

Development Matters

Issue 11

November 2009

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.

Opportunity Knocks at Knocknagael !

Affordable housing opportunities in Inverness were given a boost when the first phase of a development at Knocknagael, Slackbuie was officially opened in July 2009. The recently completed housing has been built by Cairn Housing Association with the aid of Scottish Government funding and has been delivered through the Highland Council's affordable housing planning policy. Work has now started on a second phase of the development to provide a further 28 new homes in 2010.

Alex Neil, Scotland's Minister for Housing and Communities, joined representatives of both Cairn Housing Association and Albyn Housing Society at the official opening, as well as new tenant Ashleigh Rae. During his visit the minister was also given a guided tour of other properties owned by the housing associations.



New tenant Ashleigh Rae is pictured (left) with Alex Neil, Scotland's Minister for Housing and Communities. The new housing at Knocknagael, Slackbuie is pictured above.

Mr Neil emphasised the great boost for the local economy and jobs from the Slackbuie development which took just over a year to build and comprises a range of one and two bedroom flats, and two and three bedroom houses. "This superb new development is great news for families looking for affordable rented housing and low cost home ownership" said Mr Neil.

When completed, this project will provide 28 homes for affordable rent and 12 for low cost home ownership through LIFT, the shared equity scheme ('Low-cost Initiative for First-Time Buyers').

For more information about this development please phone Cairn Housing Association on 01463 220666 or email enquiries@cairnha.com

More Housing Development News from around the Highlands

Arisaig

Lochaber Housing Association has developed a site in Arisaig which provides 16 houses for affordable rent and 4 for low cost home ownership under the LIFT shared equity initiative. In addition, 2 plots have been provided for allocation to eligible RHOG (Rural Home Ownership Grant) applicants. More details about the RHOG scheme are given below. The site in Arisaig is located on the west of the village, on a hillside overlooking Loch nan Ceall, with views of the Rhu peninsular and the Isles of Eigg and Muck. The development is close to village amenities with the houses lying between the shop and the primary school.



Funding from the Scottish Government and Highland Council towards the high costs of this scheme has enabled the development to go ahead. [For more information about the Arisaig development please contact Lochaber Housing Association on 01397 702530 or email \[info@lochaberhousing.org.uk\]\(mailto:info@lochaberhousing.org.uk\)](#) .

For more information about LIFT please follow this link: www.scotland.gov.uk/lift

Rural Home Ownership Grants (RHOG)

The RHOG scheme aims to allow people in rural areas who have low incomes and are first time buyers to build or purchase their own homes. The grant is means tested and takes savings and income into account. The grant pays part of the costs involved in helping either to acquire a site and build a property, or acquire an existing property for use as the sole residence.

RHOGs are available throughout the Highlands, except in the city of Inverness. The amount of grant payable will normally be the minimum necessary to enable a house to be built or bought after income and savings are taken into account. The grant will not normally exceed 30% of the total costs and if an individual sells their property within 10 years the grant has to be repaid.

RHOG agents in the Highlands who can be contacted for more information:

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association (for Skye & Lochalsh)	01478 612035
Lochaber Housing Association (for Lochaber)	01397 702530
Pentland Housing Association (for Caithness)	01847 892507
Albyn Housing Society (for elsewhere in the Highlands)	01349 852978

Further information regarding RHOGs and potential sites is also available from the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT) who can be phoned on 01463 233549 or emailed at info@hscht.co.uk . The Trust also has information on its website www.hscht.co.uk

Montrose Road, Auldearn

Albyn Housing Society have started work on Phase 2 of their scheme at Montrose Road, Auldearn, with the aid of funding from Highland Council and the Scottish Government.

This development will provide 10 semi-detached bungalows for affordable rent and completion is scheduled for early Spring 2010.



Lochloy, Nairn



The photo here shows work in progress at Lochloy, Nairn where Albyn Housing Society are developing a mixed tenure scheme which should be completed in December 2009.

