



Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026

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**Lochalsh  
& Skye  
Housing  
Association**



# New Houses on Raasay<sub>LSHA</sub>



**“My thanks go out to all who have worked so hard to see this project become a reality.”**

We're delighted to announce the completion of Cottages Park, delivering six high-quality new homes for affordable rent to local residents on Raasay. This development marks another important step in our long-term commitment to providing sustainable, community-focused housing on the island. Designed to meet a range of local housing needs, the homes also support biodiversity, with features such as bird boxes and insect hotels thoughtfully integrated into the build.

This project represents the culmination of seven years of sustained investment in Raasay, working closely with the community development trust.

Kate Forbes MSP, who attended the event, welcomed the progress and highlighted the importance of these homes for local people. The development was delivered by James MacQueen Builders, with thanks to the wider team for their hard work, commitment and professionalism throughout.

# Margaret Ferguson

## Housed at our new development on Raasay

**Most importantly, we love to hear what a new house means to our tenants.**

Margaret lived in her privately owned two-bedroom home on Raasay for over 50 years, having moved there in 1973 while working as the island's nurse for more than 35 years. In recent years, following the loss of her husband, she found the property increasingly difficult to manage. The house lacked insulation and central heating, making it expensive to keep warm, and her health, mobility and balance issues meant the stairs and access to the property became unsafe, despite some adaptations.

Recognising her home was no longer suitable, Margaret applied for rehousing and has since moved into an accessible bungalow within our new Raasay development. Margaret has been housed in an accessible bungalow meaning she has all living facilities on the ground floor, with an easily controlled heating system. Margaret now feels safe, warm and comfortable in her new home, and can continue to live independently with confidence.

Margaret says the minute she entered the house she knew at once it was for her, saying it was just what she needed, and to be lucky enough to be given a fabulous new property is amazing. Margaret looks forward to spending many years enjoying her new home.



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# Rent Arrears Visits

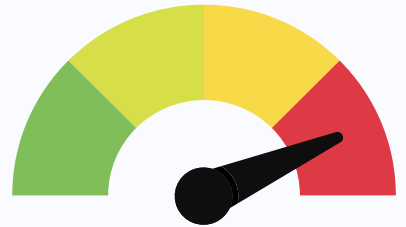
These visits are simply a friendly way for us to check in, keep communication open, and make sure you know what support is available. We understand that circumstances can change and sometimes people need a bit of help. If you're finding it difficult to keep up with your rent payments, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us by emailing [rent@lsha.co.uk](mailto:rent@lsha.co.uk) or calling the office on **01478 612035**, option 2. Our team is here to listen and work with you to find the right support.



LSHA

# Universal Credit - Update Your Housing Costs This April

**From 1 April 2026, anyone receiving Universal Credit will need to report their new housing costs to the DWP.**



**You will receive a letter from us before this date confirming your new monthly rent and service charge – please keep this safe, as you'll need the figures when updating your claim.**

**In April, a To Do called "Confirm your housing costs" will appear in your UC online account. When it does, please complete it promptly and make sure you:**

- Enter your new monthly rent exactly as shown in your letter
- Include your monthly service charge (even if it is £0.00)
- Use the exact figures – avoid rounding up or down

You cannot report the change before this To Do appears – please wait until it shows in your account.

Reporting on time is important. If Universal Credit calculates your payment using your previous rent figure, you will be responsible for paying any shortfall.

No online account, or having difficulty accessing one? Call the Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644, and they can help you report the change by phone

If you have any questions about your rent figures, our Rent Team is here to help: 01478 612035 – Option 2 Rent@lsha.co.uk

## Spring Clean Time!

If you're having a spring clear-out and need to get rid of larger household items, you can arrange a bulky uplift through Highland Council. Please remember that items shouldn't be left outside your property or in communal areas, as this can create hazards and attract additional rubbish. Instead, keep items inside your home until your arranged collection date. Using the bulky uplift scheme is a simple way to keep our communities tidy and looking their best this spring. Prices are £29 for up to three items or £58 for up to six items.

Call **01349 886603** for more information.

## Keep Shared Areas Clear

Please help to keep your shared areas safe by not leaving anything in these spaces. Staircases and corridors are the routes for fire fighters to get in as well as for you and your neighbours to get out. Items (like those pictured below) that are left in stairwells or corridors could fuel a fire or become serious obstacles, especially if the area is smoke-filled or dark.





