

# Development Matters

Issue 12

May 2010

A regular update produced by the Housing Development team of The Highland Council, designed to promote awareness by providing information about recent Housing Development activity in the Highlands.

## School Bell Rings for Drum Housing !

We have good news to report from Drumnadrochit, where the benefit of investment in affordable housing can be seen at Old School Court, Kilmore Road. The project involved renovation and conversion of the former High School building into 6 homes and a further 7 houses have been built in the school grounds. All of the homes are for affordable rent.



This scheme was enabled through the Highland Council and Scottish Government working in partnership with Albyn Housing Society in utilising surplus Council assets to provide opportunities for affordable housing in a community where the homes are desperately needed.

An open day was held at the development on 26<sup>th</sup> April and the new tenants can look forward to receiving the keys to their new homes during May.

*(continued on page 2)*

## **Old School Court, Kilmore Road, Drumnadrochit (continued)**

The Grade B listed building, built in 1877, has been unused since pupils moved to a new purpose-built school in 2002. Previous alterations and extensions have been stripped back to allow the building to be tastefully converted and the old school bell has been retained on the courtyard elevation. The conversion provides 4 two bedroom houses and 2 with three bedrooms, whilst the newly built homes in the school grounds comprise 4 three bedroom houses and 3 two bedroom bungalows.

Each house has been designed to meet Albyn's sustainability criteria and promote CO2 savings. In addition to careful choice of materials and high levels of insulation, air source pumps which provide economical, low-carbon heating, and ventilation systems have been installed.

The new homes were designed with various roof and wall finishes to contribute to environmental sustainability. The final design integrates the contemporary new-build homes with the listed building into a welcoming courtyard with a strong sense of neighbourhood.

## **More Housing Development News from around the Highlands**

### **Former Bunoich School, Fort Augustus**



In a further example of partnership working between the Council and Albyn Housing Society, another former school site is currently being redeveloped for housing. Work is underway to convert Bunoich School into 5 flats for low cost home ownership through the LIFT shared equity scheme and a further 5 homes for affordable rent are being built in the school grounds. This project is due to complete during May 2010.

For more information about the above developments please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email [office@albynhousing.org.uk](mailto:office@albynhousing.org.uk)

For more information about LIFT please follow this link: [www.scotland.gov.uk/lift](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/lift)

## Pier Road, Armadale – significant archaeological finds!

Through funding from the Scottish Government and Highland Council in the form of monies secured through council tax, Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association have started work on a development at Pier Road, Armadale which is due for completion in August 2010. This project will provide 5 homes for affordable rent and 6 for low cost home ownership under LIFT, the shared equity initiative.



In the early days of the development archaeologists uncovered a prehistoric burial ground and the discovery has captured the imagination of islanders and heritage groups. Two 'cist graves' (meaning they were short and slab-lined) were uncovered during an initial dig. Further excavations revealed a monument with an arc of three standing stones enclosing another cist, which was covered by a two-tonne capstone.



*Urn and flint tools - some of the archaeological finds at Armadale, Sleat*



In all, a total of seven cists were discovered, with flint tools and urns found inside the graves although skeletal remains had been damaged due to the tide. Experts say these are some of the most significant archeological finds yet made in the Highlands, with two urns dated to the Bronze Age and the cist at the centre considered to be possibly Neolithic, perhaps as early as 4,400 BC.

## Burnside, Plockton



Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association are building 24 units in Burnside, Plockton with completion scheduled for June 2010. There will be 15 homes for affordable rent and 9 for low cost home ownership through LIFT, the shared equity scheme. Photos above show development in progress.

For more information about these developments please contact Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association on 01478 612035 or email [info@lsha.co.uk](mailto:info@lsha.co.uk)

## Heathercroft, Upper Achintore

Through funding from the Scottish Government, Lochaber Housing Association are developing a site in Upper Achintore which will provide 21 flats of varying sizes, all for affordable rent.

The site is situated above Fort William with views over Loch Linnhe to the hills beyond.

Completion is anticipated in August 2010.



