

**HOUSING & PROPERTY COMMITTEE: 1 MAY 2024: GOOD NEWS**

**Tenant Participation News**

Tenant groups have been arranging Spring Clean Scotland events in their communities to help tidy up local neighbourhoods. Events have been held throughout April and include the Upper Achintore Resident Group working with their local primary school, Plantation Residents Group holding an engagement day to promote tenant participation with young people also taking part in the litter pick, and Windsor Place Residents Association organising an event in their area.

Tenant Participation Officers have helped facilitate these events, helping out on the day as well as providing litter pickers, gloves and bags.

**Ness Hydro Project**

The Ness Hydro project has been shortlisted for the 2024 RIAS awards.

<https://www.rias.org.uk/about/news/2024-february-rias-awards-2024-shortlist-announcement>

The winners of the awards will be announced on 4 June and those winners then become eligible for the RIAS Andrew Doolan Best building in Scotland award (to be announced in November) – one of the most significant architecture prizes in the world.

**Empty Homes**

Dawn Meston from The Highland Council's Housing team won a prestigious award at the Scottish Empty Homes Awards held at The Studio, Glasgow on Thursday 29 February 2024 in recognition of her contribution to bringing empty homes back into use across Highland. Between 1 April and 31 December 2023, a total of 25 empty properties were brought back into use following Dawn's intervention as Highland's Empty Homes Officer. Her caseload currently sits at around 250 cases which reflects the high number of empty homes in Highland (over 3000). A long-term empty home is any privately owned home that has been empty for six months or more.

Empty Homes casework involves providing guidance and information regarding empty properties, including around regulation, loans/ grants, and any initiatives available to bring empty properties back into use, and providing advice on the occupation and management of properties.

If an individual or community has any queries regarding an empty home, please contact [empty.homes@highland.gov.uk](mailto:empty.homes@highland.gov.uk)

Scottish Empty Homes Partnership is funded by the Scottish Government and hosted by Shelter Scotland and the awards hosted by Shelter Scotland.