



**Scottish Natural Heritage**  
**Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba**

All of nature for all of Scotland  
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

**PE1433/B**

Our Ref: BF022/12-13

31 July 2012

Stuart Todd  
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

By email to: [petitions@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:petitions@scottish.parliament.uk)

Dear Mr Todd

**Public Petition PE1433 Grow their own food.**

Thank you for letter of 28 June 2012, which asked SNH to respond to the following question:

**What are your views on what the petition seeks?**

SNH is generally supportive of the aspirations of this petition to increase the land available for food growing by the public, and notes the action by the Scottish Government and its agencies in the last few years on this issue.

For our part, this action has included funding for the sector for research and developing best practice (e.g. the Scottish Allotments & Gardens Society guidance 'Finding Scotland's Allotments' 2007 and the Allotment Design Guide). We also hosted a Sharing Good Practice Event in May 2012 on Community Growing – Making Local Food Work in support of an objective in the Grow Your Own Working Group Recommendations 1.3.1 a planning conference for senior officers and advisors to the planning authorities to produce improved policies and guidance for Grow Your Own initiatives. Since 2009 SNH has contributed to the Federation of City Farms and Community Growing scoping of a Community Land Bank Initiative.

SNH is a current member of the Grow Your Own Working Group and continues to support the aims of the forum.

SNH's own land holdings are nearly all National Nature Reserves (NNRs), many of which are remote from communities and which have limited potential for food growing. All our NNR holdings are also protected areas that are nationally and internationally important for habitats and species, so have to be managed very carefully.

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Nevertheless, we are willing to consider proposals for food growing or other community initiatives as they arise. For example, on the island of Rum, the NNR boundary has recently been redrawn and the croft land has been handed over to the community.

We hope you find these comments helpful.

Yours sincerely

**Ron Macdonald**  
**Head of Policy and Advice**