albyn Housing Society

building homes...supporting communities

2025 - 2026

Annual Report



About Albyn

Established in 1973, Albyn Housing Society is a long-standing housing provider operating across the Highlands of Scotland. We own, maintain, and manage nearly 4,000 homes across a mixed tenure portfolio, reflecting the diverse needs of urban, rural and remote communities.

We are committed to ensuring our tenants have a meaningful voice in shaping the services we deliver. Listening to our tenants also means responding to the challenges they face - ongoing cost-of-living pressures led Albyn to establish a Tenant Support Fund which provides practical advice, signposting and financial support to tenants experiencing hardship. The fund, which has delivered over £500,000 in direct support to tenants, reflects Albyn's commitment to helping people and communities to flourish.

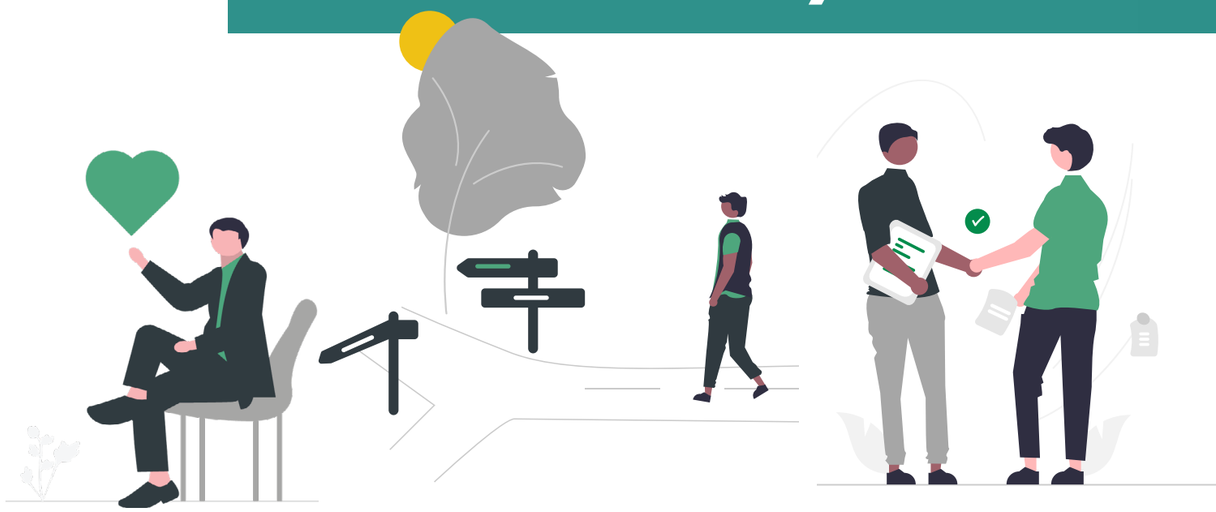
We are proud of our customer-first approach and are always looking for innovative ways to deliver value for money. Our values - Being Adaptable, Being Caring and Being Professional - are at the heart of everything we do.

The Highlands are faced with a significant housing challenge, with an estimated 24,000 new homes required over the next decade to support population and economic growth. Albyn is a key contributor to addressing the Highland Housing Challenge and in 2025, we committed to the delivery of 600 new homes over the next 5 years, strengthening supply in high demand areas and supporting inclusive economic growth.

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Albyn Values



Being caring **Being adaptable** **Being professional**

Albyn Strategic Objectives



Our Homes



Our Customers



Our People



Our Finances and Digital Services



Our Partnerships

Chair's Report



Lesley McInnes, Chair of the Albyn Board

Welcome from the Chair of the Albyn Board

It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report of Albyn for 2025/26.

This report provides an overview of how Albyn has performed over the past year and the progress made against our five objectives: Our Homes, Our Customers, Our People, Our Finances and Digital Services, and Our Partnerships. It also reflects the achievements of the Albyn Group, which includes our subsidiary Highland Residential (Inverness) Limited, in providing a range of housing solutions across the Highlands.

The year has been one of both progress and change for Albyn. Alongside the opportunities and challenges facing the housing sector, we experienced a transition in executive leadership during the year. Throughout this period, the Board remained focused on providing stability, maintaining effective governance and supporting the organisation to continue delivering for customers. I am particularly grateful for the professionalism and commitment demonstrated across the organisation, ensuring that services remained focused on the needs of our customers and communities.

