



SCOTTISH LAND COMMISSION  
COIMISEAN FEARAINN NA H-ALBA

# Business Plan 2019-2020



## INTRODUCTION

Land is at the heart of Scotland's identity, economy and communities. The Scottish Land Commission's role is to stimulate fresh thinking so that the way we own and use land in Scotland helps people to realise opportunities and ambitions. This is our second annual business plan setting out how we will deliver our three-year Strategic Plan 'Making More of Scotland's Land'.

## VISION

**Our vision is a fair, inclusive and productive system of ownership, management and use of land that delivers greater benefit for all the people of Scotland.**

## OBJECTIVES

Our work is guided by three strategic objectives set out in our Strategic Plan:

- **Productivity** – to drive increased economic, social and cultural value from our land;
- **Diversity** – to encourage a more diverse pattern of land ownership with the benefits of land spread more inclusively;
- **Accountability** – to ensure decision-making takes account of those affected and responsibilities are met.

## CORE VALUES

Our core values underpin what we do and how we work:

			
<b>INTEGRITY</b>	<b>CHALLENGE</b>	<b>INNOVATION</b>	<b>EMPOWERMENT</b>
We work for and are accountable to the people of Scotland	We challenge ourselves and others to lead change	We develop ambitious and progressive thinking	We motivate ourselves and others to realise Scotland's ambitions through land reform

## **BUILDING ON 2018/19**

2018/19 was the second year of the Commission's operation, having been established in April 2017. In 2018/19 we delivered a substantial programme of engagement, research, recommendations and guidance.

We published research and briefings looking at international and previous UK experience on land value capture, land value taxation, community ownership and interventions in land ownership. We established a major focus on vacant and derelict land and published a proposed Compulsory Sales Order mechanism. We made significant recommendations to Scottish Ministers to help them modernise land ownership, including substantial research on scale and concentration of land ownership with proposals to address the issues of concentrated power, and recommendations for what is needed to make community ownership a normal option across Scotland.

We provided advice and support to improve community engagement in decisions relating to land and published the first in a series of land rights and responsibilities protocols to support culture change. We held open public meetings in communities around Scotland and a series of stakeholder events and discussions on specific topics.

The Tenant Farming Commissioner published a series of Codes of Practice and Guidance, including on Lease Management and Late Payment of Rent. He published advice and supported events to promote uptake of the Tenants Improvements Amnesty and made recommendations to Ministers to improve the operation of agents in landlord/tenant relationships. We trialled the use of mediation as an effective means to resolve landlord/tenant disputes.

We have continued to actively grow and develop the organisation, recruiting and developing staff, reviewing and improving our systems in line with our Organisational Development Strategy. Our focus continues to be on being an innovative, fast-paced and empowered organisation that stimulates ideas and change.

## PRIORITIES FOR 2019/20

In 2019/20 we will put particular emphasis on engaging stakeholders and the public widely in the direction, ideas and proposals emerging from the Commission's work. Through this we will seek to stimulate fresh thinking, supporting change on the ground and making recommendations to Scottish Ministers where appropriate for legislative and policy change.

Our programme of work continues to respond to the wider drivers setting the context for land reform, including:

**Land Rights and Responsibilities** – the Scottish Government's published Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement sets out a clear human rights-based framework for the rights and responsibilities associated with land ownership and use.

**Community empowerment** – community ownership of land and assets is integral to empowered and resilient communities, and should be much more normal across Scotland. The ability for communities to influence and benefit from decisions about land use is as important as ownership.

**Inclusive growth** – the ability for individuals, businesses and communities to acquire, access and use the land they need is fundamental to a dynamic and productive economy that meets people's needs in a fair and inclusive way.

**A Land Use Strategy for Scotland** – this sets out a direction of travel towards a more integrated and strategic approach to land use decisions.