# Important Fire Door Information

Fire doors play an important role in keeping everyone safe by helping to slow the spread of fire and toxic smoke within a building. A fire door includes the door itself, the frame, and all its fittings such as locks, hinges and closers – all designed to resist fire for a set period of time. Please help keep these doors working properly by not wedging them open or interfering with their fittings.

## Never prop, wedge or tie open a fire door

- Fire doors cannot stop the spread of fire if they are propped, wedged or tied open.
- Keep fire doors **shut at all times** unless they are fitted with an approved 'fire door retainer'.
- A fire door retainer (pictured below) will hold fire doors open, automatically closing them when the fire alarm sounds.



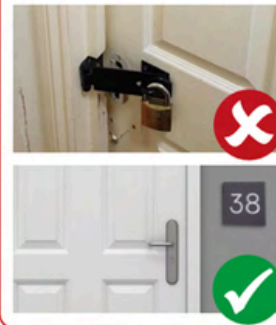
## Never tamper with the fire door closer

- Fire doors **have to** be fitted with a working fire door **closer** so it automatically closes after use.
- If the fire door was left open, fire and smoke would spread quickly through the building.
- Fire doors can be heavy to operate but never be tempted to tamper with the closer - it could save your life.



## Never alter the fire doors in any way

- If any changes are made to the fire door after it is fitted, it may not be able to stop the spread of fire and smoke.
- Never screw or drill into a fire door.
- Don't add letterboxes, handles, locks or door viewers without consulting your Responsible Person.



# Estate Inspections



Throughout the year, we will be carrying out regular Estate Inspections to check the condition of building exteriors, communal areas, car parks, gardens, fences, gates, and grassed areas. Our staff will always carry ID and will not enter private gardens without permission, either by arranging this in advance or by knocking at your door. If you ever have any concerns, please feel free to call the office on 01478 612034. These visits help us keep our communities looking their best for everyone!

# Parking Spaces and Storage of Unroadworthy Vehicles

We've noticed an increase in unroadworthy or unused vehicles and boats being stored in parking spaces. As parking is often limited, these spaces should only be used for licensed and insured vehicles. Storing unroadworthy vehicles, boats, caravans or trailers without written permission is a breach of your tenancy agreement and can cause inconvenience to neighbours.

Please also remember that vehicle repairs should not be carried out in an anti-social way around your home or within parking areas. Thank you for helping keep parking available and our neighbourhoods pleasant for everyone



**IMPORTANT**

**DO YOU HAVE AN RTS ELECTRICITY METER?**

77768 kWh  
43572

Radio Teleswitch

The radio signal that controls RTS electricity has begun the switch off phase-out.

Act now, book an appointment for a replacement meter.

The image shows a dark blue background with an orange banner at the top. On the right, there is a digital meter display showing '77768 kWh' and '43572'. Below the banner, there is a smaller image of a 'Radio Teleswitch' device. To the right of this device, there is a text box with a white background and orange border containing the text: 'The radio signal that controls RTS electricity has begun the switch off phase-out. Act now, book an appointment for a replacement meter.'

## You might have a RTS meter if:

- Your home has a separate switch box near your meter with a Radio Teleswitch label on it.
- Your home is heated using electricity or storage heaters.
- There is no gas supply to your area.
- You get cheaper energy at different times of day.

**Visit the Ofgem website for more information: [www.ofgem.gov.uk/rts](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/rts)**



Your support keeps our homes safe and comfortable!

The image shows a stylized illustration of a woman with dark hair, wearing an orange cardigan over a dark top. She is pointing her right index finger upwards. To her right, a blue speech bubble contains the text: 'Your support keeps our homes safe and comfortable!'.

# LSHA Housing for Key Workers

- **Emergency services**
- **NHS**
- **Charities and social enterprises providing publicly supported care to vulnerable persons or groups with particular needs**
- **Contractors who undertake development work for LSHA to ensure the supply of more housing in the area**
- **or other services deemed compatible with the Association's purpose.**



We currently have 14 properties leased to the NHS Highland for employees, seven to the Highland Council for temporary homeless accommodation, three to Compass who are due to start working on our Home Farm new build development soon, two to Police Scotland and one to Rosshire Women's Aid. This is a total of 27 (around 3% of all our social housing properties). There are of course tenants who are also key workers employed by these organisations, who have not been allocated through a lease and have been given tenancies through their individual Highland Housing Register (HHR) process. However, we cannot consider housing allocations to all applicants who are key workers through the Highland Housing Register, as some people are not eligible for social housing.

