

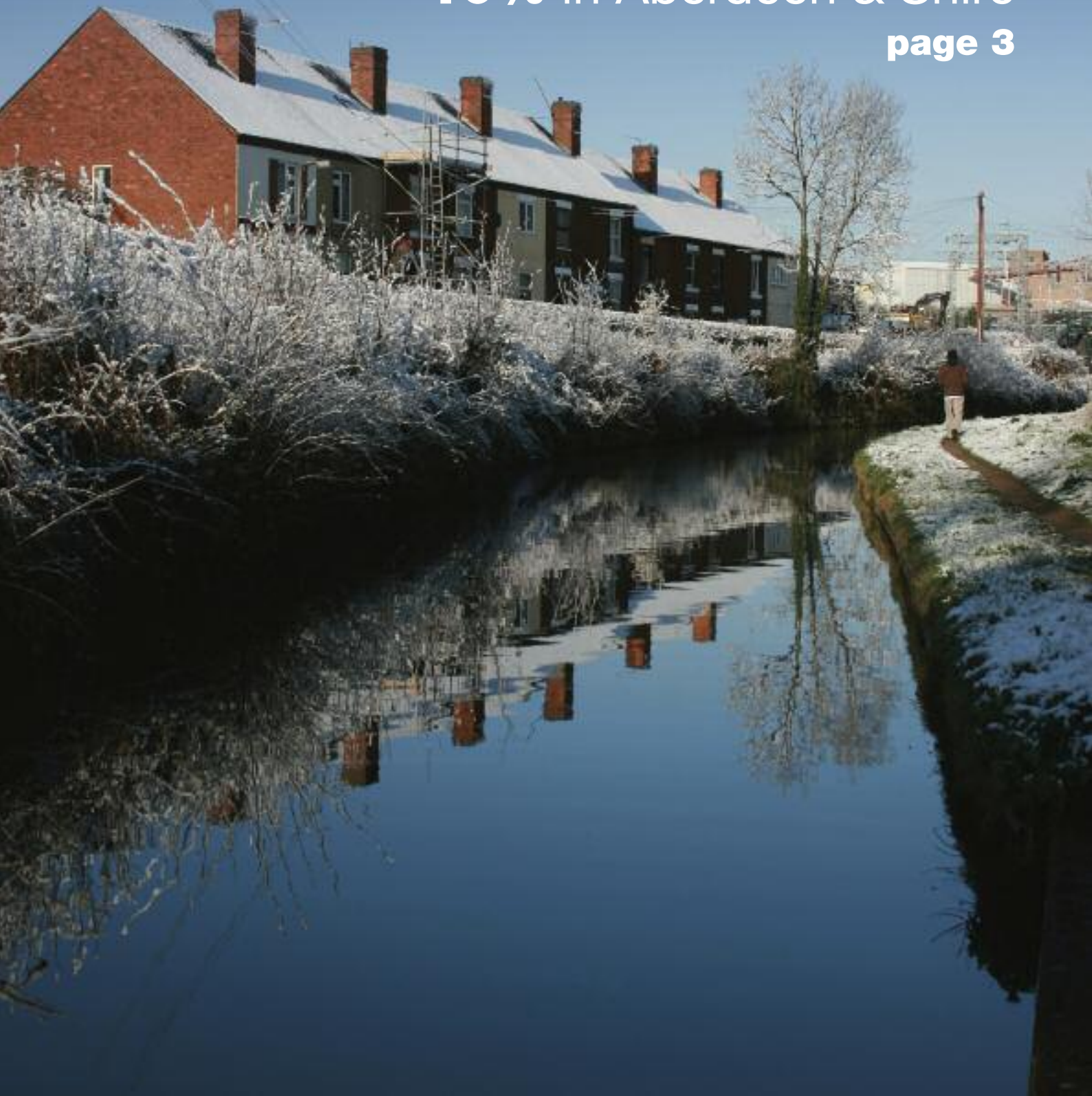


nesbanews

NESBA the voice for Builders in North East Scotland | January 2011

House sales up an average
10% in Aberdeen & Shire

page 3



Thousand new homes schemes to be doubled

An initiative aimed at providing 1,000 new homes for rent is to be expanded to create 1,000 more, Housing and Communities Minister, Alex Neil has confirmed.