I am pleased that positive progress has been made across all five strategic objectives. We continued to invest in both new and existing homes, progressed our ambitious commitment to deliver more than 600 new homes by 2030, achieved strong tenancy sustainment and rent collection performance, strengthened our digital and cyber resilience through Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation, and continued to grow and develop Highland Residential's Mid-Market Rent, factoring and low-cost home ownership sales. Together, these achievements demonstrate our commitment to meeting housing need and supporting customers.

While the Board has responsibility for governance and strategic oversight, our focus is ultimately on the people we serve. Throughout the year, we have remained committed to ensuring that customer outcomes sit at the heart of decision-making, supporting investment in homes and services, promoting affordability and strengthening communities across the Highlands. Reflecting on the year, I am encouraged by the progress made against our strategic objectives and by the resilience shown across the organisation during a period of change. The Board remains committed to ensuring Albyn continues to evolve, improve and deliver positive outcomes for the customers and communities that depend upon us.

Find out more about our Board on page 20 or visit our website www.albynhousing.org.uk/board-members

Interim CEO's Report

Maureen Knight, Interim Albyn Group CEO



Welcome from the Interim Albyn Group Chief Executive

This Annual Report tells the story of another busy and productive year for Albyn, highlighting the difference our teams have made for tenants, customers and communities across the Highlands.

It provides an opportunity to reflect on the progress made across the organisation during the past year, and to demonstrate how we are delivering against the five strategic objectives set out within our Business Plan. Together, these objectives provide the framework that guides our work and ensures we remain focused on providing high-quality homes, supporting successful tenancies and strengthening communities.

While the operating environment continues to present significant challenges, particularly around housing supply, affordability, fuel poverty and increasing costs, I am pleased that meaningful progress has been achieved across all five strategic objectives. We have continued to invest in our existing homes while progressing our commitment to deliver more than 600 new homes by 2030. We have strengthened support for customers through tenancy sustainment initiatives and income maximisation activities, invested in our people and digital infrastructure and continued to work with partners to address housing need and support communities. Through our subsidiary, Highland Residential, we have also expanded Mid-Market Rent opportunities, supported affordable home ownership and continued to provide factoring services.

Beyond the performance measures and statistics contained within this report are the real outcomes achieved for people and communities. Whether through helping a customer sustain their tenancy, investing in safer and more energy-efficient homes, delivering new housing opportunities or strengthening our digital capability, our focus remains on making a positive difference to the lives of those we serve.

This year has also seen significant investment in the future of the organisation. We have strengthened our financial position, enhanced our cyber security arrangements, improved the systems that support service delivery and continued to build the foundations required to achieve our long-term ambitions. These improvements will help ensure we remain resilient, efficient and able to respond to the changing needs of customers in the years ahead.

As I reflect on the past year, I am incredibly grateful to our staff, Board Members, subsidiary Directors and partners for their commitment and professionalism. Most importantly, thank you to our tenants and customers for the trust they place in us. There is still much to do, but I am confident that the organisation is well placed to build on the progress achieved this year and continue delivering positive outcomes for customers.

Our Homes

We will implement the approved development programme from 2025/26 to deliver 600 homes including 396 homes for social rent, 164 for Mid-Market Rental through Highland Residential and 40 for sale as new supply shared equity homes.
Work with partners developing innovative solutions to embed future sustainability and affordability into existing and new homes to improve the customer experience.

During 2025/26 Albyn continued to implement our development programme of building 600 new homes over a five-year period, with the current year being the second year of this timeframe.

Whilst we completed or acquired 34 units this year, work got underway on a further 125 units across five development schemes in locations from Tain to Ullapool.

Our new units were delivered in the second phase of our Castlepark development in Dingwall whilst 7 properties were acquired from the shared equity programme for rental within the Mid-Market Rental programme through our subsidiary Highland Residential.

We continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure that we can provide the new homes required to provide housing for those in need. This includes, The Highland Council, The Scottish Government, local developers and lenders, without who we would not be able to deliver the positive impact on people's lives.

All of our new homes provide high levels of building performance and efficiency to support affordability, not just in rents, but for energy usage and environmental impact.

