



SCOTTISH LAND COMMISSION
COIMISEAN FEARAINN NA H-ALBA

Business Plan

2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

How we own and use Scotland's land is central to driving action on some of Scotland's big public policy challenges. It matters to economic renewal, tackling inequalities, realising human rights, and to making a just transition to net zero. As we plan our work for 2023-24 we recognise we are in a period of change. The Scottish Government has consulted on the proposed Land Reform Bill, with a stated intention to introduce the Bill to Parliament during 2023. The Commission will submit to Ministers by September 2023 a new three-year Strategic Plan, which will come into place mid-way through this financial year. The Board of the Commission will also see change during this financial year with the recruitment of a new Chair and two Commissioners.

Our Business Plan takes as its starting point the priorities set out in our current Programme of Work, published in April 2022, which will complete delivery of our current Strategic Plan. It also acknowledges the need to retain flexibility during the year to adapt to changing priorities and bridge into our next Strategic Plan period.

OUR STRATEGY

Our vision: 'A fair, inclusive and productive system of ownership, management, and use of land that delivers greater benefit for all the people of Scotland.'

Our outcomes

We work to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Scotland's land is owned and used in ways that are fair, responsible and productive
2. More of Scotland's people are able to influence and benefit from decisions about land
3. The way we own and use land creates public value and economic wellbeing.

We achieve these outcomes by focusing on change in three ways:

- Reforming land rights
- Reforming land markets
- Embedding responsible land ownership and use.

OUR 2023-24 PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE

Our Strategic Plan objectives are:

- To put accountable and responsible approaches at the heart of land ownership and use
- To reform the way land rights and ownership are controlled to drive economic, social, and environmental value, strengthen community resilience and reduce inequalities
- To improve the efficiency and equity of land markets to support a fair and productive economy.

We achieve these by advising on reforms to land rights and land markets, and on responsible land ownership and use.

In 2023-24 we will deliver on our Programme of Work by:

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| <p>Providing advice and evidence to Scottish Government, Parliament and stakeholders on the proposed Land Reform Bill and other Bills where relevant (e.g. Community Wealth Building, Agriculture, Human Rights).</p> | <p>Providing advice for policy and practice in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rural land market and a just transition • Diversification of land ownership and governance • Land development and regeneration supporting delivery of NPF4. | <p>Strengthening implementation of Land Rights and Responsibilities (LRRS) through our Good Practice Programme:</p> <p>Protocols, casework, guidance, a refreshed advice service, and training to support practical implementation of the LRRS principles.</p> | <p>Supporting the functions of the Tenant Farming Commissioner:</p> <p>Promoting good relations between agricultural landlords and tenants through Codes of Practice and Guidance, casework, TFC mediation scheme, engagement with stakeholders, and policy advice.</p> |
| <p>Communications and Engagement</p> <p>Open and accessible engagement with the public and stakeholders. Communicating and engaging on land reform opportunities with people across Scotland.</p> | | | |
| <p>Organisational Development</p> <p>Supporting staff wellbeing and organisational effectiveness. Ensuring good governance and sound financial management.</p> | | | |

WHAT WE WILL DELIVER

The sections below set out what we will deliver in 2023-24 against the commitments in our Programme of Work.

| Programme of Work Commitment | Activity | Planned outputs |
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| <p>1. Providing advice to support development of the Land Reform Bill, other relevant Bills, and Scottish Government priorities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence and advice to Scottish Government, Parliament, and stakeholders to support development of the Land Reform Bill, as well as Agriculture, Community Wealth Building and Human Rights Bills. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and evidence to inform the Land Reform Bill through parliamentary process • Advice to inform the Community Wealth Building Bill (see Tenant Farming re: Advice on Agriculture Bill) • Land and Human Rights Advisory Forum (LAHRAF) – regular meetings/advice. |
| <p>2. Strengthening practical implementation of Scotland's Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver an effective Good Practice Programme to support land owners, managers, and communities to implement in practice the principles of the LRRS across urban and rural Scotland. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote refreshed advice service to support practical implementation of LRRS and respond to casework enquiries and requests for advice on LRRS implementation • Develop further approaches to LRRS self-assessment, identifying opportunities to scale up in 2024-25 • Improve access to and uptake for internally created learning resources, tools and guides • Deliver a programme of CPD training on LRRS for land agents • Work with Scottish Forestry and the forestry sector to improve approaches to community engagement and benefit • Publish a report on casework and advice to inform future policy and practice. |

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| <p>3. Advising on policy and practice to support increased diversity of land ownership</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and promote practical ways to diversify the ownership and governance of land holdings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Land Leadership Group re-established to coordinate leadership in developing community land ownership and governance • Advice and guidance publications to support the sector to diversify ownership and governance • Work with land owners to support and test a range of practical approaches to diversifying governance and ownership • Collaboration with Crown Estate Scotland to pilot Community Ownership Accelerator initiative to enable community land acquisition. |
| <p>4. Advising on policy and practice on natural capital and the land market to support a just transition</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep under review the implications of emerging natural capital value in the land market • Advise on responsible approaches to securing community benefit from natural capital investment and value. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural land markets insight and analysis publications and long-term monitoring approach agreed with partners • Advice on community benefit in natural capital investment to inform Scottish Government’s market framework • Encourage adoption of good practice in delivering community benefit in natural capital projects by providing support, advice and publishing guidance. |
| <p>5. Advising on policy and practice to support land development and regeneration</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review progress to support momentum in tackling vacant and derelict land • Support more effective approaches to land assembly for housing and development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock-take of action on delivering the recommendations of the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce • Community of practice to support and develop negotiated approaches to land assembly, contributing to NPF4 delivery plan • Advice to support Remote, Rural and Islands Housing Plan and rural repopulation pilots. |