Scotland's local authorities have been given the opportunity to participate in a further round of the National Housing Trust (NHT) initiative, which will stimulate the development of newly-built houses, with council loans for the scheme underwritten by the Scottish Government.



The NHT is designed to kick-start activity on mothballed building sites and create or safeguard around 1,600 jobs in the construction sector and wider economy.

The current NHT scheme has attracted significant interest with over 20 housing developers being invited to put forward

detailed plans for more than 50 potential sites across the country.

A variant of the NHT model will also be developed, tailored specifically for

It offers a great deal for tenants, particularly lower income households that will benefit from the ability to access more affordable housing.

housing associations in recognition of the sector's vital role in delivering social housing.

Alex Neil said: "The target of delivering 1,000 additional homes for affordable rent across Scotland remains firmly on track. The significant response from house building sector demonstrates their willingness to work alongside local authorities to address housing need while giving the Scottish construction industry a much needed boost.

"That is why I am announcing plans to expand the model further to build even more homes. Phase one set the bar high but we aim to deliver at least another 1,000 homes through the initiatives' expansion.

"The NHT is a ground breaking example of the type of innovative approach to boosting affordable housing demanded by the current economic situation. It offers a great deal for tenants, particularly lower income households that will benefit from the ability to access more affordable housing.

"We will also be developing a variant of NHT tailored specifically to the housing associations. They are key players in the supply of affordable housing in Scotland and have a strong role to play in ensuring that the clear benefits delivered by the NHT approach continue to be maximised"



UK First for Kingdom with Passivhaus Home

Kingdom Housing Association has scored a first for the social housing sector by developing the UK's first eco-friendly house designed to Passivhaus standards for affordable rent.



Kingdom enlisted some of Britain's leading lights in energy efficient design, technology, and manufacturing, to create a revolutionary 'sustainability house' in the pretty Fife seaside village of Pittenweem.

Their remit was to build a functional home fitted with the latest renewable energy technologies to see which elements could shape the future of affordable housing projects in Scotland.

Last month the thermally-efficient and groundbreaking 'Kingdom House' was unveiled to much acclaim and was handed over to its delighted tenants.

Kingdom House features cutting-edge renewable technologies incorporated into the construction process, design

and specification, which will have a positive environmental impact and significantly reduce energy costs.

The three-bedroom detached family home at Station Court, Pittenweem, is highly energy efficient featuring solar panels for hot water, 12 photo voltaic panels erected stylishly on the roof to generate electricity and an air source heat pump to power the under floor heating.

A Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery system has also been installed which recovers 90% of the heat extracted from the house. The house structure consists of a highly insulated modern timber closed panel 'Supawall' system, manufactured by Scotframe.

The panels were fabricated in the factory, with pre-installed high efficiency NorDan windows and doors. The structure was erected on site in just one day. More information can be seen at www.kingdomhousing.org.uk

Full external wall insulation designed to meet stringent new insulation values was applied by Jub whose algae resistant, waterproof render technology is very important to Scotland where climate change has caused a 60% increase in winter rainfall since 1981.

Hundreds of housing professionals and members of the public visited the 'Kingdom House' in Pittenweem over a series of Open Days, were impressed by what they saw.

Increase in house sales & prices

Figures released by the Registers of Scotland show house prices in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire have risen considerably in the past year. The average cost of a home in Aberdeen has jumped £11,374 and in Aberdeenshire they are up by an average of £5,500. The number of houses being sold in both areas has also increased by 10%. With high oil prices 2011 could see house prices rise even further in the north east despite what happens elsewhere. However the news is still not good for first time buyers mortgage lenders are still asking for large deposits.



4th Quarter house prices

Aberdeen City	£219,771
Aberdeenshire & Moray	£173,752
Dundee & Angus	£147,273
Edinburgh	£249,012
Glasgow	£162,151
Highland & Islands	£151,705
Perthshire & Stirling	£161,111
Southern Scotland	£138,399

New £10m Aberdeen College Construction Training Facility Opens

The £10m Aberdeen College Construction Training Facility, designed by Archial, has opened to students.

