

Highland Residential go over the sea to Skye

Seven new affordable homes are now available for mid-market rent on the Isle of Skye, with Highland Residential managing the properties on behalf of Albyn Group. This marks the first time Albyn has expanded into Skye.

The homes are located across Kyleakin, Broadford and Lower Breakish:

Kyleakin: Two newly refurbished two-bedroom flats, transformed from former short-term let accommodation with support from Scottish Government funding.

Broadford: Four newly built homes – two three-bedroom houses and two two-bedroom flats

Lower Breakish: One two-bedroom bungalow.

The move represents a significant geographical expansion for Albyn Group who are looking to invest further in Skye in the near future in mid-market rented accommodation. The homes will primarily be available to emergency service workers such as those working in the NHS, and workers from other key sectors, supporting the regional economy

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Welcome to our Newsletter!

Welcome to our first Highland Residential newsletter. We hope you have all enjoyed a fabulous summer and made the most of the great weather.

This will be the first of our bi-annual newsletters for Mid-Market Rental tenants. Our newsletter is filled with important and exciting information about what Highland Residential do, our developments and plans.

We are working closely with our colleagues at Albyn Housing to ensure all our properties meet the required standards and looking after the interests of our tenants by ensuring all our properties are fully compliant around tenant safety, such as gas servicing and damp and mould.

We are also playing our part in responding to the Highland Housing Challenge by offering 29 additional LIFT properties and aiming to grow our Mid-Market Rental properties by over 100 properties over the next three years.

We are reviewing all our policies to ensure we are providing the best possible service to our tenants and upgrading much of our IT systems and will be upgrading our website in the coming year.

The newsletter also introduces our new factoring contractors if you have not already seen them, please feel free to say hello as you see them about.

We have developed a new Tenant Support Fund which will assist our tenants who might be experiencing financial difficulties or need additional support. Supporting our tenants and responding to their views is a key priority for us to help tenants sustain their tenancies and shape our services in the future. We will be holding some pop-up sessions in the latter part of this year and spring next year. Please come along and let us know how we are doing, and what could be improve.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter and find it interesting and informative. We are keen to hear your views and feedback.



M Bowler



Dave Reid

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Angus MacDonald OBE MP, who represents Inverness, Skye and West Ross-shire, visited the new homes recently, alongside the senior management team of Albyn Housing Society and met with them to discuss the future of housing in Skye and the Highlands.

Albyn Group CEO, Kirsty Morrison, commented: "Our teams specialise in providing affordable housing in rural, and sometimes very remote, areas. Until now, we have focused on the mainland Highlands and have homes from the Cairngorms to Thurso and from Applecross to Moray. However, we recognise the acute need for affordable housing on Skye and in particular housing for those working in key sectors.

"We are planning to invest further in new mid market rented housing on the island shortly. If the Highland economy is to be a success and be a desirable and sustainable place for people to live and work, then we must ensure there is adequate housing in place to support communities to thrive."

MP for Skye, Angus MacDonald, commented: "There are huge pressures on our public services and one particular issue in rural areas like ours is the lack of housing for those working in our NHS and the care sector.

"This is a welcome step to see Albyn Housing Society stepping in to provide housing for key workers. It is important that we continue to see governments prioritising public services in our rural areas and supporting people to work within them and create communities that can last.

"It was great to see around these new homes and meet with some of the Albyn team before they expand into Skye. I look forward to seeing these homes occupied and families enjoying living here in the future.



