



'It is from many small streams that big rivers rise':

A workshop exploring multiple visions of community land ownership and use in Scotland

Clyde Hall, Glasgow, 1st and 2nd September 2025

This workshop aims to employ knowledge and experiences from the global South as a fresh lens through which to review community land rights in Scotland. It sets out to contribute to existing efforts and emerging coalitions that recognise different possibilities for more 'joined up' collective action as a counter to large scale private and increasingly concentrated private landownership in Scotland. The workshop seeks to encourage community owners, activists, academics and advocates of alternative visions of living on the land to share their different experiences and their longer-term goals and aspirations, with a view to strengthening forms of 'community organising' in this space.

Potential Workshop Outcomes:

- Build on existing relationships to facilitate further coalitions amongst community land activists, leaders, academics, and land movements in Scotland, in order to achieve wider, shared objectives.
- Generate new articulations and shared generation of knowledges on the complexities of the 'commoning' of land rights across multiple visions of living on and using the land, now and in the future.
- Explore political aspirations and as appropriate, promote collective political action based on emerging responsibilities and respect for different articulations around community-led land ownership and use in Scotland.
- Create, articulate, and explore artistic representations of the tapestry of knowledge and visions of living with/on and using the land.

Potential workshop outputs may include:

- A joint action statement of (political) intent emerging from the workshop, with suggested policy recommendations.
- A peer-reviewed reflective paper on the significance and key points of learning, published open access.
- Blogposts including reflections from different perspectives – SA & Tanzania & Scotland to be published.
- Collated video diary of the participants' views of the process to be published on the project webpage.
- An artistic artefact/representation of land/community ownership, created by a commissioned artist, poet or writer.

The workshop format will be informed by the methodological guidelines of the Popular University of Social Movements ([UPMS - English](#))

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Reversing the Gaze
Knowledge Stories on Community Land Rights

Workshop Programme

Monday 1st September

Time	Duration	Theme	Activity (notes)
11.30 - 12	30 mins	Arrival and registration	Arrival, registration, tea/coffee/informal introductions
12 - 12.15	15 mins	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome from project lead and co-facilitators Introducing project and key concepts Setting out the workshop intention and programme
12.15 - 12.45	30 mins	Who are we?	Introductions and movement practice
12.45 - 1	15 mins	Artist introduction	Introducing Màiri Gillies, resident artist for the workshop
1-1.30	30 mins	Lunch	
1.30 - 2.30	1 hour	Overview of land reform/community land ownership in Scotland	Lightning talks and roundtable discussion exploring aspirations for land reform and land recommoning in Scotland, and key challenges to these
2.30 - 3	30 mins	Opening up key themes for deep learning and listening in the breakout groups	
3 - 3.30	30 mins	Tea break	
3.30 - 5	1.30 hours	First break out session	See list of possible themes below (drawn from pre-workshop conversations with participants). Likely to be a limit of 4 breakout groups.
5 - 5.30	30 mins	Sharing key insights from breakout groups	
5.30 - 5.45	15 mins	Wrap-up and close of day one	Include practicalities around food, accommodation, transport etc.
5.45 - 6.30	45 mins	Break for walking/movement/rest	
6.30 - 8	1.5 hours	Meal at GalGael	

Day 2: Tuesday 2nd September

Time	Duration	Theme	Activity
8.30 - 9	30 mins	Arrival/tea and coffee	
9.00 - 9.15	15 mins	Intro to second day + movement practice	
9.15 - 10.15	1 hour	Second breakout groups session	Return to previous day's themes, with a focus on visioning and futures, in preparation for final plenary.

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10.15-11	15 mins	Break	
11am – 12.30	1.5 hours	Plenary: visioning/coalition-building	<p>What do people want to do with land? How would we like to see land reform/recommoning unfold in Scotland over the coming years? How do we envision alternative modes of land ownership, either drawing on historical or new models that go beyond capitalist paradigms?</p> <p>What are the immediate and medium-term ‘next steps’ to best support forms of coalition-building that accept and celebrate difference, while continuing to promote the broader project of community land ownership in Scotland? What unites us and what divides us? What can we learn from each other and do together? Who is missing? What are our deliberations? How will we achieve this? Agreement of workshop key messages (for whom) and outputs (+ next steps)</p>
12.30 - 12.45	15 mins	Workshop close	
12.45 - 2pm	1.15 hours	Community lunch at GalGael	

Possible breakout group themes (based on pre-workshop conversations)

Possible theme	Some potential questions
‘History’	Consideration of past injustices vs forward looking (letting the past go) e.g. in legislation
‘Gaelic, language, art’	Perspectives on how to ensure language of community is not coopted. What is the role of Gaelic and the arts in land reform and land recommoning efforts? How can that best be supported?
‘State relations’	How are community landowners/communities seeking to access land navigating relations with government? What is and what should be the role of the State in advancing land reform in Scotland?
‘Community’	What constitutes community? What makes a community a community? What does it take to be a community beyond community ownership of land? How could community ownership be made sustainable without reliance on extractive practices? How do communities navigate outside worlds that run along different lines?
‘(Re)commoning beyond community landownership’	What does recommoning look like in different contexts (going beyond the parameters of community landownership)? How do we look beyond the system of Community Right to Buy to develop more meaningful mechanisms for redistributing land and countering market forces?