We invested a total of £8.5million in the new homes handed over to tenants in the year and a further £2.5million improving our existing housing stock, providing energy efficient heating and improving housing quality.

Looking ahead to the coming period, we plan to invest a further £31million as the new build programme gathers momentum and a further £3million on improvements to our existing housing stock.

We are well supported by our lending partners who have provided finance to enable the completion of our current and planned schemes for the next 12 months and we will continue to work with them to secure further finance as required and as the programme develops.

Reflection from Andrew Martin, Executive Director of Group Services.
The Board has set an ambitious plan to deliver 600 homes over the next five years, and we have seen some challenges in getting development schemes up and running to enable this target to be met.

Albyn has made good progress in the year although delays have been caused by planning issues which have set back the planned start date of several of our schemes. We continue to work with partners to address these issues to ensure that future schemes do not suffer similar consequences which would put at risk our ability to deliver within the timescales anticipated.

Where schemes have completed in year, we have been able to work closely with our delivery contractors to ensure that handovers were phased to allow tenants to move into their new homes with the level of support that we would expect.

Development scheme costs continue to rise across the board, bringing pressure on the grant application process and scheme affordability although to date, our constructive working relationship with partners have seen all grant funding applications submitted being supported.

Work on the determination of shared equity purchases has been supported by a thorough cross disciplinary working team which has ensured that all decisions to purchase have been carefully considered and meet the needs of our portfolio and future tenants.

Expanding the Mid-Market Rental portfolio

Our decision in year to consider the purchase of former shared equity properties when a new buyer could not be found has provided access to a number of high quality, energy efficient homes which would otherwise have been lost to the affordable homes programme.

The option to purchase has arisen through our role as shared equity resale agent for The Scottish Government enabling quick decisions to be made to support the selling owner and retain properties for our Mid-Market Rental portfolio through Highland Residential.

27	7	5	125	£3.4m	89%	£2.5m	91%
New homes completed	New MMR properties	Development schemes started	New homes underway	Repairs investment	Repairs satisfaction	Component replacement spend	Stock meeting SHQS

Developments

Over 2025-26, Albyn completed 27 new homes and work began on a further 125 homes.

