

## **RURAL HOUSING SUB-COMM. MEETING, June 2013**

Held at Ormidale Pavilion Wed 26<sup>th</sup> June, 11am-1.30pm

**Benlister South Update.** Irvine Housing Association will control and factor Benlister South rather than Arran Homes as originally considered. They will use their own allocation policy which will consist of statutory requirements plus some additional adjustments to suit Arran needs. These were decided on after a survey of Housing Needs and Demands on Arran. This showed that 70% of tenancies were in the private sector, there was a lot of concealed need ie. families sharing, a lot of seasonal and short- term letting, health and disability issues and a lot of poor housing stock. Stress was laid on the necessity of all Arran Homes listed people being on the North Ayrshire housing list as well as the Arran list to be considered for one of the 40 rented houses in Benlister. This is believed to have been widely acted upon. The allocation policy will include an allowance for “key worker”. The definition of this is not by occupation but by proven need on Arran, adjudicated by Irvine Housing Association. 60 people attended the information day at Glenisle hotel and there were several enquiries and expressions of interest in the 16 shared equity with some people interested in both shared equity-and renting. The shared-equity will probably range £110 to £125 thousand (final price not arrived at yet)and the first 8 will be ready in September.

**Pressured Area Status.** Arran is now in this category. It excludes “Right to Buy” and has possible funding implications in the sense that extreme need is likely to attract more funding though this is not inevitable.

**Whitebeam Trust** backed by funding from Sannox Church and run by Scottish Churches Housing Action visited Arran and were driven to two houses on Arran by JJ and Margo Wheeler to examine the possibility of factoring and renting them on behalf of their individual owners as affordable housing. No news since then.

**AOB** ACC pointed out the need for new-build on Arran to have provision for alternative means of heating since the electricity crises had exposed the vulnerability of new housing. Benlister South was going down the same road ! It was further pointed out that, extreme events apart, Arran had a lot of power cuts and the indigenous fuel was wood with suppliers on the island. This was acknowledged by Irvine and NAC and would feature in future planning.

ACC drew attention to the provision in Argyle and Bute of £3million to fund deposits for first-time buyers on a loan basis and suggested that NAC do the same since this would mean no loss of revenue. NAC will consider this.

JJ