



**CROFTING COMMISSION
COIMISEAN NA CROITEARACHD**

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Division Application Grazing Share Tenancy Guidance Notes

Notaichean Stiùiridh Gabhaltas Earrann(an) Ionaltraidh Iarrtas Roinne



Division is the term used to describe the creation of two or more shares from an existing croft usually so that one or more of the units can be (a) separately assigned or (b) renounced and let with the consent of the Commission, to another individual.

The name(s) of each share and rent payable shall be that agreed between the owner of the common grazings and tenant. A tenant cannot renounce part of his share without first dividing the part he wants to renounce from the part he wants to retain. Please be aware that if the division is approved, we will require these details to be provided to enable the division to take effect.

If the share is currently sublet, you must give your subtenant 6 months' written notice of your intention to divide the tenancy before submitting the application.

This form should be used where an executor is seeking to divide the croft tenancy, unless the application is in respect of a house site, if following a valid bequest to do so.

1. REQUIREMENT TO REGISTER YOUR CROFT LAND

The final element of the Crofting Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 relating to the registration of croft land came into effect on 30 November 2013.

The Crofting Register is map based and provides a definitive record of the extent of, and interest in, land within crofting tenure in Scotland. In addition to showing the boundaries of land, the register also contains information on the crofter, owner-occupier crofter and/or the landlord of the registered croft. The Crofting Register is maintained by the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland, although the application for registration is made in the first instance to the Crofting Commission who will check the information contained in or accompanying the registration application against the information contained in the Commission's Register of Crofts.

If your croft is unregistered, the Commission will be unable to make a decision on your division application until the croft has been registered with the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland. To avoid delays therefore, we recommend that your division application should be accompanied by your application to register the croft on the Crofting Register.

A copy of the registration form and accompanying guidance notes can be found at **www.ros.gov.uk/services/registration/crofting-register**. If an application to register is not submitted within 6 months of the date of receipt of this application, the application to divide will be withdrawn from our records and returned to you.

If your croft is already registered with the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland, an application for Registration of a Subsequent Event will be required should your division application be approved.

This form should be used where an executor is seeking to divide the croft tenancy, unless the application is in respect of a house site following a valid bequest to do so.

2. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If the application is being submitted by anyone other than you or your Solicitor, the form should be accompanied by written confirmation from you that you have authorised the signatory to act as your agent.

Please note that any information you provide is part of an open process and made available to other parties involved in the process. Your information would also be released under a Freedom of Information enquiry subject to any disclosure exemptions under the Data Protection Act 1998.

All questions must be answered as fully as possible, otherwise the form may be returned. To enable the Commission to give full consideration to your application, we would appreciate if you would provide us with as much information as possible to help us to arrive at a fully informed decision.

You may apply to us for consent to assign a divided share(s) to another person as a new unit. Alternatively, you may renounce (give up) the divided share(s) to the landlord so that they can apply to let it as a unit or as an enlargement to another tenanted croft. You cannot renounce or apply to assign the tenancy of the divided share(s) until the outcome of this application is decided.

2.1 OWNER OF THE COMMON GRAZING NOTIFICATION

You are legally required to notify any owners of the common grazings of this application. In order to confirm you have done this could you please provide one of the following:

1. Arrange for the signed notification form at Appendix 3A to be completed and signed by the owner of the common grazings.
2. A letter confirming receipt of notification from the owner of the common grazings.
3. Evidence of notification having been sent by registered post or recorded delivery to the owner of the common grazings.

3. GRAZING SHARE(S)

We strongly advise you to confirm your share/souming entitlement with your local Grazings Clerk or with the Commission before answering this question. If our records do not match the information you provide, the application may be returned to you. Please set out the souming for each new croft in terms of livestock.

Any Crofter Forestry rights will be divided in proportion to the division of the share/souming.

4. RESIDENCY AND LAND USE

In this section you are provided with the opportunity to make any comments on these matters which you consider the Commission should take into account when considering your application.