Our [Strategic Plan 'Making More of Scotland's Land'](#) sets out the outcomes, strategic objectives and priorities we are working towards over the three years to 2021. Our [Programme of Work](#) sets out the workstreams which will deliver against the Strategic Plan over three years. This Annual Business Plan sets out the priorities, activities and resource allocations for the work we will do in 2019/20 to deliver against these outcomes and objectives.

Our work is focused on the four priority areas set out in our Strategic Plan:

- Land for housing and development
- Modernising land ownership
- Land use decision-making
- Agricultural Holdings

## LAND FOR HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2018/19 we established a major focus on vacant and derelict land including a cross-sector taskforce to challenge current approaches and stimulate change. In the coming year we will develop that collaboration to embed transformational change in the approach to bringing vacant and derelict sites back into productive use. We will also bring together our work to date on land assembly, land values and land banking, leading to recommendations on the housing land market. Through these workstreams we will support the Scottish Government's wider focus on the place principle, town centre regeneration, housing and infrastructure delivery and rural population growth.

Workstream	19/20 Activity	Outputs
<b>Vacant and Derelict Land</b>  Aim: To embed a strategic approach to addressing persistent land vacancy and dereliction that tackles Scotland's legacy of existing sites and prevents new sites from being created.	Support the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce and mainstream systems change in collaboration with SEPA, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish Futures Trust.	Work on pilot sites underway with review of lessons learned for system changes.
	Provide robust evidence on the value and impacts of addressing the consequences of long-term vacancy and dereliction.	Publish impact assessment demonstrating benefits of addressing long-term vacancy and dereliction.  Arts based participative research project to stimulate public engagement.
<b>Land Assembly and Place-making</b>  Aim: To establish a more collaborative approach to place-making which aligns land value, planning and development interests	Support development of effective models of land value capture.	Advice to inform stage three of the planning bill.
	Assess the nature, prevalence and impact of land banking.	Research report published.
	Investigate options for long-term reform of the housing land market in both urban and rural communities.	Joint review with key stakeholders established leading to recommendations in 2020/21.
	Investigate and promote best practice in proactive land assembly and placemaking and encourage uptake by local authorities.	Scope options for change in land assembly measures. CPD events delivered across Scotland.

## MODERNISING LAND OWNERSHIP

Over the last year we have provided substantial evidence and recommendations to Ministers on modernising land ownership. These include recommendations on what is needed to make community ownership a normal option across Scotland, planned and proactive as an integral part of community development and regeneration. We have published significant evidence on the issues associated with scale and concentration in ownership and recommendations to address these. In 2019/20 we will maintain our focus on diversifying the pattern of ownership, working with the Scottish Government and stakeholders on our recommendations to date and implementing further engagement and review to stimulate change in the pattern of ownership.

Workstream	19/20 Activity	Outputs
<b>Diversifying the pattern of land ownership</b>  Aim: To stimulate a less concentrated pattern of land ownership.	Address the risks and adverse consequences of concentrated power in land ownership.	Stakeholder engagement on recommendations and further development of policy options.
	Establish a review of options to recommend to Ministers measures that encourage a more diverse pattern of private ownership.	Undertake review leading to recommendations in 2020/21.
	Support the Community Land Ownership Leadership Group and implementation of the Commission's recommendations agreed by Ministers.	Support delivery of the Leadership Group's work programme.
<b>Public Interest governance and models</b>  Aim: To develop, promote and normalise models for managing and owning land that better serve the public interest.	Investigate potential for new or improved governance models for public interest ownership, including reviewing common good land.	Publish research and recommendations.
	Investigate options to enhance accountability of charitable and trust status land ownership.	Stakeholder engagement, guidance and recommendations for change.

## LAND USE DECISION-MAKING

In 2019/20 we will deliver a major programme to support good practice in land rights and responsibilities, to support land owners, managers and communities in meeting the expectations of Scotland's Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement and the Guidance on Engaging Communities in Decisions Relating to Land. We will continue to provide support and advice on engaging communities in decisions relating to land, supporting implementation of the Scottish Government's Guidance. We will review key issues in relation to the influence of tax and fiscal policy in land use decision making and engage stakeholders widely in review of the potential role of land value taxation.