In all there will be 15 homes available for affordable rent and 10 for low cost home ownership through the LIFT shared equity scheme.

Bridgemill, Nairn

There will be a further affordable housing boost for Nairn on completion of Albyn Housing Society's development at Bridgemill. They are building 45 new homes here of which 25 will be for affordable rent and 20 for low cost home ownership under the LIFT shared equity scheme. The homes should be ready for occupation in April/May 2010.

Braes of Balnagowan, Nethybridge

Albyn Housing Society have recently completed 4 new homes at Braes of Balnagowan, Nethybridge as part of the LIFT new supply shared equity programme.

The development was designed to blend with the other private homes on the site and the houses have the benefit of solar hot water systems.

The quality of the project was given a recent seal of approval when it was awarded a prestigious NHBC Quality Award at their national awards event.



For more information about the above developments please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email office@albynhousing.org.uk

Dalfaber Drive, Aviemore



The photos above show development in progress at Cairn Housing Association's scheme at Dalfaber Drive, Aviemore. On completion in Spring 2010, there will be 17 units for affordable rent and 8 for affordable home ownership under the shared equity scheme (LIFT).

North Kessock

Cairn Housing Association plan to start on site at North Kessock before the end of 2009 on a development of 12 units for affordable rent and 4 for low cost home ownership under LIFT, the shared equity initiative. Funding from the Scottish Government and Highland Council has enabled this project to go ahead, with completion anticipated in December 2010.

For more information about the developments in Aviemore and North Kessock please phone Cairn Housing Association on 01463 220666 or email enquiries@cairnha.com

Home Farm, Portree



A further 77 homes will be completed in Phases 4 and 5 of Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association's development at Home Farm, Portree. 52 units are for affordable rent, with 25 available for low cost home ownership under the shared equity initiative (LIFT). The photos above show some of the 23 homes that were completed in August and September 2009. A further 23 properties will be ready before the end of 2009, with the remaining units due to be completed by the Summer of 2010.

As reported in our previous reports, Home Farm in Portree is a large mixed tenure development of over 200 new homes which Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association is developing. Portree has been identified as one of the most housing stressed areas in the Highlands and this scheme will provide a total of 169 new affordable homes.

For more information about this development please contact Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association on 01478 612035 or email info@lsha.co.uk

Burnside, Plockton

Work has started on 24 units to be developed 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.



Pier Road, Armadale

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

For more information about the above developments please contact Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association on 01478 612035 or email info@lsha.co.uk

Station View, Muir of Ord



A mixed tenure development at Station View, Muir of Ord was completed by Albyn Housing Society in June 2009. The project consists of 2 bungalows and 4 houses for affordable rent and 6 houses available for low cost home ownership under the LIFT shared equity scheme. New tenants are pictured left, outside their new home at Station View.

Photo courtesy of Tom Baker www.scotphot.com/index.html

Muldearg Place, Fearn

A development of 7 homes for affordable rent was completed in September 2009 by Albyn Housing Society at Muldearg Place in Fearn.

The project, which was enabled through funding from the Scottish Government, has provided 4 cottage flats, 2 semi-detached houses and 1 detached house. They are pictured here shortly before completion.



For more information about the developments in Muir of Ord and Fearn please telephone Albyn Housing Society on 01349 852978 or email office@albynhousing.org.uk

Slacknamarnock, Inverness

Work is underway on the first phase of a development at Slacknamarnock in Inverness which will provide 6 units for affordable rent through Cairn Housing Association. Completion of this phase is due in February 2010. The second phase will provide an additional 4 homes for rent and 4 for low cost home ownership through LIFT, the shared equity scheme.



