Huts in Scotland: New guidance launched

Tuesday 23 February, 2016

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Huts in Scotland: New guidance launched

Tuesday 23rd February: Tonight at the Scottish Parliament, Reforesting Scotland[1] will celebrate the launch of its new guide[2] to help planners and hut builders respond to the emerging opportunities for huts in Scotland. At an event[3] attended by 80 members of the planning, building and design communities, Reforesting Scotland will explain why Scotland's planning authorities are likely to receive a new generation of planning applications from hutters encouraged by recent developments in the policy and regulatory framework for huts.

Welcoming the report, Rural Affairs Secretary Richard Lochhead said:

"Huts and hutting are a great way for people to enjoy Scotland's outstanding natural environment, with all the benefits to health and wellbeing this can bring. I very much welcome the publication of this guidance, which I hope will provide an important opportunity for many more people in Scotland to enjoy the recreational benefits associated with huts and hutting."

Scotland has a strong hutting history,[4] but numbers have declined in recent years due to a lack of a planning policy and regulatory framework for new huts. However, the tide turned when Scottish Planning Policy 2014 included supportive policy[5] on huts, indicating that the demand for huts for recreational use is one of the matters that should be addressed in the preparation of development plans. Now the Scottish Government Building Standards Division is analysing consultation responses to the proposal that huts be exempt from building regulations.[6]

Ninian Stuart, a Director of Reforesting Scotland and founder of the Thousand Huts campaign said, "*Our new guidance is designed to support planners and future hut builders to create new hut developments which will enhance people's health and happiness by spending time in Scotland's amazing landscapes. It will also help planning authorities develop their own policy and supplementary guidance on huts. We have 800 people on our books who are keen to have access to a simple hut in nature and we believe that's just the beginning*."

To download a copy of *New hutting developments: Good practice guidance on the planning, development and management of huts and hut sites* go to www.thousandhuts.org

ENDS

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Notes to editors A selection of suitable images are available on request, including: Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and Environment, Richard Lochhead welcoming the new guidance, pictured with Richard Heggie and Karen Grant of Reforesting Scotland's Thousand Huts campaign.

[1] www.thousandhuts.org

[2] *'New hutting developments: Good practice guidance on the planning, development and management of huts and hut sites'* covers a wide range of planning considerations including: defining huts; use patterns of huts; suitable locations; services; and matters affecting the land around huts.

[3] The event in the Scottish Parliament on 23rd February is hosted by by Angus Macdonald MSP

[4] Scotland's Hutting Heritage www.thousandhuts.org/?page_id=2

[5] Reforesting Scotland's guidance is based on the SPP definition of a hut:

A simple building used intermittently as recreational accommodation (i.e. not a principal residence); having an internal floor area of no more than 30m2; constructed from low impact materials; generally not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage; and built in such a way that it is removable with little or

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no trace at the end of its life. Huts may be built singly or in groups.

[6] Huts and Building Regulations: Have your say! www.thousandhuts.org/?p=577

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