

December 2018

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## New Developments

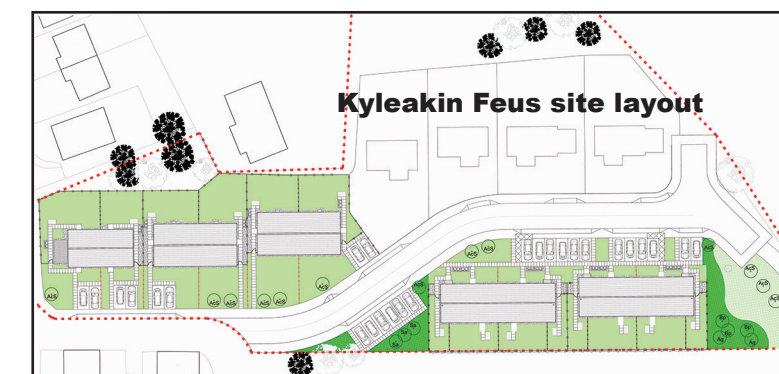
We are currently on site at **Main Street, Kyle**, with 13 flats for affordable rent with retail and office space on the ground floor. This development is due to complete in early summer 2019. The former **Hydro site** in **Kyle** has received planning consent for 5 flats for affordable rent with a retail unit on the ground floor. It is anticipated that this development will start on site in early 2019.



Main Street, Kyle of Lochalsh

We are also building 14 houses and flats at **Kyleakin Feus** which are scheduled to complete in Autumn 2019.

In **Portree**, one contract for two sites has been awarded and is due to commence on site prior to Christmas 2018 and complete in early 2020.



The sites at **Struan Road** comprise 12 flats adjacent to West Highland College and 16 flats at **Northview**. All 28 flats are for affordable rent.

In addition, we aim to be on site at the former **Rapson's bus garage** site behind Tigh na Sgìre in January 2019 with 17 flats for affordable rent, which are scheduled to complete a year later in February 2020.

Other projects due to commence during 2019 (subject to planning consent and tender approval) are:-

Location	Units	Tenure
Uig	4 houses	Affordable rent
Staffin	6 houses (2 for LSHA)	Affordable rent
Woodpark (Portree)	15 houses and flats	Affordable rent for The Highland Council
Raasay	4 houses	Affordable rent
Staffin Road, Portree	3 houses (2 for LSHA)	Shared Equity
Glenelg	4 houses	Affordable rent
Armada, Sleat	15 houses	Affordable rent

## Your Feedback

Every year we consult with our tenants on our **Rent Setting Policy** (please see page 2). We would appreciate it if you could let us know how you would like us to consult with you in future, for example, through **Facebook**, via our **web page**, at organised **public meetings** or meetings of our **Tenants' Voice** participation group.

You can phone us on **01478 612035**, send an email to **info@LSHA.co.uk** or fill in the **online contact form** on our website **www.LSHA.co.uk**. Your feedback would be very much appreciated.

## Management Committee Members

If you have an interest in **housing** and the **welfare of tenants**, we would like to invite you to consider becoming a Management Committee member. This is a **voluntary** and **unpaid** position, but all reasonable out of pocket expenses are paid.

An **Application Pack** can be obtained by phoning **01478 612035** or e-mailing **info@LSHA.co.uk**.



## Avoid Burst Pipes

If you are going away during the winter months and you turn off your heating, remember to **drain down your water** to avoid burst pipes. Otherwise, **leave the heating on low** when you are away and get a friend or neighbour to check the property regularly if possible. Tenants who are going to be absent for a long period from their properties should contact us to let us know.



## Help us keep in touch ...

It would be very helpful if you could let us know your current contact details, especially mobile phone numbers.

We will ask you to confirm your details if you phone in to the office, but we would appreciate it if you could phone us on **01478 612035**, send an email to **Info@LSHA.co.uk** or fill in the online contact form on our website **www.LSHA.co.uk**. Thank you!



## Christmas and New Year Holiday Dates

The Association will be closed on **Monday 24th, Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th December 2018** and

**Monday 31st December, Tuesday 1st and Wednesday 2nd January 2019**

The Contact phone number for

**Out of Hours Emergency Repairs is 01478 612035**



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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](mailto:info@LSHA.co.uk) and we will forward a copy to you.

**Lochalsh & Skye Housing Association**





## Rent Setting Policy Consultation 2019/2020

The Association is required to regularly review its rents and service charges. This is your opportunity to **comment on our proposals for the charges that will apply from 1st April 2019.**

### What does your rent pay for?

All rental income received by the Association is set aside to pay for the cost of the services we provide to tenants.

### Included within these costs are:-

- The management of our housing stock, including items like staff costs, insurance premiums and office expenses.
- Day-to-day repairs, e.g. faulty heating systems, electrical problems, burst pipes, etc.
- Cyclical Maintenance which includes our external painting and ground maintenance programmes.
- Planned Maintenance involving installing replacement kitchens, bathrooms, doors, windows and heating systems.
- Loan charges on the money we borrow to construct our properties.

### How do our rents compare to other similar landlords?

As part of our Policy, we need to ensure that our rents are comparable to the rents charged by similar social landlords in Scotland and we have consistently managed to achieve this. A comparison of our rents and those of the other main housing providers in the Highlands and Islands area is shown below.

