



Rum New Social Housing Applicant

16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Applicant,

**IRCT New House Tenancies, Kinloch, Isle of Rum**

Thanks for your interest in the above social housing vacancies. An application form and info pack is now available on website <http://www.isleofrum.com/news.php>

This is the relevant bit:

For everyone who has expressed an interest to date (11/03/2020), e-mail replies are being sent out. You can view the updated (12/03/2020) letter **HERE**

<<http://www.isleofrum.com/pulsepro/data/files/REVISED%20New%20Housing%20Applicants.pdf>>

This as there have been a few enquirers asking about what is available beyond just a rented property.

This updated letter gives additional information on existing opportunities for house build plots and the very limited access to other land options currently available on Rum. As I hope we make clear in the letter, a desire to build your own home can only be considered favourably in the Allocation of a house tenancy if you are also able to demonstrate that you will, very likely, make this happen. I.e. you are able to demonstrate that you are financially and otherwise ready and capable to start your build now and complete in a couple of years. I.e. you would release your tenancy in 2years and move into your new build. Any new build would be shared equity only. An example of how such a burden might work can be found on following link: [https://www.hscht.co.uk/uploads/4/6/8/5/46858349/rural\\_housing\\_burden\\_factsheet.pdf](https://www.hscht.co.uk/uploads/4/6/8/5/46858349/rural_housing_burden_factsheet.pdf)

This example might not be exactly how we would do this but it gives the idea. A new build could only be a first home. No building for second home use will likely be allowed and a burden attached accordingly.

We want to attract people to live on rum, and we need entrepreneurs, people with the ability and drive to build their own home, set up new businesses, etc, too. But we have to be realistic and build on the experience of other Scottish community land owners in balancing attracting entrepreneurial energy and drive with maintaining some community control of a vital asset. But in doing so, the Board of the Trust (principally made up of local residents) will always be willing to listen to a well founded proposal.

Whilst the above might be a tall order to achieve in the timescale for these allocations, the simple fact that you have the option to build may interest you to apply to live here, even though we may not be able to consider your interest to build strongly in our assessment of your application (if you are not in a position to 'prove' you will likely do so).

Hope that makes sense and is helpful.

Following, provides more details on what is on offer:

As noted on the form, this is an application for a housing tenancy only. Because we are an island, with a very fragile economy, and as a requirement of the funding initiative that made these homes possible, it is likely that a successful applicant will have a viable, provable employment or income stream. E.g. you work online, or you can relocate your existing business to the island (e.g. house maintenance; or tourism related, etc).

Also, these homes have two double bedrooms. Large families or single applicants will therefore do less well in the selection process compared to e.g. a couple with one child; or two couples with no children. Sorry, we couldn't afford to build houses to suit every possible need. However, we are open to any creative solutions to best utilise these homes and to allow them to best contribute to a stronger community.

Rum is a beautiful island with very many unique and varied opportunities for creating a wonderful and exciting working and social life, whether for a few years or for a lifetime. And for adults and children of any age. However, as with any island and any small, remote community, it brings multiple challenges. E.g. you have to be able to get on well with other people as you find them. Also, for every aspect of healthcare, support is minimal or entirely absent. You have to be able to handle all of that. We would anticipate that any successful candidate would visit/have visited the island at least once to meet the other people who live there and experience a snapshot of Rum life. We would anticipate some form of interview on island as part of this process for short-listed candidates.

### **New House Plots**

We also own potential development land. The Board are willing to consider applications from anyone (including tenants for these new houses) for shared equity house building plots. **You must, however, have a fully financed, business plan.** The Board may also be willing to sell plots outright in future, but currently that is not the policy. We have several possible plots throughout the village (an outline of these can be found on our Community Land Use Plan at [https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/1080/isle\\_of\\_rum\\_community\\_land\\_use\\_plan](https://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/1080/isle_of_rum_community_land_use_plan)). None have planning permission, but are fully supported by the Plan. As with any new house build plot, all of them have their challenges, some have significant constraints. The Trust would be very happy to discuss whether we could help at all with mitigating any of these constraints. We have sold only one house in 10yrs. One of the reasons for this is: where do you live whilst you build? These new tenancies could perhaps help you in making that investment on Rum. If you felt that you are in a position now to build a new house, have thought it through and have the business plan to prove it, including provable finances to do this, then please include as much detail on this with your application. If this is an essential element in your accepting a tenancy then let us know that too. We have limited staff resources, but if you need to speak further on this, then if you could email [development@](mailto:development@) You must include the subject header "Development Plot" if you are to ensure a relatively rapid reply.

### **Crofting/Small Holding Tenancies**

We also have some very limited and marginal croft land for let, and possible other small areas of allotment scale ground within the village. The croft ground is poor ground, with poor access and a fair challenge to make it productive in any major way. But the possibility does exist. It will require a separate application process which will, unfortunately, happen after the housing allocation process is concluded. But might be of interest to some applicants to know that this may be a future option.

Lastly, we are a very small community with very limited staff resources. If you are able to ask any additional questions you have via your application form then that would help allow us to make best use of our available time.

If you feel that all of the above sounds like you, that you meet these criteria and would be able to actively contribute to life on Rum, then we very much look forward to hearing back from you.

Thanks very much.

Sincerely

Steve Robertson  
*On behalf of IRCT Board*