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| <p>6. Tenant Farming Commissioner (TFC)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support good relations between agricultural landlords and tenants • Statutory appointment of valuers as per Relinquishment and Assignment (R&A) legislation • Seek relevant advice to the sector on matters of legal uncertainty through s38 • Provide advice to Scottish Government to support enactment of 2016 Act and on the implications in the Agriculture Bill for the tenanted sector • Undertake five-year review of the findings and recommendations of the 2018 Review of the Operation of Agents • Stakeholder engagement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish TFC Codes of Practice and Guidance • Advice on casework enquiries and implementation of Codes and Guidance • Support the use of mediation through TFC scheme and mediation panel • Review of R&A procedures and guidance, maintain TFC panel of valuers and valuer appointments made within statutory timescale • Advice in relation to agricultural holdings and relevant proposals in the Agriculture Act • Review of TFC's 2018 recommendations regarding the operation of agents • Regular meetings of the Tenant Farming Advisory Forum (TFAF). |
| <p>7. Communications and Engagement</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the Commission's work and create opportunities for people to have their say on land-related issues to help inform our thinking and approach • Raise awareness of the Commission's work amongst new audiences, with a particular focus on driving digital engagement and discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of public meetings, listening and discussion events • Increased social media profile and output, with an emphasis on content creation • Review of the use of the MyLand brand and campaigns to understand its impact and determine future use • Bespoke communications and engagement campaigns, encompassing media relations, stakeholder engagement and digital marketing where appropriate • Effective and inclusive event management and delivery of the biennial conference, including recommendations for discussion topics and future events |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce the Commission’s position as an authority on a range of land issues beyond the Land Reform Bill, with a clear focus on the natural capital and net zero agenda • Delivery of the Commission’s conference as a mechanism to increase understanding of the role of the commission and the support and expertise it offers • Support an effective and empowered workforce through the development and delivery of a sustained internal communications programme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective delivery of a regular internal communications calendar, designed to support hybrid working and effective sharing of successes, feedback and management updates. |
| <p>8. Organisational Development</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Development Programme (ODP) • Strategic Plan 2023-26 • Deliver sound governance and financial management supported by a culture of improvement with the implementation of audit recommendations • Effective corporate support and operational systems with continuing review and improvement including business resilience and cyber security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion to support public appointments process for Chair and board recruitment • Completion of ODP and implementation of new staff training programme • Strategic Plan 2023-26 developed with internal and stakeholder engagement • Financial management and annual accounts • Effective internal and external audit programmes and response tracker • Re-tender of IT and HR provision • Cyber security assurance and regular review • Regular staff pulse surveys |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff engagement and representation• Deliver year-on-year reductions in carbon emissions against the Climate Action Plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish revised staff engagement arrangements in context of union recognition agreement• Climate Action Plan reporting• Engagement in Scottish Government public bodies reform agenda. |
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Performance Monitoring

| Key Performance Indicators | | |
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| Business area | Key performance indicator (Strategic Plan) | Measurement (2023-24) |
| Delivery | Delivered 95% of outputs identified in the annual business plans for the three-year period. | Delivered 95% of outputs identified in the annual business plan. Percentage number of outputs delivered and completed as detailed in the annual business plan. |
| Impact and reputation | Project evaluations identify impact and change in approach by stakeholders as a direct result of the Commission's work. | Increase in respondents to evaluation surveys reporting intention to act on what they have learnt through events and engagement or able to identify a positive impact arising as a result of our work. <i>NB: Communications KPIs identified in the communications strategy and reported on annually.</i> |
| | Increase of 15% by 2023 of stakeholders identifying improvements and better outcomes in their organisation and practice as a result of the Commission's areas of work from the baseline of the 2019 perceptions audit. | |
| Staff wellbeing and satisfaction | Increase of 15% by 2023 of staff feeling valued and recognised for their work from the 2019 baseline in the annual staff survey. | Increase in staff feeling valued and recognised for their work from 2022-23 survey average. |
| Finance | End of year outturn to be within 2% underspend of total allocated budget by 2023. | End of year outturn to be within 2% underspend of total allocated budget. |

2023-24 Annual Budget

| OVERALL BUDGET ALLOCATION | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | 2023-24 | 2022-23 |
| Income: | £'000 | £'000 |
| Grant-in-aid | 1,526 | 1,550 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Commissioners' costs | 71 | 69 |
| Staffing costs | 1,099 | 973 |
| Corporate Services | 196 | 211 |
| Communications and Events | 82 | 97 |
| Programme and Project costs | 102 | 212 |
| | | |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 1,550* | 1,562 |

- Incorporates degree of overprogramming