

# Information about land A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES

This guide is designed to support communities and individuals who are looking for information about land in Scotland. Information about land and buildings is the basis for open and transparent decision-making and can enable more people to participate. Improved information about who owns land in Scotland and how it is managed can empower people, including community groups, and give them the opportunity to understand more about the land around them.



[Click through to website](#)

## Key contacts

### Scottish Government

The Scottish Government Land Reform team works to improve Scotland's system of land ownership, use, rights and responsibilities, so that land can contribute to a fair and just society while balancing public and private interests. They provide detailed guidance on the legislation and application process for Community Rights to Buy and Asset Transfer. They also provide guidance on Community Empowerment and Community Engagement in Decisions Relating to Land.

Other sections of the Scottish Government website also provide information and guidance on other relevant topics, including community involvement in the planning process and community-led regeneration.

### Registers of Scotland (RoS)

RoS are responsible for keeping public registers of land, property, and other legal documents in Scotland. This includes the Land Register of Scotland and the General Register of Sasines, as well as the Register of Community Interests in Land, the Crofting Register, and the Scottish Landlord Register.

They publish data and information about land and property, including house price information. They also offer services including conducting searches and providing documents about property, and services for the development industry such as development plan approval and plan assistance.

### Local authorities

Scotland's 32 local authorities are responsible for providing a range of public services. This includes education, social care, roads and transport, economic development, housing and planning, environmental protection, waste management, cultural and leisure services.

Some local authorities make extensive use of Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) to provide services. ALEOs are organisations established by local authorities to deliver specific services, such as sports and leisure or property maintenance.

Local authorities should be the first point of contact for enquiries about Common Good Assets, local planning applications and decisions, and Local Development Plans.

### Relevant authorities

Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 allows a community transfer body to make an asset transfer request or participation request to a relevant authority. A request can be made in relation to any land which is owned or leased by the relevant authority. An appropriately constituted community body can ask to buy or lease the land, or to have other rights, for example to occupy or use the land for a particular purpose.

Each relevant authority must establish, maintain and make available a register of their land and buildings and make it available online.

### Register of Applications by Communities to Buy Land

The register contains two types of applications. The first is applications by community bodies to buy abandoned, neglected or detrimental land. The second is applications by community bodies to buy land to further sustainable development.

### Scotland's Land Information Service (ScotLIS)

ScotLIS is an online searchable database maintained by RoS. It can be used to find property owners, search for property prices, buy property documents and check if properties are on the Land Register.

## Heritage and designations

### Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Portal

The HES Portal allows you to search for records and maps for designations, search for scheduled monument consent applications and decisions, and download GIS datasets for designated heritage assets.

### Canmore Database

The Canmore database is an online catalogue of Scotland's archaeology, buildings, industrial and maritime heritage. Compiled and managed by Historic Environment Scotland, Canmore contains information and collections from all its survey and recording work, as well as from a wide range of other organisations, communities and individuals who are helping to enhance this national resource.

The site search enables you to see the location of individual sites, buildings or wrecks, and many site entries have descriptive text, bibliographic references and catalogue entries for collections items.

### NatureScot (formerly SNH) SiteLink

SiteLink provides easy access to data and information on Protected Areas across Scotland ranging from sites of local natural heritage to designations of national and international importance.

You can find out about the important features of sites and access Site Condition Monitoring information, view site boundaries and download supporting documents. There is also data on site management agreements, consultation cases and links to other websites for additional supporting information.



## Crofting

### Crofting Register

The Crofting Register is a free to search, public register of crofts, common grazings, and land held in runrig, that is maintained by Registers of Scotland. Registration in the Crofting Register is required on certain 'trigger events' and voluntary registration is also encouraged.

### Register of Crofts (ROC)

ROC is a public list of crofts which contains basic information about the croft and the people associated with it. There are just over 20,500 crofts entered on the Commission's ROC, of which around 72% are tenanted and the remainder are owned.

## Other sources of useful information

### SIMD Interactive Map

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a relative measure of deprivation across 6,976 small areas (called data zones). If an area is identified as 'deprived', this can relate to people having a low income, but it can also mean fewer resources or opportunities.

SIMD looks at the extent to which an area is deprived across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to services, crime and housing.

### Companies House

The Companies House register enables you to search for companies in the UK and to see copies of registered documents, such as accounts, addresses for registered offices, and lists of current and previous directors.

### Local landowner's websites

If there are large landholdings in your area, then the landowners may have websites which provide useful information about the landholding and how it is used. This could include information about the activities carried out, the history of and future plans for the land, and key contact details.