Workstream	19/20 Activity	Outputs
<b>Land Rights and Responsibilities Good Practice</b>  Aim: To support practical implementation of land rights and responsibilities.	Implement Good Practice programme.	Good Practice Manager in post and action plan developed.
	Publication of Land Rights and Responsibilities Protocols.	Protocols developed with stakeholders and published by March 2020.
	Promote good practice programme and integrate protocols with stakeholders.	Collaborative campaign established.
<b>Community Engagement</b>  Aim: To support practical implementation and improvement in community engagement in land use.	Community engagement casework.	Reactive & pro-active casework.
	Promotion of good practice.	Regular case studies published. At least 6 roadshows/training events.
	Develop mechanisms for improving community involvement in land-use decision making in urban areas.	Actions from SURF collaboration identified and taken forward with stakeholders by March 2020.
	Develop measurement tool to assess levels of community engagement in land use decision making for rural and urban areas.	Baseline survey and measure for communities and landowners/managers complete.
	Develop better mechanisms for local engagement in regional land use planning.	Collaboration on pilot projects with Scottish Government.

<p><b>Tax and Fiscal Policy</b></p> <p>Aim: To develop options for using tax and fiscal policy to stimulate a more productive, diverse and accountable pattern of landownership and use.</p>	<p>Identify the aspects of current tax and fiscal policy that create incentives or disincentives influencing delivery of land reform objectives.</p>	<p>Establish expert working group to investigate potential changes in tax policy and the role of land value tax.</p>
<p>Assess the potential role of land value tax in relation to a) vacant and derelict land; b) long term capture and reinvestment of land value; c) diversifying the pattern of land ownership.</p>		



## AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

In 2019/20 we will continue to support improved relationships within the tenanted sector through Tenant Farming Commissioner Codes of Practice and associated casework. The demand for TFC casework has increased significantly over the last year and our experience will inform the review of the TFC functions required by statute by March 2020. We will also continue to focus on opportunities to improve the availability of land to support both new entrants into agriculture and a realistic 'ladder' of next steps to enable developing farming businesses to grow.

Workstream	19/20 Activity	Outputs
<b>Good Practice</b> Aim: To support successful relationships between agricultural landlords and tenants.	Promote Tenant Farming Commissioner Codes of Practice and publish new Codes and Guides as required.	Publish new codes/guides on rent review and relinquishment & assignation once enacted; Guide on Succession & Assignation.
	Casework associated with Codes of Practice.	New casework system in place by June 2019. Review pilot mediation service.
	Follow up implementation of good practice recommendations relating to the review of the operation of agents.	Publicise TFC Guide on the Professional Conduct of Agents & meetings with key agents' firms. Raise awareness of mediation through series of workshops & CPD.
<b>Improving land availability</b> Aim: To promote more flexible models for making land available to new and developing farmers.	Promotion of advice and guidance on joint venture options.	5 workshops delivered with partners by Dec 2019. Research on incubator farms as a business model.
	Support development of pilot land matching service.	Host identified.
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b> Aim: Identification and discussion of issues relevant to the development of the tenant farming sector in Scotland	Facilitate the Tenant Farming Advisory Forum.	Biannual meetings July 2019, Jan 2020.
	Contribute to the Review by Ministers of the functions of the Tenant Farming Commissioner by March 2020.	Review complete by end March 2020.

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

We will maintain our focus on being an open and accountable public body, engaging widely to stimulate awareness, debate and change. We will work to engage specific audiences, in both a rural and urban context in the work of the Commission to:

- Strengthen the role of the Commission in stimulating fresh thinking, raising awareness of the opportunity of land reform through a series of open public meetings, biennial land reform conference, events and communications;
- Deliver communications campaigns associated with our workstreams to engage and connect more people with the potential of land reform in making more of Scotland's land;
- Continue to develop effective relationships with stakeholders to support change and delivery in practice.