Repairs and maintenance responsibilities

Our responsibility

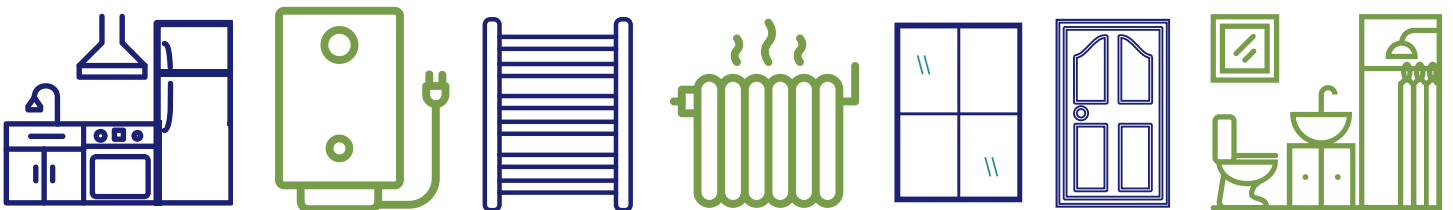
We have a legal duty to maintain your home in a fit and safe state for you to live in. We also have a commitment to provide good-quality housing. We are responsible for keeping the structure and outside of your home in a good condition, and for keeping sanitary fittings (toilets, sinks, baths and so on) and installations for supplying water, gas and electricity in good repair and proper working order. But if the damage is caused by your neglect or misuse, we will carry out the work and may charge you for it.

Your responsibility

You are responsible for decorating the inside of your home and maintaining the fixtures and fittings. This means that you should make sure your home is well decorated at the end of your tenancy. You are responsible for damage to glass, doors, sinks, blocked sinks and drains, sweeping flues or chimneys, and replacing lost keys and damaged locks.

You must:

- report repairs as soon as you notice them;
- allow us into your home to inspect it or carry out repairs;
- look after any garden or other ground let to you as part of your home; and
- with your neighbours, keep any shared gardens or stairs clean and in good order.



HRIL Award Factoring Contracts

After a robust round of procurement, the Highland Residential Factoring Team are delighted to announce they have awarded two new contracts for grounds maintenance and communal cleaning.

Perfect Clean Ltd have been awarded the stairwell cleaning contract. Perfect clean commented:

"Perfect Clean Ltd has secured a significant contract with Highland Residential to deliver stairwell cleaning services across a number of key Highland communities, including Inverness, Wick, Thurso, and Ullapool.

This partnership represents an important step in Perfect Clean Ltd.'s strategic expansion throughout Northern Scotland. By working alongside Highland Residential, the company will extend its commitment to quality and attention to detail, ensuring that communal areas are maintained to the highest standards of cleanliness and hygiene.



Perfect Clean Ltd.'s experienced teams will provide regular, thorough cleaning to stairwells, contributing to welcoming and safe environments for both residents and visitors. In addition to raising standards in residential cleaning, this collaboration will also support local employment opportunities within these Highland communities.

The partnership with Highland Residential aligns with Perfect Clean Ltd.'s mission to deliver consistent, high-quality service and to make a positive impact wherever the company operates. By building strong relationships with both Highland Residential and local residents, Perfect Clean Ltd aims to set new benchmarks for professional cleaning across the region."

Higher Gound have been reappointed as the preferred contractor for grounds maintenance.

"Higher Ground have once again been appointed as grounds maintenance contractor for Highland Residential's north area following an open tendering process. They have worked with Highland Residential and before them Albyn Housing, for 10 years now and they deliver an excellent service at a very reasonable price.

Adam Sutherland, Director and Operations Manager at Higher Ground said, "We are delighted to have been reappointed and to continue working with the team at Highland Residential and the many residents we have come to know over the years. We are totally focussed on the Highlands, and we are not motivated by profit.

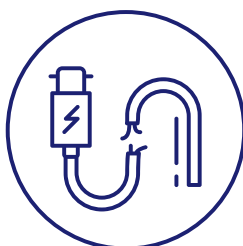
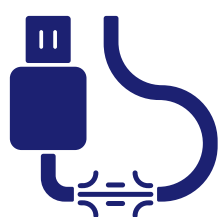


Our objectives are to help communities stay safe and flourish whilst creating real, sustainable jobs in the Highlands. We thank Highland Residential for providing our team with this opportunity"

Electrical Safety: Lithium-ion batteries

Risks

Lithium-ion batteries can pose a significant risk due to thermal runaway which occurs when internal temperatures exceed safe limits.



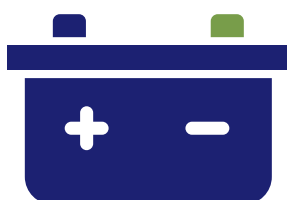
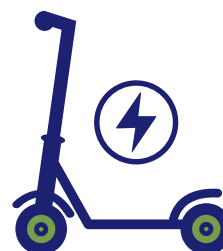
Causes

- poor quality and substandard components
- flawed design
- physical abuse
- improper charging or discharging

Devices

Items such as Phones, Laptops, Vapes, E-Scooters and E-Bikes.

