

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
Wednesday 29 October 2025
29th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

Crofting and Scottish Land Court Bill

Introduction

1. The [Crofting and Scottish Land Court Bill](#) was introduced by the Scottish Government on 2 June 2025. The [accompanying documents for this Bill are published on the Parliament's website](#).

Background to the Bill

2. Crofters actively manage land and livestock, engage in diversified rural enterprises, protect biodiversity, and uphold local traditions and community life. The Scottish Government states that it recognises crofting as being essential to sustaining rural communities, supporting the economy, protecting biodiversity, and preserving cultural heritage across the Highlands, Islands, Argyll, the Hebrides and the Northern Isles.
3. The Bill is in two parts. Part one would amend the [Crofters \(Scotland\) Act 1993](#) and the [Crofting Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) with the aim of making crofting regulation less onerous and streamlining processes for crofters and the Crofting Commission.
4. Part one would also expand the powers of the Crofting Commission and introduce changes to enforcement of crofter duties, common grazings and the Crofting Register.
5. The policy memorandum states that the Bill aims to strengthen crofting in seven key areas:
 - crofting communities
 - enforcement of crofters' duties
 - Crofting Commission powers
 - common grazings
 - the Crofting Register
 - electronic communications
 - simplifications and clarifications of crofting law
6. The [Scottish Government consulted on crofting reform proposals](#) between 6 June to 2 September 2024. The [Scottish Government published its analysis of consultation responses on crofting reform on 15 November 2024](#).
7. Part two would merge the Scottish Land Court and Lands Tribunal for Scotland into a single expanded Scottish Land Court, aiming for “structural coherence and streamlined administration”.

8. The [Scottish Government consulted on the amalgamation of the Scottish Land Court and Lands Tribunal for Scotland](#) between 27 July and 19 October 2020. The [Scottish Government published its analysis of consultation responses on the merger of the Scottish Land Court and Lands Tribunal for Scotland in June 2021.](#)

RAI Committee scrutiny of the Bill

9. The Committee held a call for views on the Bill between 13 June and 5 September 2025 and the [written responses to the Committee's consultation have been published on the Bill's webpage.](#)
10. A [briefing on the Bill has been published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre \(SPICe\).](#)
11. The Committee undertook a [fact-finding visit to the Isle of Skye in September, where it visited a range of crofts and met with crofters to discuss the potential impact of the Bill.](#)
12. On 24 September, [the Committee began its oral evidence sessions by hearing from the Crofting Commission.](#)
13. At its meeting on 8 October, [the Committee continued its scrutiny of the Bill by taking evidence from legal and procedural stakeholders.](#)
14. At its meeting on 29 October, the Committee will take evidence from crofting representatives, before concluding its oral evidence sessions by hearing from the Minister and Scottish Government officials on 12 November.
15. Following its evidence taking, the Committee aims to consider and agree a Stage 1 report on the Bill before the end of the year.

Clerks to the Committee
October 2025