Designed as the new main building on the Altens campus to relocate construction trade courses onto the same site as engineering, completion allows for the refurbishment of the existing Altens Buildings to facilitate estate rationalisation and to bring ASET (Aberdeen Skills and Enterprise Training) from an adjacent site in Altens onto one complete campus.

The new facility contains workshops and classrooms for joinery, brickwork, painting and decorating, and plumbing courses, as well as a new library, learning resource centre, fitness suite and communal eating areas.

Archial associate, Ricky Connell said: "The basis of the college layout is to reform the urban streetscape to Minto Avenue and Minto Drive respecting the topography of the site. The redevelopment of the site, whilst integrating with the longer term masterplan, aims to enable all future stages and development goals to be achieved. It also creates significantly improved access/egress from the site, allowing for more efficient parking and open spaces within the campus itself.

"The communal area is conceived as a linear strip or 'street', which links all the parts of the college, as well as providing a buffer to the car parking. The street provides a series of high quality landscaped spaces for casual social interaction, vital to the life of any educational campus.

"The building is predominately two storeys with a central core of three storeys. The entrance core houses reception, staff and student common rooms, refectory and fitness suite. The two wings, which house the workshop areas and traditional college areas, can be locked down out of hours to

allow only essential core areas to operate and hence reduce services requirements, whilst providing the flexibility and opportunity to use core areas for non-educational purposes.

"To help reduce the mass of the building, the elevations are designed as lightweight pavilions, set on a robust 'stone' plinth. The use of masonry on the ground floor and lighter cladding materials on the upper floors makes reference to the indigenous buildings in the surrounding area, whilst also mirroring the internal usage."



Given the college's sustainability agenda, a key element of the design brief was that the building would incorporate all the elements required to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' rating. To that end, the building incorporates a variety of CO2-reducing measures including the installation of solar panels, a 25KW wind turbine, natural ventilation, modulated lighting, insulation levels higher than building regulations, and radiant heat in the workshops in place of blown heat. Rain water is collected from the roof for use in the toilet cisterns.

The fabric of a building gives substance to its thermal performance

“Think Fabric First”

by Peter Hall

In October 2010, the building standards regulations were amended to ensure all new properties deliver a 30% cut in the current benchmark for CO2 emissions. These standards will then be reduced by a further 30% in 2013 and by a further 30% in 2016.

Constructing a property that meets not only today's standards, but also those of the years to come, has significant benefits in relation to the day-to-day costs of living in the property.

Scotframe were quick to recognise the need for future proofed developments in technology and became the first Scottish licensee to manufacture a highly innovative new closed panel timber frame system, which meets the regulatory standards of 2016 today and reduces energy costs significantly.

The SupaWall technology allows closed timber frame panels to be factory injected with a high performance insulating material, which fills every void in the panel, making it exceptionally thermally efficient and virtually airtight.

In short, the fabric of the building and the way it is put together means homes of this type can be heated up very quickly and retain their temperature for incredibly long periods of time. This reduces their energy needs significantly. This is where our focus should lie, rather than with using renewable energy to make up for poor design and build quality.

When we already have the technology to build houses that deliver excellent energy performances, prioritising this approach will deliver faster and longer



lasting results than installing individual renewable energy sources that can provide a portion of a property's energy needs.

When it comes to reducing CO2 emissions, the substance of the argument resides in the substance of the building and those taking this on board will achieve the biggest improvements.

For further information, contact Peter Hall – Marketing Manager

**Scotframe, Inverurie Business Park,
Souterford Avenue, Inverurie AB51 0ZJ**

Tel: 01467 626843

peter.hall@scotframe.co.uk

www.scotframetimberengineering.co.uk



Think **Fabric First**

scotframe
timber frame | engineering

Inverurie

Inverurie Business Park, Souterford Avenue,
Inverurie AB51 0ZJ Tel: 01467 624440

www.scotframetimberengineering.co.uk

Building in timber frame makes achieving a high performance building fabric straightforward due to its unrivalled thermal efficiency and airtightness.

Let Scotframe engineer a solution for you.

What to expect when a health and safety inspector calls

Who enforces health & safety law?

Health and safety law is enforced by inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or by inspectors from your local authority.