Use them safely to prevent fires.



Be safe

Always purchase from reputable retailers.

Use approved chargers, unplug after charging, and avoid charging while sleeping.

Warning signs

Look for smoke, heat, swelling, leaks, hissing or cracking sounds or unusual smells

Stop using damaged batteries immediately.



More information can be found on the Scottish Fire and Rescue website.

Fly Tipping

What is Fly-Tipping?

Fly-tipping is the illegal dumping of unwanted items in the wrong place, such as household waste being left beside bins, in communal areas, or on Albyn's estates. This includes large items like mattresses, electrical goods, and furniture, as well as commercial and industrial waste.

Fly-tipping is not just unsightly—it harms the environment, attracts pests, and can lead to further anti-social behavior. It is a criminal offense, and those responsible can face prosecution.

Report fly tipping by calling us on 0300 323 0990



Reminder: Bulky Uplift

If you are taking advantage of the brighter days to do a spring clean and find yourself with heavy items you no longer want: here's a reminder of the ways to dispose of them responsibly.

Curb collection by the Highland Council's Bulky Uplift service. The service must be requested at least 2 days in advance and costs £25 for up to 3 items, or £50 for up to 6 items.

Visit www.highland.gov.uk and search bulky uplift.

If your items are in a good, safe condition, consider donating them to New Start Highland, they will collect from your home and they will help people back on their feet after experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

Find out more at the New Start Highland website: www.newstarthighland.org/get-involved/donate-furniture



Annual Visits

As part of our service improvements, we will be continuing our programme of annual visits to all our properties.

We completed an annual visit to all our properties in the year 2024/2025.

The purpose of these visits is to get to know you better and establish where we can offer support to manage your tenancy. At the same time, we will check that fixtures and fittings are in good condition and meet compliance with national standards.

The visits will take approximately 30 minutes, and we will need access to every room in your home and outdoor space if you have it.

You will be contacted in advance to let you know when we will be visiting, and it is essential you allow our staff access to carry out these visits.

Tenancy Support Available

Highland Residential has a fund to help tenants who would benefit from support with the cost of living or who are facing exceptional hardship.

The Highland Residential Tenant Support Fund is a discretionary fund that can be used to provide shopping vouchers to tenants who would benefit from extra help to meet ongoing household costs. Help through the fund can also include support in a variety of ways including essential household items, items to help keep warm, school uniforms and mobile phone top-ups to stay digitally connected.

The Team can assist with a range of issues including Energy Advice, Financial Difficulty, and Isolation. Where the team cannot assist tenants directly, we will signpost to advice or community services who can provide help. We work in partnership with Change Works who provide support to our tenants on all energy-related matters. This may include reducing energy consumption and costs or operating your heating system more effectively. We have our own Tenant Support Fund to help households who may be struggling with the cost of living and need help to buy food, energy, or essential items. If you feel you would benefit from assistance, please contact our team on lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk

If you are finding it hard to meet your rent or other living costs, please contact our lettings team to discuss what support is available to you. To be referred you can email lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk or call us on 01463 701271 Option 2.



Winter Welfare Checks

Throughout December 2025 staff from our lettings team will be contacting tenants over the age of 70 or those who may be vulnerable to check on their wellbeing and find out if they required any support managing their tenancy. We contacted all our elderly tenants in December 2024 to make sure they were well and managing in their homes.

As a result of these calls and visits we were able to provide support to those that needed it. If you have concerns about a family member, friend or neighbour please contact us in the strictest confidence.

Cold Weather Precautions

Keep warm

In order to avoid burst pipes try to keep your house warm day and night. If you choose to only have the heating on downstairs, leave room doors open to allow heat to circulate. Burst pipes can be avoided by keeping your radiators at the frost setting, so please consider this if you will be away during cold spells. Check on attic spaces, especially if water and storage tanks are there. Make sure insulation which should cover pipes and tanks has not been accidentally moved.

