



STÒRAS UIBHIST

Oifis Stòras, Daliburgh, South Uist, Western Isles HS8 5SA

	Writer	Huw Francis
	Telephone No.	01878 700 101
	Fax No.	
	E-mail Address	huw.francis@storasuibhist.com
	Ref:	
	Date	2/9/11

Dear Member/Resident,

Croft Re-letting Policy

The core aims of the community company are to:

1. Retain population and reverse population decline (particularly in the 16-40 age range),
2. Support and develop crofting,
3. Encourage young-entrants into crofting,
4. Support and encourage retention of Gàidhlig language and culture,
5. Support retention and improvement of local services,
6. Support and stimulate economic growth,
7. Manage and operate community owned assets for the benefit of the community.

Stòras Uibhist is proposing to structure its croft re-letting policy with these aims in mind and remove the 'highest bidder' element from the process. Only croft tenancies renounced, or declared vacant by the Crofters Commission, would be part of this process and tenancies assigned by existing tenants will not be affected.

The intention is to score applicants on their ability to use the croft in a realistic manner, develop and improve the croft and contribute to both the local crofting township and the community at large.

It is not the intention to exclude an applicant because their aspirations for the croft are modest or low cost. Realistic and achievable aims for the croft that are highly likely to be achieved would be preferable to expensive but inappropriate/unrealistic plans.

The scoring sheet is attached, along with an explanation of how the points would be allocated. Stòras Uibhist would like to receive feedback from township committees, croft tenants and local residents on the policy and its aims, along with suggestions for changes that could be incorporated.

The Directors of Stòras Uibhist would be happy to attend township meetings to discuss these proposals in more detail. Alternatively, please contact the Stòras Uibhist office directly for further information or to submit comments.

Huw Francis
Chief Executive

DRAFT Scoring for Croft re-letting

Proposed Considerations:

	Max. Score	Score (1 = low)
1. Existing links to the Estate		
a. Residency	5	
b. Family	5	
c. Other	5	
2. Knowledge of crofting or agriculture.	10	
3. Planned use of croft	10	
4. Ability to deliver on plans	20	
5. Croft tenancies already held (higher the number held, the lower the score).	10	
6. Preference of current township tenants	20	
7. Contribution to the community	20	
	Score	105 (max)

Conditions

1. Preference will be given to suitable applicants without a croft over an applicant already holding a croft tenancy.

Supplementary Information Required From Applicant:

1. Evidence of finance to complete proposed project (asked of preferred tenant only).
2. Evidence of skills to deliver on plans.
3. References – last/current employer & personal

Definitions

- Residency – 5pts eligible for Stòras Membership; 3pt simple proof of current residency; 3pts to a previous long-term resident (3yrs+); 1pt (proof of accepted job offer)
- Family – as defined by Crofters Commission (5pts immediate family; 2 pts extended family)
- Other – Family/residency elsewhere in the Western Isles – scoring as above, but allocated half the available points.
- Knowledge of agriculture (dependent on demonstrated knowledge and/or enthusiasm)
- Planned use of croft – based on written outline plan and interview
- Ability to deliver (realistic expectations, with demonstration of ability to do so – employment, cash at bank, practical help, etc.)
- Croft tenancies held – 2pts deducted for each of the first two crofts already held, 3 or more crofts gives zero points. Previous croft tenancy holders (on South Uist Estate and elsewhere), reason for disposing of the croft considered on its merits.
- Preference of current township tenants – points only allocated following a full township meeting with secret ballot (where majority of tenants are resident and where the majority of tenancies are dispersed among multiple individuals).
- Contribution to the community – points awarded for e.g.: children going into local school; skills to benefit the community, etc.