Full details of activity and measures can be found in the Communications Strategy 2019-2020.

Workstream	19/20 Activity	Outputs
<b>Communications</b>  Aim: to engage people widely in the potential of land reform and the work of the Commission.	Strengthen the Commission's narrative and position as a catalyst for change.	Refreshed corporate messaging and website.  Hold second land reform conference.
	Increase and improve engagement with communities on key areas of work encouraging interaction and dialogue.	Hold a series of public meetings across rural and urban Scotland.
	Communications campaigns to support workstreams with sector specific engagement and with clear link to overall contribution to land reform in Scotland.	Communications campaign plans.
<b>Stakeholder engagement</b>  Aim: to build strong and collaborative relationships with stakeholders.	Increase engagement with local authorities.	Implement stakeholder engagement plan.
	Relationship development with key stakeholders.	Structured and tailored stakeholder communications with clear paths of engagement.

<b>Internal Communications</b>  Aim: to support an effective and productive team.	Develop strong internal communications contributing to informed staff and cross team working.	Establish effective internal communication channels and improve functionality and use of the intranet.
	Maintain an effective working environment for staff	Create first staff survey and publish results on intranet.

## ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We will continue to deliver our Organisational Development Strategy to proactively shape our culture, reviewing our processes and procedures to ensure they continue to be effective, responsive, and provide value for money.

Workstream	19/20 Activity	Outputs
<b>Corporate Systems</b> Aim: to ensure effective and proportionate corporate systems.	Complete the review and implementation of improvements to our corporate systems.	New finance and Casework Management systems reviewed to ensure effective use.
<b>Human resources</b> Aim: to support a motivated, productive and empowered team.	Continue to review and tailor HR policies to support our organisational culture.	HR policies and procedures implemented following discussion at staff engagement forum.
	Deliver a team development programme to build the ongoing effectiveness of the organisation.	All staff development day delivered in consultation with staff.
<b>Organisational performance</b> Aim: to communicate a transparent and consistent assessment of performance.	Implement a performance monitoring and evaluation framework to assess future performance.	Framework is embedded within organisational processes and regularly reported on.

<p><b>Research capacity building</b> Aim: to support growing capacity in the research sector.</p>	<p>Work with Universities and Research Institutions to provide support to build capacity within the land reform research community.</p>	<p>Opportunities for students within the Commission and our programme of work.</p>
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## PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Our work is intended to deliver the long-term outcomes (10year +) set out in our Strategic Plan:



These long-term outcomes are aligned with the Scottish Government’s purpose and national outcomes as set out in the National Performance Framework. Our performance monitoring framework identifies the medium-term outcomes and KPIs that will allow us to track our progress and we will report against these on an annual basis.

Delivery of our Business Plan will be monitored and reported throughout the year in our quarterly progress reports to the Board, reporting against the outputs and KPIs.

## 2019/20 BUDGET

<b>OVERALL BUDGET ALLOCATION</b>	
<b>Income:</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Grant-in-aid	1,500
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Commissioners costs	84
Staffing costs	739
Corporate Services	184
Communications & Events	138
Research & Project costs	355
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,500</b>

<b>BUDGET ALLOCATION BY PRIORITY*</b>	
<b>Income:</b>	<b>£'000</b>
Grant-in-aid	1,500
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Commissioners costs	84
Staffing costs*	385
Corporate Services	184
Communications & Events	138
Research & Project costs:	
<i>Land for Housing &amp; Development</i>	262
<i>Land Ownership</i>	139
<i>Land Use Decision Making</i>	220
<i>Agricultural Holdings</i>	88
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,500</b>
<i>*Relevant staffing and project costs allocated against Programme of Work priorities</i>	