You should never ignore a minor water leak. A small leak may be okay overnight, but if left for several days, it could cause major damage within your home. If a leak happens, these are the steps you should take:

1. Turn off the water supply. The stop valve is usually under the sink.
2. Switch off the electricity at the mains.
3. Call Albyn to report the emergency.
4. Switch off central heating systems. If you have a solid fuel fire, close down the damper and let the fire die out. Do not attempt to drain down the boiler unless the fire has gone out.
5. Use a bucket to catch any water leaking from the burst.
6. Open all taps to sinks and bath (if possible, collect water in the bath for flushing the WC and washing).

If you go away in the winter, please be advised that you should take care to drain your pipes or leave your radiators on the frost setting to prevent damage to your property. If you go away for more than 2 weeks' time, you should let the Society know you will be away and where a key can be obtained in case of emergencies.

The society is not responsible for any damage caused to your personal belongings by frost damage or burst pipe or tank.

How to clear snow and grit paths safely

Don't be put off clearing snow or gritting paths. Government advice states that you are highly unlikely to be sued or held legally responsible should someone fall on an area you have cleared as long as you have cleared it in an effective manner. If you clear snow and grit pathways effectively you will be doing a service to your community.

Follow these simple tips to make this an easy and quick job.

- Clear snow and ice early in the day. Less compact snow is easier to move.
- Use salt – not water. Pathways become dangerous if they are allowed to refreeze. Remember to use extra on steps or where it is steep.
- Use sand or ash to provide grip. Remember to use extra on steps or where it is steep.
- Avoid piling snow over drains to prevent flooding when it melts.
- Pile snow away from driveways and turning points to allow free access for vehicles.
- Let us know if grit bins are empty or damaged.

Remember to check on less able and vulnerable neighbours as they may need assistance to clear their paths and driveways.



Migrating To Universal Credit

You'll have to move to Universal Credit when you get a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) telling you to claim by a certain date - this is a 'migration notice'. If you get a migration notice, you should claim Universal Credit by the date on the letter to keep getting financial support.

If you haven't had a migration notice, you might still choose to move to Universal Credit if:

- you'll be better off on Universal Credit compared to your legacy benefits
- one of your legacy benefits has stopped because your situation has changed - for example, if you've separated from a partner or moved to a different council area

You must claim Universal Credit by the deadline on the letter to keep getting financial support. Your deadline day should usually be at least 3 months after the date the notice was sent.

The DWP might pay you extra to make sure you're not worse off than on your legacy benefit. This is called 'transitional protection'. You can only get transitional protection if you have a migration notice.

If you can't claim by the deadline

If the deadline day hasn't passed yet, you can ask the DWP to extend it. You can only ask for this before the original deadline in the letter. If the DWP agree, they'll send you a new deadline day. If you claim after the final deadline, you can still get Universal Credit - but you can't get transitional protection.

This advice and more can be found at www.citizensadvice.org.uk

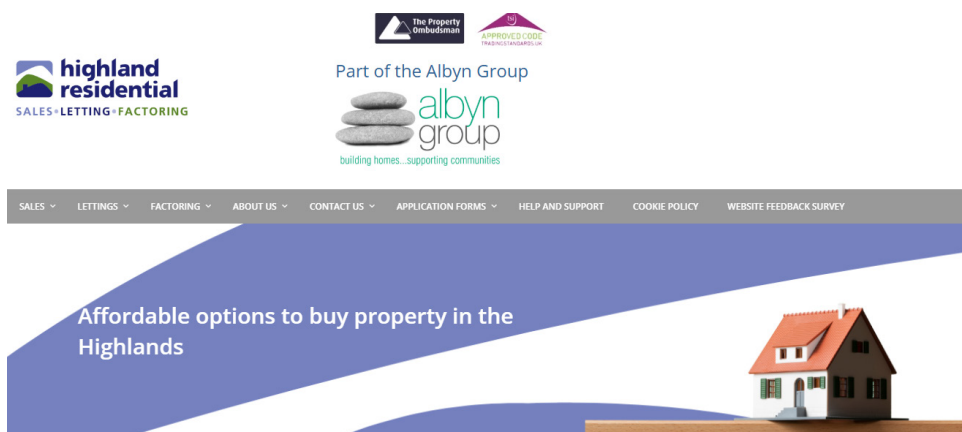
Shape Our Website

As part of our commitment to improving our services we are reviewing our company website to ensure it meets the needs of our tenants, staff, and external partners. Our website is a vital resource, providing key information supporting our customers and enhancing Highland Residential's reputation.