Inspectors have the right to enter any workplace without giving notice, though notice may be given where the inspector thinks it is appropriate. On a normal inspection visit an inspector would expect to look at the workplace, the work activities, your management of health and safety, and to check that you are complying with health and safety law. The inspector may offer guidance or advice to help you. He/she may also talk to employees and their representatives, take photographs and samples, serve improvement notices and take action if there is a risk to health and safety which needs to be dealt with immediately.

Enforcing health and safety law

On finding a breach of health and safety law, the inspector will decide what action to take. The action will depend on the nature of the breach, and will be based on the principles set out in the Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) Enforcement Policy Statement. The inspector should provide employees or their representatives with information about any action taken, or which is necessary for the purpose of keeping them informed about matters affecting their health, safety and welfare.

Inspectors may take enforcement action in several ways to deal with a breach of the law. In most cases these are:

Informal

Where the breach of the law is relatively minor, the inspector may tell the dutyholder, for example the employer or contractor, what to do to comply with the law, and explain why. The inspector will, if asked, write to confirm any advice, and to distinguish legal requirements from best practice advice.

Improvement notice

Where the breach of the law is more serious, the inspector may issue an improvement notice to tell the dutyholder to do something to comply with the law. The inspector will discuss the improvement notice and, if possible,

resolve points of difference before serving it. The notice will say what needs to be done, why, and by when. The time period within which to take the remedial action will be at least 21 days, to allow the dutyholder time to appeal to an Industrial Tribunal if they so wish (see 'Appeals' below). The inspector can take further legal action if the notice is not complied with within the specified time period.

Prohibition notice

Where an activity involves, or will involve, a risk of serious personal injury, the inspector may serve a prohibition notice prohibiting the activity immediately or after a specified time period, and not allowing it to be resumed until remedial action has been taken. The notice will explain why the action is necessary. The dutyholder will be told in writing about the right of appeal to an Industrial Tribunal.

Prosecution

In some cases the inspector may consider that it is also necessary to initiate a prosecution. Decisions on whether to prosecute are informed by the principles in HSC's Enforcement Policy Statement. Health and safety law gives the courts considerable scope for punishing offenders and deterring others. For example, a failure to comply with an improvement or prohibition notice, or a court remedy order, carries a fine of up to £20,000 or six months' imprisonment, or both. Unlimited fines and in some cases imprisonment may be imposed by higher courts.

Appeals

A dutyholder will be told in writing about the right of appeal to an Industrial Tribunal when an improvement or prohibition notice is served. The appeal mechanism is also explained on the reverse of the notice. The dutyholder will be told:

- how to appeal, and given a form with which to appeal;
- where and within what period an appeal may be brought; and
- that the remedial action required by an improvement notice is suspended while an appeal is pending.

Information to employees or their representatives

During a normal inspection visit an inspector will expect to check that those in charge, eg employers, have arrangements in place for consulting and informing employees or their representatives, eg safety representatives, about health and safety matters. Such arrangements are required by law.

An inspector will meet or speak to employees or their representatives during a visit, wherever possible, unless this is clearly inappropriate because of the purpose of the visit. When they meet, employees or their representatives should always be given the opportunity to speak privately to the inspector, if they so wish.

The inspector will provide employees or their representatives with certain information where necessary for the purpose of keeping them informed about matters affecting their health, safety and welfare. This information relates to the workplace or activity taking place there, and action which the inspector has taken or proposes to take. The type of information that an inspector will provide includes:

- matters which an inspector considers to be of serious concern;
- details of any enforcement action taken by the inspector; and
- an intention to prosecute the business (but not before the dutyholder is informed).

Depending on the circumstances, the inspector may provide this information orally or in writing.

INVERURIE SKIP HIRE

Household & Commercial



- Door Drop Skips ■
- Competitive rates ■
- Skip Hire - Various Sizes ■
- First class reliable service ■
- Recycling services ■
- Credit cards accepted ■

Tel: 01467 671134 or 07836 564510
Causewayfold, Meikle Wartie, Inverurie AB51 5AU



Jennifer Young



Rebecca Riddell



Veli-Matti Raikonen

Apprentices & Continuity of Employment

As many employers will have found out the hard way, terminating the employment of any employee is not always straightforward. The position is different in relation to apprentices, but only in that apprenticeships involve greater responsibilities for employers than ordinary contracts of employment. An apprenticeship is for a fixed period and premature termination by the employer may result in compensation not just for lost wages, but also loss of training and loss of status.