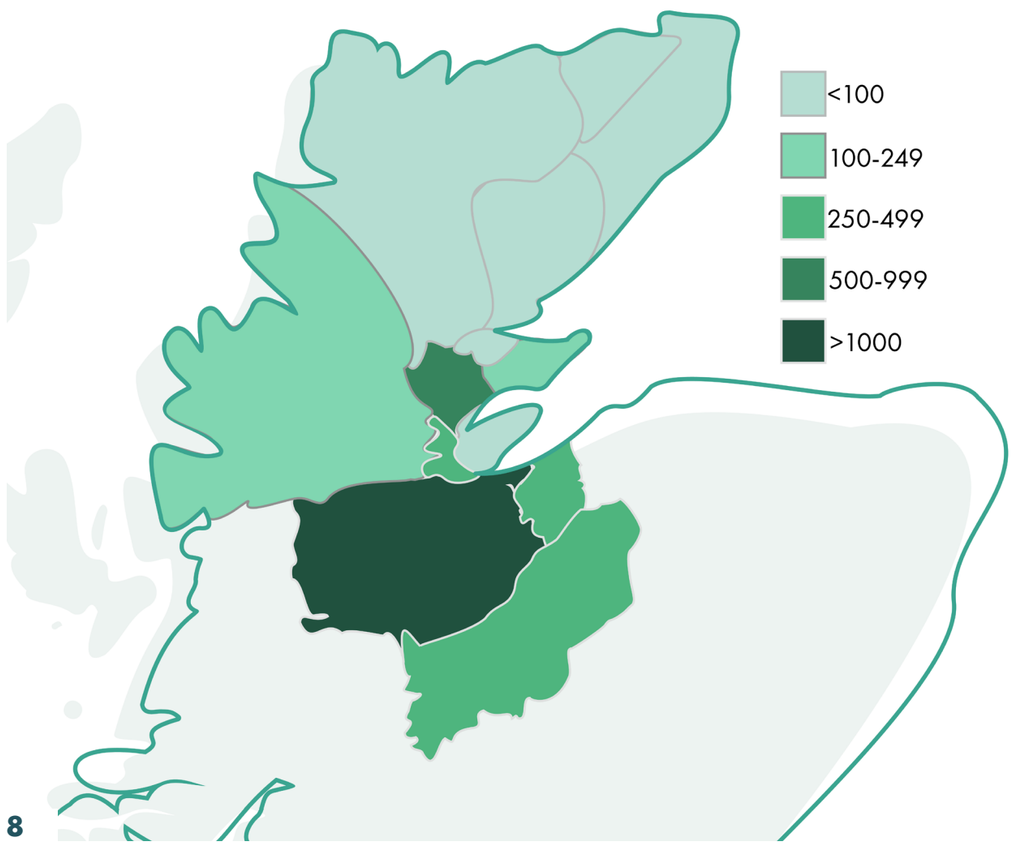








Distribution of Albyn properties



Awards Nominations

A £2.3m social housing development by Albyn in Lairg in the Highlands gained national recognition after it was shortlisted in two categories at the Scottish Home Awards 2025.

The development was shortlisted for the Social Housing Development of the Year (under 100 units) and Community Contribution awards. Although it was not successful in winning on the night, Albyn is extremely proud of the achievement of being nominated.

The specialist new homes represented the first new social housing in the village since the 1990s. They were built on derelict land which had lain empty since the demolition of the Sutherland Arms in 2007 and was donated by the local community group, Lairg Community Development Initiatives (LCDI).

Albyn, which has 3,800 homes in over 70 rural communities across the Highlands, used a local contractor, Compass Building & Construction Services, to deliver the new homes. Some tenants were able to move into their new home two months ahead of the schedule because Compass completed the project earlier than planned.

The development comprises four two-bedroom wheelchair accessible bungalows and four one-bedroom Fit homes with stunning views of Loch Shin. The state-of-the-art Fit homes, pioneered by Albyn as part of the Inverness and Highland City Region Deal, utilise predictive behaviour pattern sensors and harness artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Andrew Martin, Executive Director of Group Services, commented: "*It was really exciting to have this development recognised in this way. It was the result of a great partnership in Lairg between the local community who donated the land, Compass who did such a fantastic job ahead of schedule, our funders, and Albyn's use of technology.*

"Most importantly, this new housing provided high quality homes for our tenants and became part of a strong local community. This was the first social housing project in the village in almost 30 years, and it remains a key priority for Albyn to build in the most rural parts of Scotland, delivering the homes that people need and supporting the Highland economy to thrive."



Our Customers

Our long-term goal is to support the welfare of all our customers by providing proactive energy advice, and practical assistance in maintaining a tenancy and to ease cost pressures associated with starting a tenancy thus promoting long-term housing stability. Through targeted support and advocacy, we will help ensure our customers can maintain and enjoy their homes while promoting energy efficiency and long-term customer satisfaction on the services we provide.

During 2025/26, Albyn continued to strengthen its customer-focused approach by combining practical tenancy support, proactive intervention and service improvement initiatives. Our focus remained on helping customers sustain successful tenancies, improving the overall customer journey and ensuring that support is available at the earliest possible stage.

This work supports our Business Plan objective of promoting long-term housing stability, reducing barriers to successful tenancy sustainment and improving customer satisfaction. By investing in prevention, support services and better customer experiences, we are helping customers remain safe, secure and successful in their homes whilst ensuring resources are used effectively.

Performance reported through the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) demonstrated continued improvement across a wide range of customer-facing services. Improvements in tenancy sustainment, rent collection, anti-social behaviour resolution, void management and adaptations reflect the commitment of our Customer Services teams and the success of a proactive, preventative approach to service delivery.

Throughout the year, our Income, Tenancy Operations and Tenancy Sustainment teams continued to work together to deliver practical support to customers. This collaborative approach has strengthened tenancy sustainment, improved customer outcomes and ensured support is available to those who need it most. By focusing on prevention, early intervention and continuous service improvement, we continue to support customers to maintain successful tenancies while contributing to safe, sustainable communities.

Reflection from Maureen Knight, Interim Albyn Group CEO and Executive Director of Operations.
A particular success during 2025/26 has been the continued cross-team working between our Income, Tenancy Operations and Tenancy Sustainment teams to deliver more proactive services to support our customers to maintain successful tenancies.

