**WOMEN AND THE CROFTING COMMISSION BOARD**

The Board of the Crofting Commission comprises 9 Commissioners; 6 elected members and 3 appointed by Scottish Ministers. Commissioners receive remuneration of £8,789 per year. New elections will take place in 2022 and one new Appointed Commissioner will also be chosen in 2022. This short survey has been designed to seek information on women’s thoughts about joining the Crofting Commission Board.

We would very much welcome women to come forward, to ensure the Board represents your experience of crofting. We recognise women are often juggling a variety of responsibilities and this may make it more difficult to commit to sitting on a Board based in Inverness. So, ahead of the election period, we want to understand what some of those barriers are and see if we can make changes to help overcome them.

We would be most grateful if you would complete the survey, to help us make the Board a welcoming place for women. Your responses will be anonymous but if you would like to contact me directly, with more information or insights, please do so at:

Compliancehub@crofting.gov.scot .

The deadline for completing the survey is 30 April 2021.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Board meetings are mainly held in Inverness, but since March 2020 they have been held by video-link. Going forward, it is likely that Commissioners will have the option (once it is safe to do so) of travelling to meetings in Inverness or attending meetings via a remote link. Which would be easier for you?

Attend via remote link [ ]

Travel to Inverness [ ]

 A combination of both [ ]

2 Meetings are held on a weekday and generally last for most of the day. Would this create a problem for you?

No [ ]

Yes [ ]

If Yes, please explain:

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1. There are usually 7 Board meetings a year, at roughly 6-week intervals (we try to avoid January, April, and July).

Would committing to attend this many meetings be difficult for you? No [ ]

 Yes [ ]

If Yes, are there particular times of year that are more difficult than others? Please specify.

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1. In addition to Board meetings, Commissioners are also required to attend occasional Strategy days, and other ad hoc meetings. Some of these (perhaps 3 or 4 a year) are usually external meetings, such as Roadshows or Hearings, held at various locations in the crofting counties. Perhaps once or twice a year, this may require an overnight stay (in normal times).

Could this create a problem for you? No [ ]

 Yes [ ]

If Yes, please specify:

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1. If you have caring responsibilities or a work pattern that would make it difficult to attend meetings that require time off work, is there anything we could do to reduce this barrier?

Would attending by remote link help? No [ ]

 Yes [ ]

1. One of the key roles of a Crofting Commissioner is to contribute to discussions and Decisions on complex cases. Training in this is provided but it requires Board members to take the time to read through case papers and sit in on casework meetings, on a rota basis. Reading through papers prior to Board meetings is also required, so Commissioners need the space and time for this.

Could this be a challenge or a barrier for you and, if so, is there anything we could do to reduce the difficulty?

No [ ]

Yes [ ]

If Yes, please specify:

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1. Do you have any ideas which you think could make the way the work of the Board is organised easier for women, so that more women would come forward for selection?

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This survey asks a limited number of questions. If you think there are other issues not included here, which make it difficult for women to come forward to sit on the Board, please get in touch, so that these can be explored and hopefully resolved. We are keen to hear your ideas.

Jane Thomas

On behalf of the Crofting Commission