Section 58A(7)(a) of the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993

In considering its decision on this application, the Commission must have regard to:

- (i) whether any person is or will be ordinarily resident on, or within 32 kilometres (20 miles) of, the croft;
- (ii) whether the croft is being or will be cultivated or put to such other purposeful use

All crofters are required to comply with a number of statutory duties relating to residency and management of their crofts.

5. WIDER INTERESTS

Section 58A(7)(b)-(e) of the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993

In considering its decision on this application, the Commission must have regard to:

- (b) the interests of the estate which comprises the land to which the application relates;
- (c) the interests of the crofting community* in the locality of that land;
- (d) the sustainable development of that crofting community;
- (e) the interests of the public at large

**Crofting community means all the persons who (either or both) occupy crofts within a township which consists of two or more crofts registered with the Crofting Commission; hold shares in a common grazing associated with that township.*

5.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development of a crofting community will normally include the economic social and environmental well-being of the community but meeting the sustainable development criteria need not require meeting all these strands. For instance, the agricultural aspect of crofting is not always necessarily financially sustainable, but this does not preclude it from adding value to the well-being of the individual and the surrounding community. Consideration of applications should take account of the maintenance and possible increase in populations, good management practices, the protection and enhancement of environmental assets, economic demand and employment opportunities, the protection and encouragement of biodiversity, the production of renewable energy reduction in carbon emissions, resource efficiency and the avoidance of dereliction of land. There are many criteria available when considering sustainable development although not all will be applicable to each circumstance.

5.2 PUBLIC INTEREST

Crofting legislation does not define 'public interest', although it contains various references to it. It is therefore for the Commission to be satisfied that, where required on a case-by-case basis, the public interest test is met.

In exercising its functions, the Commission must have regard to (a) the desirability of supporting population retention in the crofting counties and in any other designated area where crofts have been created, and (b) the impact of changes to the overall area of land held in crofting tenure to the sustainability of crofting.

In determining if, for example, approving an application is in the public interest, the Commission may consider any evidence of the benefits and disbenefits to other crofters, crofting communities, the wider community and others the Commission considers as having an interest in the application. The Commission will also take into account the Scottish Government's crofting policies and will normally favour the wider public interest particularly where individual private interest will disadvantage the sections detailed above.

6. ACCESS

Your location and/or site map must show all existing access routes to the croft **as well as** any proposed access provision. Please provide as much information as possible of the current or proposed access provision at question 16 including details such as width, gates, condition and any consents obtained or that may be required together with supporting evidence.

7. POLICY PLAN ON DIVISION

The Commission recognises that, in some circumstances, the division of crofts can further the aim of population retention and provide opportunities for new entrants to crofting.

The Crofting Commission will exercise its discretion to decide every application for division on its merits. It will consider the following factors, amongst others, in assessing the matters to which the Commission must have regard in terms of section 58A(7) of the 1993 Act:-

- the size of the new crofts to be created through division
- the quality of the land of the new crofts to be created
- the use(s) to which the new crofts will be put
- the impact, where relevant, on the use of any associated share(s) in a common grazing.

Where a grazing share forms part of the croft, an application will not be considered competent unless it details what is intended for the share.

The Commission will apply its standard policy on access, to ensure that all new crofts have the required standard of access available.

The Commission will also, where appropriate, apply its policies on sustainability and sustainable development.

8. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

You must advertise your application to divide the tenancy of the croft in a newspaper. You are responsible for paying for the advert. Please refer to our guidelines on advertising applications on our website at www.crofting.scotland.gov.uk/forms-and-guidance

Failure to follow the guidelines may result in you having to re-advertise your application in an accepted newspaper. Please give details of the arrangements you have made at question 17.

It is important that this application is sent to us before the advert appears in a newspaper.

Sample Newspaper Advert:

Proposed Division of a Tenanted Common Grazing Share(s)

(Your name)

is applying to divide the tenancy of the grazing share(s) pertaining to the croft at

(Croft name & Parish)

into (insert number of shares including the original share) new crofts.

(insert details of each common grazings here, if more than one) Common Grazings.

Written Comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to:

Crofting Commission, Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.scotland.gov.uk by DD/MM/YY*.

*Enter date 28 days from the date of publication of the advert



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