

ACHILTIBUIE

Highland, Scotland



Achiltibuie Old School House

Background:

An empty schoolhouse in Achiltibuie has been transformed into two affordable dwellings thanks to an innovative funding package secured by The Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust and the Coigach Community Development Company (CCDC) with support from The Scottish Government, The Nationwide Foundation and The Highland Council.

A community owned disused schoolhouse in the remote community of Achiltibuie, Coigach, Wester Ross has been given a new lease of life.

The Coigach Community Development Company is delighted with the renovation of the old schoolhouse.

The building was transferred from the Highland Council to the community via the CCDC, after they submitted a proposal with their plan to develop the substandard building into 2 comfortable housing units to serve the community. The building had not been used in over 5 years.

Highlands & Islands Enterprise also contributed a grant towards the feasibility and legal fees associated with the purchase.

Aims:

The project aimed to provide the community of Achiltibuie with 2 new affordable flats to rent. Transforming the property into two flats instead of one large dwelling to maximize the potential to provide local housing for key workers and local people in a community which is severely lacking affordable housing.

Award-winning David Somerville Architects redesigned the property, improving the standard with increased insulation and a responsive heating system resulting in low running costs. The finished property consists of one 2 bedroom property, and one 1 bedroom property.

The development was overseen by The Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust (HSCHT), who now lease the two properties to people in housing need within the local community.



Location: Achiltibuie, Coigach

- ⇒ Community driven project by Coigach Community Development Company
- ⇒ Conversion of an old schoolhouse into two affordable flats to rent
- ⇒ Funded by The Scottish Governments Rural Housing Fund, The Nationwide Foundation Empty Homes Fund, Highland Councils Empty Homes Grant, and Highland Council Discretionary Fund.

Partners & Funders



The Highlands Small Communities
Housing Trust

7 Ardross Terrace, Inverness, IV3 5NQ

01463 233 549

info@hscht.co.uk

hscht.co.uk

Affordable housing provision allows people to remain in rural areas instead of moving elsewhere. Therefore providing social and economic sustainability.



First affordable housing in over 40 years

Achiltibuie

Funding Model:

The conversion was made possible, through HSCHT receiving funding from the Nationwide Foundation through its Decent, Affordable Homes strategy. This funding took the form of both grant and loan funding, and also contributed towards the completion of another property last year, Druim Garbh, owned by the Acharacle Community Company.

Working in partnership, additional funding was secured from the Highland Council, in the form of an Empty Homes Grant, as well as through their Ward Discretionary Fund.

An application was then made to the Scottish Government's Rural Housing Fund, with the hope that funding could be applied for to cover the funding shortfall in the project.

The Scottish Government's new Rural Housing Fund was instrumental in funding this Achiltibuie renovation. This is the first successful project to be completed with assistance from the Rural Housing Fund.

Working with The Scottish Government, the Nationwide Foundation and The Highland Council, has allowed HSCHT and CCDC to bring about one of the many pipeline community-owned housing projects in the Highlands. Achiltibuie has benefitted greatly from two new fit-for-purpose affordable homes. The project demonstrates the great benefits derived from cooperation with the community and the wider partnership of those involved.

Future:

The project is now complete, and both homes have been allocated to locals within the community. A minute of agreement and a lease is in place between HSCHT and CCDC. This allows HSCHT to manage the property on their behalf for a period of 21 years after which the home reverts to the control of the community company. HSCHT intends to lease the home to tenants which fit with the agreed allocations policy on a Short Assured Tenancy basis.



- ⇒ An exemplar rural housing project
- ⇒ Wide social, environmental and economic benefits to the area
- ⇒ Excellent community driven project

Housing Minister Kevin Stewart said: "We recognise the challenges of developing affordable housing in remote rural areas and so I'm delighted that the Scottish Government is able to provide funding to this worthwhile project through the Rural Housing Fund. This will contribute to the Scottish Government's commitment to build 50,000 new homes across Scotland over the next five years"

~

The Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust

7 Ardross Terrace, Inverness, IV3 5NQ

01463 233 549

info@hscht.co.uk

hscht.co.uk