For more information about this development please contact Lochaber Housing Association on 01397 702530 or email [info@lochaberhousing.org.uk](mailto:info@lochaberhousing.org.uk)

## Knoydart by Mallaig

The Knoydart Foundation is a community owned organisation working to regenerate the remote Knoydart peninsula, located north of Mallaig. The Foundation has been successful in obtaining Rural Homes for Rent funding from the Scottish Government to deliver 3 new homes for rent in the Knoydart area and will receive grant funding towards the overall cost of developing the homes.

As grant funding for the project is only payable on completion of the units, Highland Council is providing bridging finance from the landbank fund for a period of eight months. The finance will be repaid when the grant is received from the Scottish Government on completion of the new homes, which is anticipated in late 2010.

For more information about this development please contact Angela Williams at the Knoydart Foundation on 01687 462242 or email [angela@knoydart.org](mailto:angela@knoydart.org)

## The Laurels, Kingussie



Albyn Housing Society has redeveloped a former Council owned building in Kingussie, to provide 5 homes for affordable rent close to the centre of the village. The project was completed in December 2009.

This was a high cost scheme which was enabled through grant funding from Highland Council's landbank fund, utilising council tax revenue available from second and holiday homes.

For more information about the above development please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email [office@albynhousing.org.uk](mailto:office@albynhousing.org.uk)

## Bridgemill, Nairn

Work is in progress on the construction of 45 new homes in an attractive riverside location at Bridgemill, Nairn.

Albyn Housing Society is developing 25 flats for affordable rent and 20 flats for low cost home ownership which will be available through LIFT, the shared equity scheme.

Completion is anticipated in July 2010.



## Juniper Drive & Pinewood Place, Tain



Albyn Housing Society have completed a development of 30 new affordable homes in Juniper Drive and Pinewood Place, Tain as part of the Highland Housing Alliance development at Scotsburn Road. Albyn's mixed tenure scheme provides a mix of bungalows, houses and flats of which 6 are for affordable rent and 24 for low cost home ownership through LIFT, the shared equity initiative.

William Rostock, 62, has been living in his new home here since December 2009 and the bungalow was individually designed with his disability in mind. Being a wheelchair user, the key adaptation of William's house is the specially designed kitchen with adjustable height surfaces including the sink unit which, simply by turning a handle, can be moved up or down depending on the user's needs.

William is a retired joiner and lived in a small council house in the nearby Mansfield estate before moving to his new home. He was referred to Albyn through the Highland Housing Register and describes his new home as "completely fantastic". He said: "I absolutely cannot fault this house in any way at all; it has improved my quality of life beyond belief. In my old house I was really limited for space, but now with all this extra room, my carport and my specially adapted kitchen, everything is so much easier."

William is pictured above in his kitchen, with Donald Lockhart, Development Director at Albyn Housing Society. William's successful move to his new home illustrates what can be achieved when priority cases are identified through joint working between the Council and housing associations.

For more information about the above developments please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email [office@albynhousing.org.uk](mailto:office@albynhousing.org.uk)

## **Essich Gardens, Slacknamarnock, Inverness**



The first phase of Cairn Housing Association's development at Essich Gardens, Slacknamarnock was completed in January 2010. It comprises 6 semi-detached houses, 4 x 3bedrooms and 2 x 2bedrooms and all of the homes are for affordable rent. The second phase is anticipated to be completed in November 2010 and will provide an additional 4 homes for rent and 4 for low cost home ownership through LIFT, the shared equity scheme.

## **Myrtle town Park, Woodside of Culloden, Inverness**



The first phase of a scheme at Myrtle town Park in Woodside of Culloden was completed by Cairn Housing Association in April 2010 and provides 26 two-bedroom flats, of which 18 are for affordable rent and 8 for low cost home ownership under the LIFT shared equity scheme.

A further 17 homes are underway in phase 2 of this project.