What of termination of the apprentice's employment at the end of the apprenticeship? If the apprenticeship has lasted for longer than 12 months (which is mostly the case) the apprentice will have the right not to be unfairly dismissed. Termination of the contract of apprenticeship on completion will amount to a dismissal in law. If the reason for the termination is the coming to an end of the apprenticeship, that is likely to amount to a potentially fair reason for dismissal – which can be converted into a fair dismissal by following a fair dismissal procedure (which is not onerous).

The danger is that the apprentice's employment is allowed to continue beyond the completion of the apprenticeship without it being explicitly agreed on what terms the apprentice is being employed. In these circumstances it will be difficult to terminate the apprentice's employment by reason of the apprenticeship coming to an end. It may then be necessary to review staffing levels overall – which may involve placing all workers of a particular type at risk of redundancy.

It is therefore vital for employers to plan ahead, and to make sure that appropriate decisions on retention of apprentices are taken well before the apprenticeships are completed.

Who have you contracted with?

We wrote several months ago about the importance of properly concluding contracts and that advice remains as important as ever in today's climate. It may go without saying that to create any contractual relationship, you need to identify the contracting parties. However, in practice, that is something often overlooked.

It is very important to know who you are contracting with as it determines not only the basis of any claim for payment, but the prospects of recovery. When entering into a contract consider the following:

1. Are you entering into a contract with an individual, a partnership, limited company or an agent? Don't make any assumption from the letterhead on correspondence. Always check.
2. Look behind the name. What appears to be a company could in fact be the trading name of a sole trader. An individual may be signing on behalf of a company. Always clarify which company is liable under the contract. It is not uncommon for an individual be a director of more than one company, especially if it is a group of companies with a parent company with numerous subsidiaries.
3. A director may be using a company's address, but be purporting to contract as an individual. Always obtain clarification at the outset as to who will be liable to pay you.
4. Ensure a company is actually a company by checking with Companies House. A company is only capable of being sued for payment if it is properly registered.
5. If contracting with an agent, ensure you are aware of the principal's identity as this is ultimately the party you are contracting with. If possible, also ensure the agent is within his powers to contract with you. If he is not and the contract is breached, your only remedy is against the agent personally.
6. Check the solvency position of the party you are contracting with. This can be done by checking Companies House, the Register of Insolvencies or by obtaining a credit check. This is essential when dealing with companies – do they have any assets or are they merely a shell?

In today's environment it is not uncommon for cash strapped parties to seize on any ambiguity as a means of avoiding payment. Carrying out the above simple checks will help protect you against any messy disputes over who is liable to make payment.

Jennifer Young – jennifer.young@ledinghamchalmers.com

Rebecca Riddell – rebecca.riddell@ledinghamchalmers.com

Veli-Matti Raikonen

vmr@ledinghamchalmers.com

01224-408458



Low-Carbon Heating Scheme extended in Aberdeen

More people will soon have access to low-cost, low-carbon heating thanks to an extension to the Aberdeen district heating scheme.

The Scottish Government is pumping £1m into the Aberdeen scheme, which is already cutting emissions and helping to tackle fuel poverty for people living in multi-storey flats. District heating uses a central plant to heat a number of buildings through a network of pipes. Aberdeen City Council will now determine the most suitable and cost-

effective extension to the scheme infrastructure.

"The Aberdeen district heating scheme is already a success, serving 850 flats and eight public buildings. This funding will enable more housing and council buildings to be served by the scheme in the future, bringing low-cost, low-carbon heating to more people."

Budget

Escape the everyday.

Van Hire from £25

Telephone

01224

771777

Plans for new Aberdeenshire homes revealed

Aberdeenshire Council homes could be built in a north-east village for the first time in more than a decade.

Proposals for a one-and-a-half acre estate at Cruden Bay have been lodged by council housing chiefs. The 13 properties are earmarked for land between John Buchan Drive and Golf Road, on the northern side of the village.

The scheme is part of a wider programme of council house construction across the north-east. The first local authority homes to be built in Buchan for more than 13 years were opened at Mintlaw last month. New homes have recently been completed at Tarves, while properties at Johnshaven are due to be finished before the end of the year. There are also plans to build homes at Banff, Alford and Stonehaven.

