



PE961

The Scottish Parliament

Public Petitions Committee – a template for e-petitions

Should you wish to submit an e-petition allowing signatures to be gathered on-line on the Public Petitions Committee e-petitioner web pages please complete the template below. Before submitting your e-petition please consult the Guidance on submission of public petitions for advice on what is and is not admissible. You may also seek advice from the Clerk to the Committee whose contact details can be found at the end of this form.

Details of principal petitioner:

Please enter the name of person and organisation raising the petition, including a contact address where correspondence should be sent to.

Sally Richardson,
255/3 Canongate,
EDINBURGH
EH8 8BQ

canongatecommunityforum@yahoo.co.uk

Text of petition:

The petition should clearly state what action the petitioner wishes the Parliament to take in no more than 5 lines of text, e.g.

The petitioner requests that the Scottish Parliament considers and debates the implications of the proposed Agenda for Change legislation for Speech and Language Therapy Services and service users within the NHS

Petition by Sally Richardson calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Executive to introduce legislation to provide greater protection and increased powers for local communities in respect of the ownership and use of common good land.

Period for gathering signatures:

Please enter the closing date for gathering signatures on your petition, which we would usually recommend is a period of between 4-6 weeks

Closing date: 5 May 2006

10031

Additional information:

Please enter any other information relating to the issues raised in your e-petition, including the reasons why the action requested is necessary. The text entered in this field should not exceed 2 pages. However, you may wish to provide further sources/links to background information.

The sale of Common Good and council-owned land and public buildings.

Existing legislation covering local government procedures does not ensure sustainable management of public assets and Common Good land. Management of Common Good land was passed to local government from the old Burghs in 1975, but many continue to dispose of these community assets inappropriately. New procedures are needed to ensure that Common Good Land and usable publicly owned buildings can, as a first priority, be retained and reused by the public either directly through community organisations and trusts or through continued local authority management.

Common Good Land and other heritable and movable public assets have been sold off to private interests without any public notification or any opportunity for local communities to object or propose alternative uses. Common Good Land which is to be sold should be declared to be such when the proposed sale is reported to the Full Council Committee for approval, but at least 2 recent sales in Edinburgh which included Common Good Land have been recommended to committee for sale with no reference made to their status.

There is no formal opportunity for public objections to such sales, and local authorities sell Common Good Land without a requirement to consider if these assets can be retained for use in the delivery of public services and so ensure they continue to be used for public benefit, as in many cases the original bequests to the Burghs required. Common Good Land is all too often sold off to raising funds for general expenditure, which means those assets are lost to future generations. This is both economically and socially unsustainable, and the good management of assets should support existing communities and ensure income, services and opportunities for future generations.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting an e-petition:

Before submitting a petition to the Parliament, petitioners are expected to have made an attempt to resolve their issues of concern, by for example, making representations to the Scottish Executive or seeking the assistance of locally elected representatives, such as councillors, MSPs and MSPs. Details of those approached should be entered.

Bill Cunningham (Councillor, Holyrood Ward)
Trevor Davies (Councillor & Convener of Planning, City of Edinburgh Council)
Sarah Boyack MSP
Mark Ballard MSP

Comments to stimulate on-line discussion:

Please provide at least one comment to set the scene for an on-line discussion on the petition, not exceeding 10 lines of text.

The purposes and intentions of the people who donated Common Good Land in the past should be respected. It was given to the community in perpetuity, and those donors would be appalled to see it being sold off for executive flats, bland office blocks, and thus permitting the destruction of the character of part of the Royal Mile, Scotland's most famous and important street. Not only must this project be blocked, but Parliament must ensure that nothing like this can be proposed in the future.

Petitioners appearing before the Committee

The Convener of the Committee may invite petitioners to appear before the Public Petitions Committee to speak in support of their petition. Such an invitation will only be made if the Convener considers this would be useful in facilitating the Committee's consideration of the petition. It should be noted that due to the large volume of petitions it has to consider, the Committee is not able to invite all petitioners to appear before the Committee to speak in support of their petition.

Please indicate below whether you request to make a brief statement before the Committee when it comes to consider your petition.

I DO request to make a brief statement before the Committee

I DO NOT request to make a brief statement before the Committee

Signature of principal petitioner:

When satisfied that your petition meets all the criteria outlined in the Guidance on submission of public petitions, the principal petitioner should sign and date the form in the box below. Other signatures gathered should be appended to this form.

Signature

Date

For advice on the content and wording of your e-petition please contact:

The Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
Tel: 0131 348 5186 Fax: 0131 348 5088
e-mail: petitions@scottish.parliament.uk

Note

Completed e-petition forms should also be sent to petitions@scottish.parliament.uk