## **David Munro Close and MacEwan Drive, Inverness**



Cairn Housing Association completed their development in the Fraser Park area of Inverness in March 2010, comprising 6 flats and 2 houses for affordable rent. An official opening day will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

For more information about the above developments in Inverness please phone Cairn Housing Association on 01463 220666 or email [enquiries@cairnha.com](mailto:enquiries@cairnha.com)

## West Heather Road, Inverness

A development of 32 homes at Fairways in Inverness has achieved a prestigious “excellent” rating for sustainability. The Servite Housing Association development, financed by the Scottish Government, has achieved the highest score in Scotland against the current version of the EcoHomes rating system. The rating system considers all areas of sustainability including energy, CO2 performance, land-use, ecology and biodiversity, materials use, health and wellbeing, management, transport, pollution and water use.



The photos above show building in progress, shortly before completion in April 2010.

Part of a healthcare village development, the Servite homes will provide 28 flats and 4 cottages with a particularly high building standard, high energy performance and a communal biomass system to provide heating and hot water. 24 of the homes will be for affordable rent and 8 for low cost home ownership under the shared equity scheme (LIFT).

The housing here is being managed by Cairn Housing Association. For more information about the availability of housing on the above development please telephone Cairn Housing Association on 01463 220666 or email [enquiries@cairnha.com](mailto:enquiries@cairnha.com)

## Anderson Street, Inverness

Regeneration of the Merkinch area of Inverness continues with Albyn Housing Society's scheme in Anderson Street.

The development of 10 new homes was completed in June 2009 and provides 4 flats for affordable rent, with a further 6 for low cost home ownership through the LIFT shared equity scheme.



For more information about the above development please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email [office@albynhousing.org.uk](mailto:office@albynhousing.org.uk)

## South Head, Wick

Pentland Housing Association are about to commence development on the first phase of a site overlooking Wick Bay. The site, which was formerly owned by the Council, has capacity for up to 85 units. Phase 1 will comprise 12 units for rent and 5 for shared equity under the LIFT initiative. In addition phase 1 includes improvements to local infrastructure and will provide 4 serviced house plots which will be available for open market sale. The project has been assisted through Housing Association Grant funding from the Scottish Government and monies secured by the Council under the Vacant and Derelict Land Fund initiative.

For more information on this development please telephone Pentland Housing Association on 01847 892507 or email [pha@pentlandhousing.co.uk](mailto:pha@pentlandhousing.co.uk)

## Kinlochewe



In an area renowned for its geological features, a development in Kinlochewe was completed by Albyn Housing Society in May 2009 comprising 2 two bedroom bungalows, 3 three bedroom houses and 1 house with four bedrooms. All of the homes are for affordable rent.

## Torridon



***Three homes for rent in  
Torridon (pictured shortly  
before completion)***

Torridon is the location of some of Scotland's most magnificent mountains and Albyn Housing Society completed phase two of a development here in June 2009. This phase provides 3 two bedroom bungalows for affordable rent.

For more information about the above developments please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email [office@albynhousing.org.uk](mailto:office@albynhousing.org.uk)

## Council House Building – Good News!

The Scottish Government recently announced that it planned to invest £25million to encourage new council house building and Highland Council successfully submitted a bid for funding of £1.275m to support the construction of 51 houses. As part of the bid £1.020m will be provided from the Council's landbank fund and £1.000m from the Council's Housing Revenue Account as the Council's contribution as well as additional prudential borrowing of £2.570m.

The following sites were identified on which a total of 51 units could be provided. These are either Council owned sites or Highland Housing Alliance sites:-

<b>Location</b>	<b>Units</b>
Caol	8
Dingwall	10
Invergordon	12
Nairn	9
Tain	12



*All of the houses will be comparable to the new energy efficient homes recently developed by the Highland Housing Alliance at Kildary, (pictured left)*

In February 2010 the Scottish Government announced a further round of council house building funds with a further £25million to be made available nationally under the initiative, with the maximum level of subsidy per house increased from £25,000 to £30,000. Following this announcement the Highland Council submitted a bid for funding of £1.65m to support the construction of a further 55 houses. As part of the bid an estimated £1million will be provided from the Council's landbank fund in 2011/12 and £1million from the Council's Housing Revenue Account as the Council's contribution, as well as additional prudential borrowing of £3.280m.