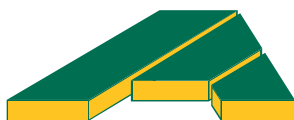
The council currently has around 7,200 people on its housing waiting list. The local authority secured more than

£4million from the Scottish Government to build houses. The Cruden Bay plan originally featured 10 properties and was lodged earlier this year. However, it was withdrawn just weeks later. The application has now been revised to include 13 homes and re-submitted.

A council spokesman said: "While there is a requirement to construct simple, affordable housing, care has also been taken to create simple architecture reflecting today's standards and trends."

The bid for planning permission still has to be approved by local councillors. If successful, work could begin in the first half of the new year.

Meanwhile, the council will be spending more than £30million upgrading existing council homes across the region. Between 2011 and 2014, more than £9million is due to be spent on improving Aberdeenshire Council's housing stock in Banff and Buchan. A further £8.6million is due to be used for upgrades on properties in Buchan during the same period. A further £12million worth of work is scheduled for homes in Garioch and Formartine. Improvements will be made to doors, kitchens, bathrooms and gas heating.



asphaltic
roofing supplies

01224 692000

aberdeen@asphaltic.co.uk

www.asphaltic.co.uk



Scotland's leading independent
Commercial vehicle dealer

Telephone

01224

725412

www.clarkcommercials.co.uk

Munara Training Services

Driver CPC

Drivers of vehicles with a gross weight of 3.5 tonnes or over may require a "Driver Certificate Of Professional Competence" (DCPC) card to continue driving that class of vehicle after 10.9.2014.

To gain the DCPC card you will be required to do 35 hrs of periodic training before September 2014.

For more information about periodic training call

Bill Munro anytime on **07742 307467** or

01975 562646 after 7pm.



Munara Training Services, Munara, Gallowhill, Alford, AB33 8NJ

OVER **100**
YEARS
VAN EXPERIENCE

OVER **100**
VANS
ALWAYS IN STOCK

THAT'S WHY WE
ARE SCOTLAND'S
LEADING
INDEPENDENT
COMMERCIAL
VEHICLE
DEALER



NEW ARRIVALS

AT UNBEATABLE PRICES.



NEW VW CADDY
MONTHLY CONTRACT HIRE
£192.55 + VAT



PEUGEOT BIPPER
DRIVE AWAY FROM ONLY
£7,995 + VAT

SEE OUR FULL STOCK LIST ONLINE NOW AT WWW.CLARKCOMMERCIALS.CO.UK

At Clark Commercials we don't just sell vans.

We know your van is your business. That's why we go out of our way, to keep you on your way.

20 Courtesy Vans • Service & Repairs • Van Finder Service • Leasing & Finance • Out Of Hours Servicing
Bespoke Racking & Storage Solutions • Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles Approved Service Centre

So, pick up the phone or come and see us today. Or we could come to you.

Clark Commercials

30 Wellheads Drive || Dyce || Aberdeen || **01224 725412**

www.clarkcommercials.co.uk Part of the John Clark Motor Group



Commercial Vehicles
Approved Service Centre



North East Scotland Builders Association

Expert support & advice
for builders, joiners &
roofing trades

Become a member of NESBA
for benefits including:

- Legal advice
- Job Leads
- Employment Law advice
- Debt Recovery
- Training
- Promotion

Save on costs and generate
income with NESBA ...

... your local
trade association



Join us now...

Contact us on **0845 055 1663**
or visit www.nesba.co.uk



Managing your risk
Safeguarding your future

Business Insurance | Liabilities | Accidents & Sickness
Household & Motor | Specialising in Farm Insurance

tel: **0845 345 5035** | www.youngson.co.uk
3 Main Street, Turriff AB53 4AA

Authorised & regulated by the Financial Services Authority

Nesba News is published by NESBA

(North East Scotland Builders Association)

PO Box 66, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, AB34 5WY.

If you would like more information about NESBA, please go to www.nesba.co.uk
or call us on **0845 0551663** or email us on admin@nesba.co.uk

If you would like to advertise in this publication or submit a story please call
Nesba on **0845 0551663** or email admin@nesba.co.uk