## Membership organisations and networks

### Scottish Land and Estates (SLE)

SLE is a membership organisation for rural land-based businesses in Scotland. They represent members' views, identify opportunities and risks for land-based businesses, celebrate rural successes, provide a network for sharing knowledge and good practice, and provide support to those with a stake in land and property in rural Scotland.

### Community Land Scotland (CLS)

CLS is a membership organisation for community landowners and aspiring community landowners. It supports and promotes community ownership and provides important opportunities for networking and knowledge sharing.

CLS members collectively own and manage around 560,000 acres of land in Scotland. The website includes a membership list with contact details.

### National Farmers Union Scotland (NFUS)

NFUS represents 9,000 farmers, crofters, growers, and other supporters across Scotland, providing information and representation on key policy and legislative matters. It aims to achieve a sustainable and profitable future for Scottish Agriculture. It is organised into nine regions with 78 branches providing a focus for local activity.

### Scottish Land Matching Service (LMS)

The Scottish Land Matching Service aims to match new entrants and progressing farmers with well-established farmers, crofters, and landowners who may be looking to step back or explore new opportunities. The service supports individuals to find the right option for them, whether that is through tenancies, contract farming, joint ventures or share farming.

### Development Trusts Association Scotland (DTAS)

DTAS is a membership organisation for community development trusts across Scotland. It uses its expertise to inform, support and represent this network, facilitating the sharing of knowledge and encouraging co-operation.

DTAS' website includes a list of members with information about what they do.

### Scotland's Regeneration Forum (SURF)

SURF is a regeneration network. It acts as a channel for information, policy and consultations. The SURF network includes seminars, conferences, case studies and the annual SURF Awards for Best Practice in Community Regeneration.

### Scottish Property Federation (SPF)

SPF is the trade association for Scottish commercial and residential property companies. Members are listed on its website; they include real estate companies, institutional investors, companies that own property (e.g. supermarket chains), housing associations, professional firms, and companies such as construction, insurance and services, and affiliated organisations.

### Green Action Trust

The Green Action Trust works across Scotland and specialises in developing and delivering environmental improvement projects. They work with community groups, private landowners, local authorities and government agencies and offer a 'one-stop-shop', taking projects all the way from an initial idea through to seeing the work completed.

## Public bodies and charities

### Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE)

Highlands and Islands Enterprise offers a range of support services and funding for community organisations and social enterprises. They work with around 150 social enterprises in the region and support projects that promote inclusive and sustainable growth across a range of areas including community assets, craft, energy, Gaelic and culture.

### South of Scotland Enterprise (SoSE)

South of Scotland Enterprise (SoSE) is the economic and community development agency that covers Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders. They offer support, advice and funding to businesses to help them to build capacity, to take on local assets, and to develop social enterprises or community businesses.

### Greenspace Scotland

Greenspace Scotland is a charity who works with a wide range of stakeholders to create, manage, fund, use, promote and evaluate parks, greenspaces and green networks. They can provide support through consultancy services and training, support the development of projects, strategies and plans, and support community place-making and place-changing programmes.

### Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

A source of high-level advice and information for communities on a range of land and building related issues. Also includes information on how public agencies can take the public with them when planning new buildings or activities, with case studies from Scottish Water and others.



## Practical tools and funding

### Scottish Land Commission

The Scottish Land Commission has a range of practical tools available to help you improve your practices with regard to land rights and responsibilities. There are seven [Land Rights and Responsibilities Protocols](#) and a [Community Engagement Route Map](#).

### Place Standard

The Place Standard tool offers a framework to structure conversations about place. The tool provides prompts for discussions, allowing you to consider the physical and social elements of a place and helps to pinpoint the assets of a place as well as areas for improvement.

### Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) funding options

The table provides a brief description of different funding sources available, highlighting the main limitations of each and indicating what type of activity the funding is most suitable for.

### Stalled Spaces Toolkit – Architecture & Design Scotland (ADS)

Stalled Spaces Scotland aims to encourage and support communities to bring stalled spaces or derelict and vacant land back into temporary use. ADS has produced various toolkits and case studies to help communities and local authorities to develop their own projects to bring life back into these sites.

### Scottish Land Fund

The Scottish Land Fund supports communities to become more resilient through ownership of land. Funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by The National Lottery Community Fund and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, it offers support and grants to help communities develop their projects and take ownership of the land and buildings that matter to them.