The Income Team continued to deliver exceptional arrears performance, achieving some of the lowest arrears levels in the organisation's history whilst maintaining a strong focus on early engagement and support rather than enforcement. Close collaboration with customers at tenancy sign-up, together with increased emphasis on rent payments in advance, has reduced the risk of early tenancy debt and contributed to stronger tenancy outcomes.

The Tenancy Operations Team also achieved strong results throughout the year, maintaining excellent performance in anti-social behaviour case resolution, minimising re-let times and ensuring vacant properties were returned to use as quickly as possible. These improvements have helped reduce rent loss, improve neighbourhood outcomes and provide homes to customers more quickly.

Alongside this, the Tenancy Sustainment Team continued to provide targeted support to customers facing financial pressures, health concerns and other barriers to maintaining a tenancy. The continued rollout of the New Tenant Care Programme and other preventative support initiatives contributed to significant improvements in tenancy sustainment, particularly for customers who had previously experienced homelessness.

Together, these improvements demonstrate the benefits of a coordinated customer service model focused on prevention of homelessness, early intervention and positive customer outcomes. Looking ahead, we will continue to use customer insight, feedback and service performance information to further enhance the customer journey and ensure that our services continue to meet the changing needs of our communities.

New Tenant Care Programme

The continued rollout of the New Tenant Care Programme represented a significant development during 2025/26. The programme was introduced to provide earlier, more proactive support to customers at the start of their tenancy, helping to identify and address potential issues before they escalated.

Working alongside our Income, Tenancy Operations and Tenancy Sustainment Team's, the programme strengthened our preventative approach to service delivery and contributed to improved tenancy sustainment, particularly for customers who had previously experienced homelessness or were facing additional barriers to maintaining their tenancy.

24.3 days — Average re-let time

6% — Properties vacant across the year

72% — New tenants paid advance rent

100% — ASB cases resolved

2% — Arrears reduced

96% — Tenancies sustained for 12 months

4% — Increase in homeless tenancies sustained

168 — Adaptations completed

Making a House a Home

2025-2026 Pilot Project Report

Pilot objectives

- Increase tenancy sustainability
- Improve tenant wellbeing
- Improve partnership working
- Protect assets
- Support households transitioning from homeless to permanent tenancy

The Making a House a Home pilot provided practical support to tenants moving from homelessness into permanent accommodation, as well as households fleeing domestic violence who lacked the financial means to furnish their home. The pilot supported tenants who were excluded from, or partly excluded from, other forms of assistance such as Scottish Welfare Fund grants, including people in employment who continue to face significant financial barriers to furnishing their homes.

How support was delivered

Eligible tenants were identified by our Allocations Teams before they signed their tenance agreement. The Tenancy Sustainment Team then contacted each tenant before they moved into their new home to agree what household items they needed.

The pilot was delivered in partnership with New Start Highland (NSH), which sourced, delivered and installed household items including white goods. Furniture packs were made up of recycled items from NSH stock, while white goods were purchased new, so tenants benefited from warranty cover. This partnership approach with a local social enterprise streamlined delivery; reduced the burden on Albyn resource; and delivered wide social and economic benefits to the local community.

Where specific items or skills were not available through NSH, one-off purchases were made through other retailers and contractors.

During the pilot, 10 participants received various essential household items based on their individual needs. These included beds, bedroom drawers, dining tables and chairs, sofas, bedding and kitchen packs, refrigerators, cookers, washing machines and flooring. Each of these provisions enabled tenants to move into homes that were safe, functional and more immediately liveable.

Tenant Commitment

Each tenant was assigned a Tenancy Sustainment Officer and committed to engaging with the Tenancy Sustainment Team. All tenants engaged with follow-up visits throughout the first six months of their tenancies and continue to engage with the service. As well as supporting the sustainment of tenancies, it has also enabled early identification of further needs that the tenants may have.

Participant profile

- 80% of tenants were Moving from homeless accommodation
- 70% of tenants who participated were employed
- 20% of tenants were fleeing domestic abuse: 2 households
- 60% of tenants were aged between 25-49

The pilot was delivered across the Highlands including Foyers, Dingwall, Fortrose, Evanton, Invergordon, Milton and Thurso, demonstrating the pilot's reach across both rural and town-based communities.

What our participants said about Making a House a Home

"It meant I could move into the home as I had no money to buy items. I can not explain what it meant - it gave me independence. I never had to ask for help before, but everything was handled really well."

"A job well done."

