

CROFTING CONSULTATION**1. Do you agree that new areas should be designated for Crofting?**

No. Moray and Banff are geographically and economically very different to the Highlands and Islands. Structures already exist for land use and occupation, which provide a very much better vehicle for businesses in the rural environment.

2. Do you agree the new areas should align with those of Highlands and Islands Enterprise? If not why?

No. See the answer to 1.

3. Is there another area which has a stronger claim, if so why?

No. See the answer to 1.

4. Do you agree that crofting community Right to Buy should not be extended to the new areas?

Yes. Any extension of Right to Buy provisions would be inequitable and would further damage the already fragile confidence that landowning interests have in the Scottish Government's rural agenda.

5. Any other comments?

Some years ago the Scottish Government produced an excellent document entitled "A Forward Strategy for Agriculture". One of the principal provisions within that document, which has subsequently been delivered, is the fixed term tenancies in the form of a Short Limited Duration Tenancy and the Limited Duration Tenancy. Whilst these new structures still present many difficulties for those wishing to participate in land use and management they do fundamentally create new structures for a more modern and dynamic agricultural and rural enterprise economy for the rural areas of Scotland. This we felt was a forward-looking and enterprising approach. The crofting proposals are, in our view, backward-looking and should not therefore be encouraged. There are very many more constructive ways of enhancing economic activity in rural environments, which encourage genuine partnership and sharing of responsibilities and opportunities. In our experience one of the most significant constraining factors on young people entering the agricultural industry, or wishing to carry on a diversified business in the rural economy, is the availability of capital. Healthy forward-looking tenancy arrangements can provide rural entrepreneurs with an opportunity to start and grow their businesses in partnership with another person or business without the necessity of finding all of the capital to finance that business. It is this structure that we should be building on, not old style structures.

6. What is your background?

Landowner.