



News Release

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First affordable island house design prize awarded

Arc Architects, a small rural Fife practice named winner of Our Island Home Design Competition

Following a bumper entry of 50 designs from small architecture practices across the country the **Our Island Home Design Competition** award was presented today by Richard Lochhead, Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment at the Rural Housing Scotland Conference in Birnam.

The competition sponsored by the Prince's Countryside Fund, Highlands + Islands Enterprise, Scottish Sea Farms, UPM Tilhill and BSW Timber Group asked architects to design an affordable 2 bedroom starter home suitable for the Hebrides that is easy to build and cheap to heat for under a challenging budget of £100,000.

From a shortlist of six projects – described by the Chair of the Judging Panel, Lesley Riddoch as “inspiring, practical, green and quite ingenious”, the judging panel selected a design by **Tom Morton of Arc Architects**, from Cupar as the winner.

Tom's island home design was deemed 'the most thoughtful submission' by the judging panel. The design features that aided its success in the competition were its low environmental impact, simple construction and aesthetic approach. It was important for the design to meet the vernacular of island life and Arc's design made sure there was a porch for wellies, a larder and a shed outside.

Rural Affairs Secretary Richard Lochhead said:

"I was impressed by the standard of designs submitted and congratulate (name of winner). Housing is and will remain a priority for this Government and we will continue to invest in new

affordable homes, which are particularly needed in rural areas.

“It’s great to give some of Scotland’s top architectural talent the opportunity to showcase their skills in a competition which is full of good intentions.”

Rural Housing Scotland will be working with community landowners and the winning architect to build the winning design in several locations in the Hebrides, with the first houses planned for the Isle of Mull

Notes to Editors

Photo of the winner (Tom Morton) with Richard Lochhead, Lesley Riddoch and the shortlisted architects.

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Our Island Home was created by Rural Housing Scotland to help young people in the Hebrides access affordable housing. It has three main aims: to help island communities create new housing options for rent and ownership; to develop an island starter home which is easy to build, easy to transport, and easy to heat; to provide advice on housing options to young people

The Our Island Home competition aims to deliver a 2 bedroom house for less than £100,000 and Rural Housing Scotland will work with community landowners in the islands to find sites and funds to build the winning design. It is expected that the winning design will be used by community landowners, self builders and housing associations.

Our Island Home is based on the Isle of Mull and works across the Hebrides from Islay to Lewis.

Our Island Home is a project of Rural Housing Scotland, the trading name of Rural Housing Service. Rural Housing Service is recognised by OSCR, Scottish Charity No. SC 031239 and is a Company Limited by Guarantee SC 216096.

OIH Judging Panel

Lesley Riddoch	Author + Journalist (Chair)
Annie McKee	Rural Housing Scotland (Vice Chair)
David Chisholm	Architecture + Design Scotland

Rory Conn	Scottish Sea Farms
Ian Hepburn	North West Mull Community Woodlands Company
Seonaid Maclean-Bristol	Development Coll
Malcolm Robertson	Corben Consulting (Technical Adviser)
Neil Ross	Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Ed Taylor	The Prince's Foundation for Building Community
Raymond Young	Rural Housing Scotland