Weekly Rents	2 Apt	3 Apt	4 Apt	5 Apt
<b>Scottish Average</b>	<b>£73.33</b>	<b>£74.94</b>	<b>£81.37</b>	<b>£90.39</b>
<b>Albyn Housing Society</b>	<b>£71.18</b>	<b>£80.56</b>	<b>£88.65</b>	<b>£99.00</b>
<b>Hjaltland Housing Association</b>	<b>£79.04</b>	<b>£87.33</b>	<b>£91.21</b>	<b>£102.89</b>
<b>Lochaber Housing Association</b>	<b>£76.59</b>	<b>£82.77</b>	<b>£90.75</b>	<b>£96.43</b>
<b>Lochalsh &amp; Skye Housing Association</b>	<b>£68.00</b>	<b>£74.00</b>	<b>£81.65</b>	<b>£86.67</b>
<b>Orkney Housing Association</b>	<b>£74.22</b>	<b>£81.17</b>	<b>£87.41</b>	<b>£95.32</b>
<b>Pentland Housing Association</b>	<b>£57.55</b>	<b>£66.91</b>	<b>£83.29</b>	<b>£95.46</b>
<b>Osprey Housing Moray</b>	<b>£68.90</b>	<b>£82.31</b>	<b>£89.74</b>	<b>£101.50</b>
<b>West Highland Housing Association</b>	<b>£76.24</b>	<b>£88.74</b>	<b>£97.46</b>	<b>£115.21</b>

### What is the proposed rent increase in 2019/2020?

The Association is proposing to increase rents from 1st April 2019 by the **Consumer Price Index** figure in September 2018 plus 1% which will result in a total increase of **3.4%**. This is the increase we calculate that we need in order to continue to provide the level of services that tenants require.

### What is CPI?

Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) is the speed at which the prices of the goods and services bought by households rise or fall. CPI is estimated by using price indices - think of a very large shopping basket containing all the goods and services bought by households. CPI estimates changes to the total cost of this basket. Most price indices are published monthly; in the UK, CPI is the main measure of inflation.

### Will Service Charges increase?

Yes. It is proposed that these increase in line with the change to rents.

### Why the increase?

The Association's costs are subject to inflationary pressures and many of our costs are increasing by more than the rate of inflation. In addition, arrears are rising as a result of Universal Credit (UC) and Associations are having to employ extra staff to deal with UC issues. Increased fire safety and energy efficiency requirements will incur an estimated cost of £300-£400 per property. Most Associations are having to invest more to cope with increased regulation and smaller organisations are most affected.

### What happens next?

We are inviting all our tenants to respond to this consultation by **31st January, 2019**. All comments and submissions will be considered by our Management Committee who will take the final decision on rent levels for 2019/2020. We will then advise tenants of their new rent figure **no later than the end of February 2019**.

## Communal Areas - Fire Safety Issues

All residents occupying flatted developments have recently been advised by letter of the need to keep communal areas clear of rubbish, cycles, prams/pushchairs or, indeed, any other items, to ensure there are no obstructions in the event of any emergency situation occurring or Emergency Services requiring access.

Our communal area cleaning staff attend regularly and will arrange to remove any items stored within the communal areas immediately. The items will be taken for storage to one of the Housing Association's stores. Bolt cutters will be used to remove any items chained to railings or banisters; the costs of chains and padlocks will not be refunded.

We will leave a notice advising that our staff have removed the item but we cannot guarantee that the notice will remain in place. If you wish to retrieve the removed item, phone or visit us during office hours. There is an administrative fee of £50 which you will have to pay before the item can be collected; it must then be stored in your flat and not in the communal area.

If items are not claimed within six weeks they will be taken to The Council's recycling centre or donated to one of the local charity shops. If we have to remove an item for a second time there will be no opportunity to retrieve it as we will immediately dispose of the item.

Fire doors or main entrance doors in some communal areas are often found to be wedged open, which obviously compromises the containment of any incident and the security of the building. Please refrain from this practice in the interests of all occupiers of the developments.

If anybody has any concerns regarding fire safety within any of our properties, please contact us on **01478 612035**.

## Bag It and Bin It, don't Flush It!

**A staggering 300 million items of sanitary waste are flushed down Scotland's toilets every year. The waste water drain which runs from your house is just 4 inches wide, and it's only designed for human waste and toilet roll. Flushing anything else can cause blockages in your drains.**

**During heavy rainfall, the flow of waste water in sewers increases hundreds of times. Diluted waste water can sometimes be allowed to flow into rivers or the sea to prevent homes from flooding. Unfortunately, if 'never flush' items have been flushed these can also escape, polluting rivers and beaches. This causes a health hazard, harms wildlife, and it's awful to look at too.**

## Legionella Precautions

Any water outlets – **taps, showers, hosepipes, outside taps** - that are not regularly used should be **flushed for two minutes** on a weekly basis to reduce the risk of Legionella bacteria building up. If a property is left vacant for some time then all outlets should be flushed prior to reoccupation for **at least five minutes** to help prevent stagnant water from contaminating the system.

You should notify us -

If the water is **discoloured** or contains **debris**.

If the hot water supply **stops working** properly, this could mean the water is not sufficiently heated to control Legionella bacteria.

If the cold water supply is **running warm**, this could mean the water is not cold enough to control Legionella bacteria.

**Do not interfere with the settings on your boiler** or hot water system. The hot water should be set so that the water is stored at 60°C and reaches the outlet at 50°C.

If you have a shower installed, it produces small water droplets or spray which can be considered to be a risk. If the shower is getting used regularly then the water turnover should be sufficient to control the growth of Legionella bacteria.

If used infrequently the shower should be flushed through, at the hottest setting, for at least five minutes once a week. Clean the shower head periodically, descale and disinfect it at least every three months.

As a tenant, it is likely that you will notice any problems first, so it is important to remember to:

