



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

PRESS RELEASE

To: News editor

Landmark housing project launched on Arran

A major research project is being launched to help find solutions to the issue of affordable housing on Arran.

The study is being hailed as a milestone moment in the efforts to deal with long-standing housing shortage on the island.

The project is being spearheaded by the recently-launched Arran Housing Task Force, which includes North Ayrshire Council, the Scottish Government, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Trust Housing Association, and Arran Development Trust, alongside other community organisations and representatives.

The Taskforce has recruited North Star Consulting & Research - an independent housing consultancy – to carry out the major piece of work which will look at settlements across Arran to determine a true picture of the island's housing needs.

The research project will get under way in the coming weeks and North Star will consult with people across the island to gather essential data, views and information.

Councillor Alan Hill, Cabinet Member for Communities and Islands and Chair of the Housing Task Force, described the project as a landmark piece of work which aims to have a far-reaching, positive effect on the island's housing situation.

He said: "The issue of a lack of affordable housing on Arran is well known – it has been ongoing for decades without being resolved.

“This has become more apparent in recent years with the increasing number of empty homes and second homes on the island, meaning fewer choices for those looking for a home as well as driving up prices.

“The housing taskforce has been created to assess the demand for affordable housing on Arran and identify issues that may be limiting economic sustainability and growth.

“It’s vital for the island’s economic fortunes that we have affordable housing in place which allows for the retention and attraction of a working-age population.

“This research project will hopefully be a turning point in the quest to solve the long-term issue of affordable housing on the island and get a true picture of housing need.”

Jackie McIntosh, Trust Housing Association’s Director of Assets & Sustainability, said: “With nearly 300 homes on the island we are currently the largest provider of socially rented homes on Arran and a key housing delivery partner for the council.

“We are thrilled to be extending our partnership further as part of the Arran Task Force and look forward to working with the council and our fellow Task Force members on developing and delivering more affordable housing options for both our existing and future customers on the island.”

Tom Tracey, Chair of Arran Development Trust, said: “In recognition of the affordable housing issues on Arran, the Arran Development Trust is delighted to be part of the Arran Affordable Housing Task Force working with North Ayrshire Council and other relevant stakeholders to share information, learnings and work together devising solutions tailored to the island and its community.”

Freya Lees, Director of North Star Consulting and Research, said ‘We are delighted to have been appointed to carry out this important study and are looking forward to working with the Arran Housing Taskforce. This study will provide an evidence-based assessment of demand for affordable housing on the Isle of Arran which will build upon the North Ayrshire Housing Needs and Demand Assessment of 2020.”

Work will get under way shortly on the research project and the consultants will be aiming to speak to as many people and organisations as possible right across the island to build up a true, detailed picture of the housing situation on Arran.

This work will focus on affordable and rented accommodation but will cover all tenures to build a full housing market analysis for the island.

It is expected that the project will take a number of months to complete, and it is currently expected that a report will be presented to the taskforce later this year.

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