To make meaningful improvements we need your input! We are inviting all tenants and stakeholders to share your feedback with us. What works, what does not, what would you like to see included in our website.

Your insights will help us create a more intuitive, user-friendly website that truly serves our community.

If you have any feedback, please contact us by emailing: lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk



Staying Informed and Getting Involved

We encourage all tenants to stay connected with us and keep up to date with any changes or important updates. You can do this by:

- Visiting our website for up-to-date policies, FAQs, and service information.
- Checking our social media channels for the latest news and updates.
- Engaging with our newsletters, where we share key information and useful advice.
- Attending our community pop-up events in Autumn and Spring

At Highland Residential, we are committed to providing clear and accessible information to all our tenants. If you ever need guidance or support, do not hesitate to reach out – we are here to help.



Complaints

Whilst we hope that making a complaint is something you will never need to do; there are times where you may feel we are not quite getting things right. If this happens, we want to ensure we support you through the process and get your issues resolved as quickly as possible. If you feel you have received poor customer service, we want to hear about it to try and make things right and continue to support you.

Over the last year we have focussed on improving our communication and providing quicker response times to your complaints.

So far, this financial year we are on track to meet our obligations with regards to response times for Stage 1 and 2 Complaints

	2025/26	Target
Stage 1 Complaint	3 days	5 days
Stage 2 Complaint	18 days	20 days

As a tenant of Highland Residential you have the right to expect good service and fair treatment. The Lettings Agent Code of Practice sets the standards that landlords must meet. The Housing and Property Chamber First Tier Tribunal monitors these standards to ensure landlords are performing well.

Do you wish to make a complaint or provide a compliment?

Call us on

01463 701271 Option 1 for Factoring, Option 2 for Lettings & Sales

Email us at

Lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk, sales@highlandresidential.co.uk factoring@highlandresidential.co.uk

Who to Contact for Help

We know that questions and issues can arise at any time, and we have dedicated teams in place to provide the right support:

Contact information

Email: lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk

Email: sales@highlandresidential.co.uk

Email: factoring@highlandresidential.co.uk

Tel: 01463 701271 Option 1 for Factoring Option 2 for Lettings & Sales

Albyn & Highland Residential offices in Invergordon and Inverness remain closed unless by appointment. Please be advised our phone lines are transferred to the out of Hours call centre on the last wed of every month from 1pm for staff training purposes.



Who are we?

Lettings

We pride ourselves on delivering the best service to tenants and take care in assisting our customers through the process of renting a home through Mid Market Rental.



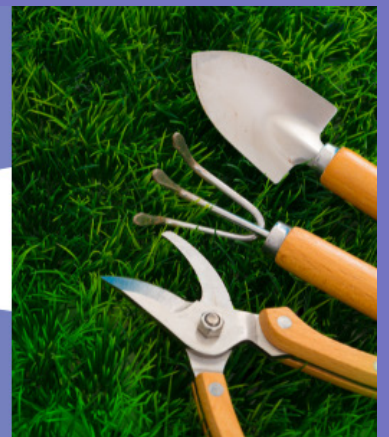
Sales

Our extensive experience in the affordable housing market means that we can simplify the process to purchase an affordable home through the LIFT scheme.



Factoring

Providing a wide variety of factoring services including grounds maintenance, communal stairwell cleaning and repairs to homeowners and residents.



Contact us

We pride ourselves on our friendly and professional service. Whether you are looking to buy or rent a home or wish to speak to us about local factoring services we are happy to help.

Write to us

98-104 High Street, Invergordon, IV18 0DL

Call us

01463 701271

Email the relevant team

sales@highlandresidential.co.uk

lettings@highlandresidential.co.uk

factoring@highlandresidential.co.uk