

Garden Competition

The Association is holding its annual **Garden Competition** which is open to all tenants and sharing owners. A **£50 Garden Centre voucher** will be given for the best garden, with a runner-up prize of a **£25 voucher**. Another **£25 Garden Centre voucher** will be given as a special award for work that has been done to benefit the community rather than individuals, such as keeping an area of communal ground neat and tidy, creating a wildlife garden, etc.

Please write, e-mail us (info@LSHA.co.uk) or call **01478 612035** if you would like to enter your garden or your neighbour's garden in the competition.

Entries should be made by Friday 17th June 2011.

Judging will take place in **July 2011.**

Council Tax Payments

Highland householders are being advised by **The Highland Council** of **new and extended ways of paying their council tax, rent and other council bills**. The new payment system takes effect from **1st April**.

From 1st April, the public will **not be able to pay by cash or cheque at a Council Service Point**, although they will continue to be able to pay by debit or credit card.

It will be possible to pay by cash or cheque at any **Post Office** and more than 300 **PayPoints** and **Payzones** throughout the Highlands.

New Committee Members Required

The Association is governed by a voluntary **Management Committee** which is responsible for agreeing our policies and plans and overseeing the day to day work of the staff.

The Committee meets once a month (in **Portree** and **Broadford** alternately) and meetings generally last no more than two hours. Whilst we cannot pay Committee members, they can claim all reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for attending meetings, including travel expenses, childcare costs, etc.

Committee members come from a wide variety of backgrounds and, whilst they do not need to have any particular qualifications, an interest in housing and a desire to make a difference to people's lives are essential.

If you would like to have an informal chat about what Committee membership involves, contact **Lachie MacDonald** on **01478 612035**, or ask for a **Committee Membership Information Pack** to be sent to you.



Morrison House, Bayfield, Portree,
Isle of Skye, IV51 9EW
Tel: 01478 612035
Fax: 01478 613377
e-mail: info@LSHA.co.uk
web: <http://www.LSHA.co.uk>

If you would like to receive this document in another format or language, please contact us on 01478 612035 or e-mail: info@LSHA.co.uk and we will forward a copy to you.

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association

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New Dornie Development Completed

We have completed **8 new rented properties** for the Association and a **Day Centre** in **Dornie**, built on behalf of **The Highland Council**. The rented properties have been designed to cater for the special needs of elderly tenants.

The development will be known as **Aitemore Road, Dornie**.



Dornie Day Care Centre



Aitemore Road



Covered Walkway links to the Day Care Centre

The Association has **12 flats for sale** under the **Shared Equity Scheme** at **Home Farm, Portree**.

These properties come highly specified with high levels of insulation, Scandinavian windows and doors and highly efficient central heating systems. As an existing tenant, you may be eligible to purchase a **51% stake**, which can cost as little as **£65,535**.

If you would like to know more about the Shared Equity scheme or would like to view a property, either for yourself or someone you know, please contact **John Lamont, Development Officer**, on **01478 612035** for further details.

Rural Home Ownership Grants

We have been advised by the **Scottish Government** that there will be **no funding available** from them for the **Rural Home Ownership Grant (RHOG)** in future years and **no new applications** will be considered by them **with immediate effect**.

We have written individually to everyone who had previously been in contact with us regarding

these Grants to advise them of the position, but, if anyone requires further information on this matter, please contact **John Lamont**, our **Development Officer**, on **01478 612035**.

If other sources of funding are found, or if the Scottish Government re-introduces the Grant in the future, we will make this information available at the earliest possible opportunity.

Tenant Participation Information Day

Would you like to **have your say** about the Housing services you receive? And **be listened to??** Find out how **you** can improve the area you live in.

Two **Tenant Participation Information Days** - one in **Kyle** on **15th March** in the **Kyle Hotel**, and the other in **Portree** on **6th April** in **Tigh na Sgìre** have been arranged jointly by **The Highland Council** and the Association. Representatives from **The Highland Council Income Maximisation** team, the **Waste Aware** team, **Lochalsh & Skye Energy Advice Service** and **Handyperson Services** will be present to offer advice and to listen to your ideas.

A poster for the Portree event is enclosed with this newsletter, but if you would like more information, contact **Maureen Taylor, Housing Services Officer**, on **01478 612035**.

If you would like to attend but need help with transport, please contact **Mandy Macleman, Highland Council Tenant Participation Officer** on **01349 868471** or email **mandy.macleman@highland.gov.uk**.

Incentive for Tenants to Downsize

Tenants who occupy properties with more bedrooms than they need can be offered an incentive to **move to a smaller home** that better meets their needs.

The scheme will be available in **early 2011** to tenants of all 6 Highland Housing Register Landlords, namely:-

Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association
The Highland Council
Lochaber Housing Association

Albyn Housing Society
Cairn Housing Association
Pentland Housing Association

The scheme can provide a mix of financial and practical help to eligible tenants who want to move and **up to a total of £1,500 can be paid** if a tenant moves to a property which is two bedrooms smaller. Applicants will be assessed according to the demand and need for the property type, size and location of their current home.

The scheme will run for an **initial six-month period**, funded to a maximum of £75,000.

If you would like further information regarding the scheme, please **contact our Housing Services** staff on **01478 612035**.



SAVE, BORROW, PLAN FOR TOMORROW Savings & Loans

Hi-Scot Credit Union, the Credit Union for the Highlands & Islands

A **“Not for Profit” Community Co-operative** offering **affordable flexible Credit** and an **excellent return on Savings**

Available **now** to the people of Skye & Lochalsh

To find out how you can join contact:

Website: **www.hi-scot.com**
Telephone: **01851 701865**
Email: **info@hi-scot.com**

or visit

The Highland Council Service Points or **Sleat Community Trust Filling Station** in **Ardvasar**

Nature Trail link to Home Farm development

The Association has completed a footpath that leads through the **Nature Trail** from **Manse Lane in Portree** to the **Home Farm** development.

The footpath is at the side of the second bridge over the river in the Nature Trail, and it comes out below **Rathad an Fheoir**.



Please note that you **should not use household salt** to **de-ice concrete pathways or steps**. The salt will permanently damage the surface of the concrete.



Rock salt or **grit**, which is available from most hardware stores, should be used instead.

Home Farm Allotments

The Association is in the process of gifting land at Home Farm to the **Portree Area Community Trust** for community use, developing the site over a number of years for the benefit of local residents. The site lies to the southern end of the housing development. Through future consultation with the local community, the Trust will produce a **Development Brief** for the site. The Trust has already been made aware of local demand for **allotments**, which should be produced as the first phase of a wider project.

A **land suitability study** has confirmed that the proposed site, with a degree of work, will produce suitable allotment land. Subject to planning permission and carrying out essential site preparation work, the allotments could be **available to rent in 2 to 3 years** time. The Trust has set up a **sub-committee** which includes **tenants** as members of the group.

Work is ongoing to produce an **allotment project plan** in order to apply for funding. An **open meeting** will be held soon, and more detail on the proposed allotments will be provided. This will also give residents the chance to find out more, register their interest and have questions answered. The meeting will also allow a wider discussion on the future use of the rest of the site.

Details of the public event will be circulated to residents. In the meantime, if you would like to become involved with the group, or register your interest in renting an allotment in the future, please send an email to **info@portree.org** or contact **John Lamont, Development Officer**, on **01478 612035**.

