same as in the previous two elections, in 2012 and 2017, but for the first time there were at least two candidates in every constituency. There were four candidates in East Highlands, two in the Western Isles, and three in each of the other constituencies: Shetland; Orkney and Caithness; West Highlands; and South West Highlands.
- 26.9.2. As a result of local authority elections scheduled to take place in May 2022, the local authorities across the crofting counties were unable to provide their services and assistance to administer the election. The Crofting Commission Chief Executive was the Registration Officer with responsibility for determining the electoral roll, while the function of Returning Officer was contracted out to MiVoice, a private company with experience administering public sector elections. The Scottish Government made available a budget of £50,000 to run the elections.
- 26.9.3. Significant engagement was undertaken to improve voter turnout, encourage appropriately qualified candidates to stand, and increase the diversity of candidates. The voter turnout averaged around 30% of the electorate, with the Shetland, Orkney & Caithness and South-West Highlands constituencies providing the highest voter turnouts.
- 26.9.4. Following the election, the Commission had two brand new elected commissioners, three more who had also been elected in 2017, and one from the 2012-2017 Board who was standing for the third time, providing some welcome continuity to the Commission.

## **27. Registers of Scotland - Crofting Register**

- 27.1. Introduced in 2012, the map-based Crofting Register, maintained by the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland (RoS), is the first official register to provide crofters and other interested parties legal certainty over the extent of, and interests in, croft land.

**Table 27.1 Total number of applications to register croft land during the reporting period (Crofting Register Figures)**

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23 <sup>[1]</sup>	Total (by form type)
<b>Form A</b>	1083	642	661	450	2836
<b>Form B</b>	589	475	551	407	2022
<b>Form C</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Form D</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Form E</b>	30	13	9	9	61
<b>Form F (croft)</b>	139	103	165	106	513
<b>Form F (common grazings)</b>	21	10	19	32	82
<b>Form G</b>	338	275	210	148	971
<b>Non-trigger updates<sup>[2]</sup></b>	26	30	35	30	121
<b>Total per year</b>	2226	1548	1650	1182	6606

27.2. Form types:

- Form A: First registration of a croft;
- Form B: Subsequent event affecting a registered croft;
- Form C: First registration of an existing common grazing;
- Form D: First registration of a new common grazing;
- Form E: Subsequent event affecting a registered common grazing;
- Form F: Rectification of the Crofting Register (information not currently available); and
- Form G: Notification to the Keeper by the Crofting Commission following approval of a regulatory decision.

27.3. RoS continues to offer support to crofters and landowners who are considering registering their croft land collectively through a community application. RoS collaborate with other Government bodies (e.g. the Crofting Commission and Highlands & Islands Enterprise) and with external stakeholder groups (e.g. the Scottish Crofting Federation, the National Farmers' Union Scotland and Scottish Land & Estates), with respective initiatives being aligned to ensure that, where appropriate, the correct level and type of support for community registration is offered as part of a package of measures designed to enhance the local economy in rural areas. This is an opportunity for local communities to work together to agree extents and boundaries of, and interests in, croft land in advance of applying to register as, once agreed, the potential for challenge against a registered interest is reduced.

<sup>[1]</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.

<sup>[2]</sup> Non-trigger updates are changes to the register where there is no form type or legislative requirement to do so.

- 27.4. As at 24 November 2022, RoS has registered 8,666 Crofts and 335 common grazings. RoS has also registered 70 community applications totalling 889 crofts, accounting for 10.2% of the total number of 8,666 registered crofts.
- 27.5. Where appropriate, RoS encourage crofting landowners to apply for voluntary registration in the Land Register in support of its objective to deliver the benefits of a completed Land Register by 2024.
- 27.6. Registration fees for the Crofting Register are set by Order by the Scottish Ministers and can be viewed in the Registers of Scotland (Fees) Order 2014 (SSI 2014 No. 188). The current £90 fee per registration has remained unchanged since the Crofting Register was first introduced in November 2012.

## **28. Scottish Land Court**

- 28.1. The Scottish Land Court (SLC) is a Court of law. The Court's jurisdiction is set firmly within the context of Scottish farming. It has authority to resolve a range of disputes, including disputes between landlords and tenants, in agriculture and crofting. The Court is based in Edinburgh, but holds hearings throughout Scotland.
- 28.2. From 1 April 2017 the SLC became part of the Supreme Courts structure within the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service, however the SLC retained its identity as a separate court.
- 28.3. Under current crofting legislation the SLC has, for example, jurisdiction to:
- Determine the extent and boundaries of a croft;
  - Determine a fair rent for the croft;
  - Authorise a landlord to resume (to take back) croft land or common grazings for a reasonable purpose;
  - Authorise a crofter to acquire a heritable title to his croft from his landlord;
  - deal with appeals from decisions or determinations of the Crofting Commission; and
  - Deal with challenges to the first registration of crofts or common grazings in the Crofting Register.

**Table 28.1 Resumption and other applications received**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Resumptions</b>	<b>Other Crofting Applications</b>
2019	65	35
2020	68	38
2021	70	27
2022 <sup>[2]</sup>	42	30

28.4. During this reporting period the SLC continued to receive and decide Scheme for Development applications, mainly for renewable energy developments such as wind farms, although there have also been two applications for space port developments, but the biggest category after resumptions was crofting registration challenges.

## **29. Crofting Legislation**

29.1. During the previous Parliamentary session, work on crofting law reform was suspended as a result of Brexit preparations. However, Scottish Government officials, in partnership with the Crofting Commission, continued to explore non-legislative solutions to crofting issues.

29.2. The 2021 SNP manifesto contained a commitment to reform the law and develop crofting to create more active crofts. In May 2022, the Crofting Bill Group was reinstated to consider crofting legislation. The Group is composed of stakeholders including the Scottish Crofting Federation, National Farmers' Union of Scotland, Crofting Commission, Highland and Islands Enterprise, Registers of Scotland, Law Society of Scotland, crofting Solicitors and others. The issues being considered include those raised by the previous Bill Group in 2016-2018, and any additional changes that the Crofting Commission may wish to propose to make crofting regulation less onerous for crofters and the Commission.

## **30. National Development Plan for Crofting**

30.1. The National Development Plan for Crofting was published in March 2021, and sets the long-term strategic direction for crofting. The Plan drew on the work undertaken by the Crofting Stakeholder Forum and various consultation and survey responses, and highlights the core elements necessary to ensure that crofting remains at the heart of our rural and island communities.

30.2. The Plan highlights how crofting activities can be undertaken in a way that further contributes to the enhancement of Scotland's environment, iconic landscapes and biodiversity. The Plan encourages croft diversification into agri-tourism, woodland regeneration and creation, local food networks, and

---

<sup>[2]</sup> Figures up to 31 October 2022.



the restoration of Scotland's degraded peatlands. Such priorities are laid out in the Plan, and work has begun to deliver on these actions.

- 30.3. What is also central to the Plan is how to encourage full occupancy and use of crofts and effective management of all common grazings. These top priorities are shared by the Scottish Government, the Crofting Commission, stakeholders and the wider crofting community. The Scottish Government's commitment to these priorities and to the delivery of the Plan is reflected in the additional funding provided to the Commission during this reporting period. In April 2022, the Commission received an increase to its annual budget to enable it to increase its staff resource, which will support and encourage active management of common grazings and more active use of crofts, and create opportunities for new entrants.

## 31. Future Measures

- 31.1. The Scottish Government's [Vision for Agriculture](#) was published on 2 March 2022. The vision outlines the Scottish Government's aim to transform how it will support farming and crofting and food production in Scotland, to become a global leader in sustainable and regenerative agriculture. This commitment will be the centre of the framework underpinning Scotland's future agriculture support regime from 2025 onwards. Allied to this, a new Scottish Agriculture Bill will be brought forward in 2023 to provide a replacement for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).
- 31.2. A phased introduction of the Future Support Framework (FSF) from Single Application Form, from 2025 onwards, will offer a practicable model for reform, accounting for operational requirements and customer needs. Enhanced direct payments will launch first, as the Scottish Government's key mechanism to incentivise farmers and crofters to take meaningful action for climate and nature. The Enhanced tier is key to deliver the policy outcomes of the Vision for Agriculture and to meet the public commitment that 50% of direct payments will be 'conditioned' by 2025. It will require further conditionality to be introduced to existing support schemes, with revised Greening and Cross-Compliance rules, and the introduction of measures such as the Whole Farm Plan. The new Enhanced mechanisms will launch in 2026, and there will be flexibility to add or amend this in subsequent years.
- 31.3. A phased approach will require the extension of some existing schemes beyond 2024 to provide stability and security during a challenging time of rising industry input costs. It is intended for BPS and Greening, LFASS and VCS (voluntary coupled support) to be extended to enable the continuation of payments beyond 2026. The extension of other services such as AECS, Food Processing Marketing and Co-operation and the Farm Advisory Service would continue to provide the Elective and Complementary aspects of the future framework. The upcoming Agriculture Bill will provide the powers to enable these to continue until their replacements are phased in. The stability approach requires maintaining the existing approach to base payments including regions, subject to further convergence, with changes to base

payments to be considered from 2027 onwards in the second FSF launch phase.

- 31.4. Work is underway to co-develop our long term policy for rural support and the Scottish Government has already taken action to accelerate its delivery towards climate and environmental outcomes. The Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board and National Test Programme embodies the transitional approach and will be used to assist in identifying conditionality that can be introduced to existing support and form future conditionality within the FSF. This approach enables the industry to test new conditionality options and provides clarity to the industry and time for businesses and stakeholders to plan and adapt to any proposed changes.

## **32. Next Report**

- 32.1. In accordance with section 51 of the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, the next Report to the Scottish Parliament will be due in December 2026.



© Crown copyright 2022

**OGL**

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80525-386-0 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, December 2022

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS1215822 (12/22)

**w w w . g o v . s c o t**