

Sleat Community Council

Briefing Paper on Sabhal Mor Ostaig Developments

Prepared for the Sleat Community Council Meeting on Tuesday 07.05.24

Introduction

Sabhal Mòr Ostaig would like to congratulate Sleat Community Council on the recent election and re-elections of its members and wishes the Council a successful term. Sabhal Mòr is delighted to work alongside the Council to the benefit of our community.

Here are some general updates on Sabhal Mòr activities and developments.

Education

We are coming to the end of the academic year for most students and teaching staff: students are this week involved in class exams and handing in their assignments. We will miss our students very much but hope to see many of them again at the start of the next academic semester in late August/early September.

After a few weeks in May of conferencing and other work with external partners, we will welcome the start of the Short Courses, which will run for a number of weeks in July and August. Numbers are very healthy, with many courses full.

Kilbeg Village Development

Work is progressing well with this next phase of 'affordable housing' at Kilbeg, despite a slight delay, due to Scottish Water taking longer than had been expected to link up with the main Kilbeg Wastewater Treatment Works - a projected completion date of mid-June 2024, is now being predicted for this next phase of housing.

In the meantime, our delivery partners, *The Highland Council*, and the *Community Housing Trust*, are both busy on their marketing and allocation plans, in readiness for allocation.

Community Housing Trust is working closely with Sabhal Mor on marketing these opportunities and details can be found on:

www.chtrust.co.uk/future-opportunities.html or 01463 233549

All these CHT homes and self-build plots are available to those who meet some, or all, of the criteria listed below:

- Those who require a level-access or wheelchair-accessible property.
- Homeowners who wish to downsize
- Those who wish to own a low-cost property.
- Those currently in unsuitable housing
- Those working in the local area.
- Those who wish to relocate to be closer to family and local facilities.
- People located in Sleat, Skye or the wider Highlands and Islands
- Those interested in the language and culture and the unique language and cultural opportunities offered at Sabhal Mor Ostaig, including Gaelic learners and/or speakers.

NB. All *Community Housing Trust* properties have a *Rural Housing Burden*, attached to title, thus protecting housing stock for local communities into the future.

The Highland Council Allocation Policy will be determined by national statutory guidelines but, where practicable, will aim to be sensitive to key elements of the above listed criteria.

Information can be found at:

www.highland.gov.uk

This phase of the development will deliver:

6 homes for discounted sale (2 general use, 2 level access, 2 fully wheelchair accessible)

2 homes for discounted rent

3 discounted self-build plots

6 properties for social rent

Kilbeg Village Square Development (12-14 units of affordable housing)

On completion of this phase our contractors, James MacQueen's Ltd, will then turn their attention to preparations for the next phase of the development, namely the provision of what has been referred to as the '*Village Square Development*', which will see the delivery of two significant buildings, forming an important visual 'signature' for the new village and providing a further 12-14 units of 'affordable' housing.

It is anticipated that ground preparation works will be begin shortly, in readiness for a start date early 2025. The new access road to the rear of the new building, will facilitate the opening-up of other areas of the Kilbeg Masterplan Site, for further development. It is hoped that the new Kilbeg Village will become a vibrant, sustainable, and economically active new community, with the Gaelic language and culture 'at its heart.'

Sabhal Mor Ostaig Library

Plans are currently being developed significantly increase the library space available at SMO and these plans are being developed through a strategic partnership with the National Library of Scotland (NLS) in Edinburgh with which we are about to sign a *Memorandum of Understanding* and which will be launched at a special event at the NLS in Edinburgh on 9th May and further announced as part of the special *Scottish Parliamentary Reception* being given by the Parliament to honour Sabhal Mor Ostaig's contribution to the national cultural life of Scotland and beyond as *The National Centre for the Gaelic Language and Culture*.

Fàs Building

Following the production of a detailed Business Case, it is hoped that remedial work will start as soon as possible to bring this important building back into use.