The outcome of this second bid for funding is awaited, with a decision expected in June 2010. The following sites were identified on which a total of 55 units could be provided. Again, these are either Council owned sites or Highland Housing Alliance sites:-

<b>Location</b>	<b>Units</b>
Assynt Road, Inverness	12
Joss Street, Invergordon	12
Rowan House, Fort William	5
Nairn Road, Ardersier	8
Strathpeffer	8
Portree	6
Kingussie	4

An update on the Highland Council's second bid for funding will be provided in our next News Report.

## Update from the Highland Housing Alliance



### **SCOTLAND'S HOUSING EXPO 2010 1-31 August, Milton of Leys, Inverness**

Scotland's Housing Expo, the first of its kind in Scotland, takes place in Inverness at Milton of Leys, from 1-31 August 2010 when members of the public, professionals and everyone who has an interest in housing, new homes and gardens will be able to look around this fantastic project.

The event will showcase the very latest in house design, sustainability and materials fit for a stylish, greener, more affordable future. There will be 52 architect designed homes, built to the highest specification. After the event the houses will be available for affordable rent, low cost sale and open market sale.

If you are interested in house design, architecture, sustainability, interior design, planning, landscape design or simply want the latest ideas or inspiration for your home, then Scotland's Housing Expo is the show for you.

To buy tickets and for more information log on to [www.scotlandshousingexpo.com](http://www.scotlandshousingexpo.com) (tickets can also be purchased at the entrance to the event)

### **New Energy Homes for Golspie**

Highland Housing Alliance has now completed its 16 house development in Golspie. Albyn Housing Society Ltd has purchased 8 of the homes, 6 of which will be available for affordable rent and 2 for low cost home ownership through LIFT, the shared equity initiative. Local reaction to the new houses, which represent the first major housing development for sale in Golspie for some time, has been extremely positive.

The Alliance has 8 two and three bedroom homes for sale starting from £130,000. Marketing material and viewings are now available.

Please call 01463 251132 and speak to Johanna to book a viewing.



### **New Supply Shared Equity Scheme, Kildary**

The Alliance has been successful in its bid to be part of the Scottish Government's trial of the New Supply Shared Equity Scheme with developers. Under the scheme, participating developers will take equity stakes jointly with the Scottish Government in unsold or partially built private stock. Buyers will pay 60-80 per cent of the purchase price with the remainder of the cost split equally between the Scottish Government and the developer. When the owner decides to sell their home, the Government and developer will receive the value at the time of sale of the percentage equity stake funded. Six properties will be available through the New Supply Shared Equity at Kildary.

For more information please contact Johanna Moffat on 01463 251132 or email [johanna.moffat@highlandhousingalliance.com](mailto:johanna.moffat@highlandhousingalliance.com)

# LAND WANTED !

**Do you own land that is zoned for housing, or that you think will be suitable for housing? (Minimum 4 houses).**

**If so, please contact:-**

**Allan Maguire, Head of Housing Development & Estates  
Housing and Property Services  
The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness IV3 5NX**

**Tel: 01463 702528**

**Email: [allan.maguire@highland.gov.uk](mailto:allan.maguire@highland.gov.uk)**

**Alternatively, contact:-**

**Susan Torrance, Chief Executive  
Highland Housing Alliance  
Fairways Business Centre  
Castle Heather  
Inverness IV2 6AA**

**Tel: 01463 251131**

**Email: [susan.torrance@highlandhousingalliance.com](mailto:susan.torrance@highlandhousingalliance.com)**

***For further information about the Highland Housing Alliance, please see their website [www.highlandhousingalliance.com](http://www.highlandhousingalliance.com) The Alliance has also been featured in previous issues of Development Matters.***

***Have you any comments or questions to be covered in future issues or at the Area Housing Development Forums?***

***If so, please write to the Housing Development team, Housing and Property Services, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX or send an email to Heather Bebbington at [heather.bebbington@highland.gov.uk](mailto:heather.bebbington@highland.gov.uk) (Tel: 01463 702831)***