"This was my first home, the move cost a lot and I would not have been able to afford anything for the house. It made my main room feel like home."

"Made it a lot easier for me."

"Fulfilled everything I needed, relieved the stress of having to pay for everything at once. Everything was made very easy. I thought it would be daunting and lots of form filling, but the officers made it really easy."

"It was a good support."



100%

of tenants confirmed support from the pilot reduced anxiety they had about moving.

100%

of tenants confirmed support from the pilot helped them to settle into their home.

£7,130

Pilot total cost

£548.53

Per household cost

Our People

We will develop and improve recruitment, retention and succession plans. Staff development will be framed around staff and organisational ambition. We will continue to focus on staff engagement, communication and organisational culture to be an 'employer of choice' and demonstrate our values.

Our people continue to be at the heart of everything Albyn do. Our ambition is to be an employer of choice where colleagues feel valued, supported and able to develop their careers, while living our values of Being Caring, Being Adaptable and Being Professional. Having the right people, with the right skills and support, is fundamental to delivering excellent services for our customers and achieving our corporate ambitions.

During the year, we continued to strengthen our people framework to support recruitment, retention and future workforce sustainability. This included introducing updated Recruitment and Retention Policies, a new Promotion Policy and progressing the development of a Succession Planning Policy to help ensure we are well positioned for future leadership and workforce needs.

Supporting colleagues to learn, develop and thrive remains a key priority. We further enhanced our Learning and Development Framework, helping to align individual career aspirations with the skills and capabilities Albyn requires for the future. We also strengthened the integration of our organisational values within recruitment and performance review processes, helping to ensure our culture is reflected in how we attract, support and develop colleagues.

We also made significant progress towards implementing a new HR system. While additional assurance and due diligence activity extended the timescale, this approach helped ensure that the solution selected is the right long-term fit for Albyn and will support a more efficient and effective employee experience in the future.

A particular achievement this year was receiving a Strong Assurance rating from Internal Audit for our recruitment and retention arrangements. This independent assessment recognised the effectiveness of our people practices and the commitment of managers and colleagues across the organisation to creating a positive and supportive workplace.

Reflection from Laurie MacLeod, Head of HR and Organisational Development.
One of the highlights for me has been seeing our values come to life through our people. The Staff and Tenant Day was a great example of this, with colleagues from across the organisation taking time to meet customers, listen to their experiences and better understand what matters most to them. Bringing this learning back to the Staff and Board Day helped create a shared understanding of the vital connection between our people, our customers and our ambitions as an organisation.

The Strong Assurance rating from Internal Audit was also a proud moment. It provided independent recognition that our recruitment and retention arrangements are effective and well managed, while reflecting the commitment of managers across Albyn who support, develop and empower their teams every day.

One challenge this year has been progressing the implementation of our new HR system. While we had originally hoped to complete implementation sooner, we were not prepared to compromise on cyber security, data protection requirements or organisational risk. Taking the time to get this right means we can move forward with confidence, knowing we have selected the best long-term solution for Albyn.

Looking ahead, there is much to build on. The launch of our next staff survey, implementation of our new HR system and continued development of our Learning and Development Framework will help us better understand what matters most to our people, strengthen the colleague experience and ensure Albyn remains a great place to work and develop a career.

Specialist Training

We co-ordinated and delivered 'Managing Emotive Community Conversations' training for our front-line colleagues. This was developed in partnership with Diversity Scotland and Cairn Housing Association in response to the increasingly complex and sensitive conversations colleagues can experience when supporting customers and communities.

Diversity Scotland brought specialist expertise to help colleagues understand different perspectives, approach challenging discussions with confidence and respond in a way that reflects our values of Being Caring, Being Adaptable and Being Professional. Working alongside Cairn Housing Association also provided an opportunity to share learning, experiences and good practice with another social housing provider.

This was well received by colleagues, delivered positive outcomes and helped build confidence in managing difficult and emotive conversations. These activities demonstrated the value of listening, learning and partnership working, while supporting our ambition to work collaboratively and continuously improve outcomes for customers and communities.

