# **The Future of Crofting? A study of the Purpose, Perceptions and Predictions for Crofting and its Legislation**

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Crofting has been an iconic part of community development and land

management within the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for many years. It has

not been without its issues, with historic events such as the Highland Clearances

inflicting a major influence upon those working the land. Hence, the creation of

the Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act 1886. Fast forward 133 years, past the

introduction of the absolute right to buy in 1976, we find ourselves attempting to

work through an act which has been considered complex, muddled and

completely outdated; with no overarching purpose.

The aim of this study was to assess the attitudes of key stakeholders towards the

future of crofting and its legislation in Scotland, by carrying out semi-structured

interviews throughout the crofting counties. The analysis output highlighted

participants perceptions on the overarching purpose of crofting, their views and

practical implications of the current law and their attitudes towards the future of

crofting and its legislation. Following the three separate elements in respective

order: participants state that one of the main purposes of crofting is going to be

rural retention though it faces some overriding challenges. The current legislation

is not fit for purpose and practically effects both tenants and owner occupiers in

different manners. The future of crofting is believed to consist of an evolved and

diversified landscape with the preferred option of crofting reform in the manner of

a re-written act.