

PRESS RELEASE – 17th September 2021 (for immediate release)

It has been a busy few weeks for the Association with its Annual General Meeting taking place and the completion of its new affordable housing project at Houlland Lea in Sandwick.

Hjaltland Housing Association 45th AGM

Hjaltland Housing Association recently held its 45th Annual General Meeting. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, Colin Nicholson, welcomed Members to the meeting and relayed the Chair's report on the year's operations to the committee for approval.

“At the end of the Chair's last report Agnes Tallack expressed our hopes that 2020/2021 would herald a brighter, more positive future for us all. Well... who could have predicted the year that we have just lived through? For many people it has been a time of uncertainty and real financial hardship and Hjaltland staff have been working closely with our tenants to support them through these difficult times”.

Mr Nicholson highlighted the extent the impact Covid-19 has had on the Association and how well both staff and Committee Members have carried out their responsibilities given the circumstances, further commenting on the continued development projects with the completion of the 27 new flats at King Harald Street, along with the start onsite of the Upper Scalloway and Heathery Park developments.

Mr Nicholson also commented on the excellent achievement of continuing to provide both a planned maintenance and routine repair service, especially with the restrictions in place, and the successful move to the new, bigger premises which also included a complete rebrand for the Association.

The Vice Chair finally finished the report by thanking the Committee, Senior Managers and all staff for the dedicated work & commitment shown over the past 12 months.

Irene Hambleton of RSM UK Audit LLP was then introduced and gave the Association a financial “clean bill of health” and commented on the current strength of the business and its balance sheet.

At the Management Meeting following the AGM the office bearers were voted in by committee, those were:

Chair – Agnes Tallack
Vice Chair – Colin Nicholson
Treasurer- Jeff Goddard

End

Hjaltland Housing Association sees the completion of its new affordable housing project Houlland Lea in Sandwick Shetland.

Hjaltland Housing Association is pleased to announce the completion of its Houlland Lea development which sees the provision of twelve new family homes in Sandwick, Shetland. The project was supported by the Scottish Government who provided £1.8m in grant funding as part of its commitment to the provision of affordable housing in Shetland.

The scheme was designed by PJP Architects and Mott MacDonald Engineers with Quantity Surveying services provided by John Duguid Partnership. The construction was completed by David Smith Building Contractor.

The project consists of 3 person and 4 person properties which are all accessed from a central shared surface area that prioritises pedestrians.

All properties have been constructed to a very high standard with air source heat pumps, underfloor heating, Mechanical Ventilation with heat recovery, and fibre to the premises for superfast broadband.



Bryan Leask, chief executive of Hjaltland Housing Association said, “The Association has been working extremely hard since the beginning of the Covid pandemic to keep its development programme going and I am delighted we are now in a position to start handing out keys for these twelve family homes in Sandwick. Working with both the Shetland Islands Council and the Scottish Government we are continually trying to meet the demand for affordable housing in Shetland and this scheme goes some way to helping us achieve that.”

The Association’s Head of Investment Paul Leask commented, “It feels like a real victory finally getting this project completed. It cannot be overstated the significant impact both Brexit and the Covid pandemic have had on the contract with delays in material delivery, labour restrictions and high material costs to name but a few of the challenges the team had to overcome. We place a great emphasis on the quality of our houses but equally want to create excellent external environments and the space between the properties is just as important. I think the design team have done a great job in achieving this and despite facing significant challenges throughout the contract David Smith Builders have performed brilliantly and delivered an excellent finish. I’m really looking forward to finally seeing tenants move in.”



Ian Irvine from Architect for PJP Architects said, “With the design we wanted to create a place that would not only serve the new houses at Houlland Lea, but also encourage pedestrian links to existing nearby housing. This was done by providing a shared surface area through the site, with the main space in the heart of the development accessed from Houlland Road. This space is for children to play and people to meet, and is designed to slow down traffic. This is achieved with the introduction of timber planters, some with built-in seating, and low-level landscaped areas. These, along with communal grass areas and low timber fencing, soften the edge between the houses and the shared surface space on to which they overlook. We are delighted with the completed scheme and feel that it is great addition to the area, providing a connection between the existing housing and the wider community of Sandwick accessed from the main road to the North.”



David Smith Builders added, “Despite the challenges posed by Covid and the shortage of materials over the past 20 months we are delighted to have been involved with Hjaltland and their design team to deliver this project. The homes, which have been designed and constructed to a very high standard, along with the well-designed shared surface areas mean it should prove to be a great area to live in.”

HHA Head of Housing & Customer Service Ian Bray continued, “High quality social housing such as Houlland Lea not only helps to alleviate significant housing need, but also tackles broader issues within our communities, such as fuel poverty and child poverty. It comes as no surprise the Association has been inundated with expressions of interest for these properties following their recent advertisement. All provisional offers have now been made and we’re looking forward to handing out keys to the new tenants.”



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For further information please contact the HHA office.
Day: 01595 694986
Website: www.hjaltland.org.uk
Also find us on Facebook & Instagram



All Photos Attached by Paul Leask

Hjaltland Housing Association Limited
6 North Ness Business Park, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0LZ
Telephone 01595 694986 | Email mail@hjaltland.org
www.hjaltland.org.uk