We are pleased that we are in a position to help support local services and in turn, this contributes positively to the local economy, vital amenities, safety and wellbeing of the community.

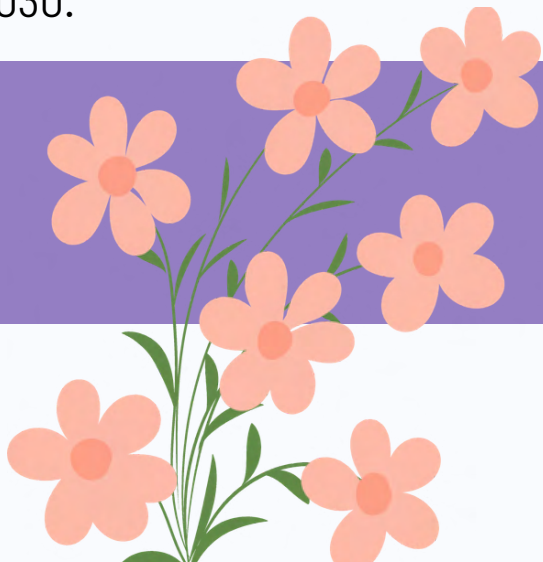


LSHA

# HandyPersons Digital switchover

The Handyperson Services were tasked to switch all analogue Telecare units and replace them with the new digital units. We currently have between 250 and 300 units throughout the Skye & Lochalsh area. We were given the go ahead at the end of August and were set a deadline for completion of 31<sup>st</sup> December.

This was achieved with all the new digital units installed, tested and linked to all existing sensors. There were around 10 clients who do not currently receive mobile phone signals and therefore could not be switched and they will continue to receive a guarantee of an analogue phone service until the year 2030.





LSHA

# New Sunflower Fund for Stroke Survivors in Skye and Raasay



Thanks to financial assistance from both the Budhmoir Fund administered by Skye Older People's Welfare Committee and Muirhall Energy, Skye Stroke Friends (SSF) have been able to launch the Sunflower Fund to help stroke survivors in Skye and Raasay have access to vital small aids.

If you have survived a stroke and are adjusting to what can be significant life changes, sometimes it's the little things that can make a big difference. Small items such as dressing aids, grabbers, adapted cups, multipurpose stability mats, physio weights, wrist supports, and exercise bands can be invaluable.

The Sunflower Fund managed by Skye Stroke Friends in partnership with NHS Highland Allied Health Professionals will enable all stroke survivors living on Skye and Raasay to purchase small items of equipment to aid recovery or independence. You do not need to be a member of Skye Stroke Friends or to attend their meetings to be eligible to apply.

## How To Apply?

**See the next page for information on how to apply.**



# How To Apply LSHA

## Open to Stroke Survivors in Skye and Raasay

- Contact one of your local Allied Health Professionals (e.g. Physio, Speech and Language or Occupational Therapist). They will assess you and complete a request form for the purchase of a piece(s) of small equipment appropriate to your needs.
- The appointed SSF Trustee Sub-Group will review application requests
- once applications are approved, the items are purchased and delivered directly to you or an appropriate alternative address.

## Skye Stroke Friends

Skye Stroke Friends run weekly, peer group meetings in Skeabost Memorial Hall. They deliver rehabilitation activities, providing motivational and practical support to people with lived experience of a stroke. The group aims to improve physical and mental well-being by supporting members to become more socially and physically active.

They meet every Wednesday 1-3pm at Skeabost Memorial Hall for a friendly get together with refreshments, roundup of relevant discussions, cognitive recovery activities, games and often a guest speaker.

Skye Stroke Friends are grateful for the financial assistance from the Budhmor Fund and Muirhall Energy which helps with venue hire costs at Skeabost Memorial Hall.

**Email [skystrokefriends@gmail.com](mailto:skystrokefriends@gmail.com)**

# Highland hub | WithYou

**WithYou anywhere**

## Alcohol and drug support for Highland

We provide free and confidential services, without judgement, to people facing challenges with drugs and alcohol. If you have questions, need advice, or just want to talk, we're WithYou.

[Get support now](#)



Designed to make it easy for people anywhere in Highland to get information, we can connect with you by phone, video or webchat. This online service is available to anyone living in Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey, and Skye and Lochalsh.

We can also provide advice for people who are worried about a loved one's alcohol or drug use.



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