Market Street, Ullapool



New housing for affordable rent at Market Street, Ullapool



We have previously reported that Highland Council assembled a site in Market Street, Ullapool through purchase of the disused medical centre and identification of other buildings in the Council's ownership. Detailed design works produced a proposal that the site be used to accommodate 10 flats, whilst retaining a building for community use. The community building relates well to the existing village hall and swimming pool and Cairn Housing Association completed the flats for affordable rent in August 2009.

Bridgend, Dingwall

Cairn Housing Association have just completed the second phase of a 32 house development at Bridgend on the outskirts of Dingwall. The six flats completed in phase 2 are available for affordable rent, adding to the 4 units for rent and 3 for low cost home ownership provided in the first phase. The remaining houses have been developed for private sale by a local builder.

For more information about these developments please telephone Cairn Housing Association on 01463 220666 or email enquiries@cairnha.com

Forward Funding

The Council holds a Landbank Fund which is used to provide loans and grants to partner organisations, enabling strategic sites to be secured or prepared for development of housing. The Landbank Fund is a revolving facility with loans repaid as land and property is resold or developed. The Fund can also be used to provide grant assistance.

During 2008/09 forward funding of £4,630,000 was provided to housing associations throughout the Highlands, enabling affordable housing projects to be progressed.

A further number of priority affordable housing projects have now been discussed with the Scottish Government and housing associations on the basis that the Highland Council's Landbank fund could provide short term funding with monies being repaid from the Government's 2010/2011 investment programme, or from slippage within the 2009/10 programme.

Forward funding will enable starts on site for the proposed affordable housing projects listed below:-

Development	Units	£
Conon Bridge, Sellar Place	25	140,000
Dingwall, Old Evanton Road	12	340,000
Dingwall, Jubilee	5	100,000
Gospie, Drummuie	20	660,000
Grantown, Grant Arms	5	150,000
Kiltarlity, Sawmill	13	260,000
North Kessock, phase 1	16	375,000
Inverness, Balloch	5	100,000
Inverness, Nairnside & Easter Muckovie	8	160,000
Kyleakin Youth Hostel	10	124,059
Raasay	6	104,826
Balmacara, Former Dairy	8	161,634
Kyle, Former Medical Centre	5	166,933
Total	138	£2,842,452

The Council is also considering further forward funding provision of £1,725,000 for an additional 7 housing projects throughout the Highlands and more details will be included in future news reports.

Update from the Highland Housing Alliance

New houses underway for Wick



Highland Housing Alliance has let the contract for the next phase of houses in Lower Pulteneytown, Wick.

Called Grey Coast Buildings, 9 of the 11 apartments and houses will be for sale, with 3 of them being specifically targeted to first time buyers for cost home ownership through the LIFT shared equity scheme via Pentland Housing Association. 2 of the homes will be available for affordable rent through the housing association.

As the project will significantly regenerate a major part of Lower Pulteneytown, it is being supported by the Highland Council's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and also by the Caithness Area Regeneration Scheme to assist with the conservation elements of these historic buildings.

The houses will be available for sale next year and if you are interested in reserving a property in this historic part of Wick, please contact us to be put on the mailing list.

New Energy Homes for Golspie

Highland Housing Alliance and Albyn Housing Society have commenced building 22 New Energy Homes at Drummuie, Golspie. The houses will have spectacular views over the Moray Firth, and incorporate the award winning energy saving insulation and heating systems used at Kildary. These features produce homes which are designed to cut down energy consumption and carbon emissions, reducing maintenance and running costs.

The Alliance will have for sale 8 two and three bedroom properties with prices starting from £130,000. Marketing material will be available shortly, but if anyone wishes to look around our show house at Kildary, we can let them see what the Golspie houses will look like.



The New Energy Homes at Golspie will be similar to the homes at Kildary (left)

If you want an information pack about the new homes in Wick or Golspie, or to be added to the Alliance's mailing list, please contact Johanna Moffat on 01463 251132 or email 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

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

For further information about the Highland Housing Alliance, please see their website 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 (Tel: 01463 702831)