88	27	8	19	2	59
Number of staff	Recruitment campaigns	Internal promotions	New colleagues welcomed	All staff events	L&D activities supported

Staff and Tenant Day



The importance of staff engagement

Albyn believes that the strength of a positive customer experience is in having engaged staff, who connect with the mission and understand the impact of the work they do, so that decisions are informed by quality interactions. This is why Albyn recently held its third annual Staff and Tenant Action Day, with colleagues visiting tenants across communities throughout the Highlands.

The initiative brings together staff from across the organisation to meet tenants in their homes alongside frontline housing staff. The aim was to give staff at all levels the opportunity to hear directly from tenants and deepen their understanding of how Albyn services affect everyday life.

During the day, teams carried out pre-arranged visits, and estate walkabouts. In addition to identifying follow up actions, feedback was gathered to inform broader service improvements.

This is just one of many ways that Albyn ensured that it's staff have the opportunity, at all levels, to engage with tenants, peers and community members.





Just 4 weeks after the Staff and Tenant Day, the annual Staff and Board Day brought staff together with Board Members to celebrate personal and professional achievements and reflect on their learning from the Staff and Tenant Day.

Staff highlighted how hearing directly from tenants gave them a greater understanding of the challenges and successes

experienced by customers, helping them identify opportunities to improve service delivery, strengthen cross-team working and helping to strengthen understanding between our people, customers and strategic objectives.

The address from Chair of the Board, Lesley McInnes spoke of how far Albyn had come on its journey from good to great, with performance across the organisation exceeding targets and collaborative projects achieving significant benefits for out tenants.

By investing in opportunities for staff to engage with tenants, Board Members and colleagues, Albyn continues to build a culture of learning, collaboration and customer focus. These experiences help staff understand the difference their work makes and support the organisation's commitment to delivering excellent services across the Highlands.





Laurie MacLeod, Head of HR and Organisational Development, commented: *"One of the highlights of the year was the introduction of our Staff and Tenant Day. While engagement with tenants is a core part of our work, this event provided a unique opportunity for colleagues from across the organisation to spend dedicated time listening to tenants, hearing about their experiences and understanding the impact of the services Albyn provide.*

The event created meaningful conversations between staff and customers and reinforced the importance of keeping customer voices at the centre of decision-making. The learning from the day was subsequently shared with Board Members through our Staff and Board engagement event, helping to strengthen understanding of tenant priorities across the organisation".





Our Finances and Digital Services

We will implement measures to manage Albyn's finances to meet regulatory obligations for affordable rents whilst ensuring that there are sufficient financial resources to meet our day-today commitments, business plan objectives and future capital investment needs.
We will successfully implement identified actions to strengthen and enhance our ICT network and data management arrangements and will continue the implementation and exploitation of our housing and asset management software to provide improved digital services and efficient and effective processes.

It is a fundamental quality to have sound financial management and resource control to deliver the objectives within our business plan. Albyn take our responsibilities seriously to ensure that our commitments are affordable, represent a sound investment of our customers money and contribute towards the provision of high-quality homes.

During 2025/26 our turnover increased to £25.3million and our operating surplus for the year was £1.3million, enabling the capital investment in improving tenant's homes to increase by 25% to £2.5million.

Strong performance this year was achieved through close financial control and improvements to internal systems and processes, keeping repair costs broadly in line with the previous year while targeting resources where they could have the greatest impact.

In support of our ongoing development programme, we have seen debt levels increases to £101.5million from £97.8million in 2024/25, whilst close monitoring of interest rate exposure and a downturn in base rates have seen debt servicing costs fall form £4.9million last year, to £4.6million in 2025/26.

Throughout the year we have maintained covenant compliance across all lenders and maintain this as a key performance indicator which is fundamental to our ongoing financial sustainability.

Investments in IT increased to £185k in the year following the appointment of a new managed service provider after an open competitive tender process which delivers greater cyber resilience and competitive costs. This investment included replacement of our internal IT infrastructure alongside ongoing investment in our housing management system.

Introducing the CX Assets module to our housing management system will bring key housing data and information together, supporting better asset management and planning. Progress towards schedule of rates functionality, alongside a new customer and contractor portal, will improve back-office efficiency and strengthen the customer experience.

Reflection from Andrew Martin, Executive Director of Group Services.
After a challenging 2024/25 where operating surpluses were adversely impacted by rising repairs costs and elevated interest rates, the 2025/26 financial year has seen a stronger financial performance with increases in turnover resulting in a stronger operating surplus.

The impact of a stronger financial performance enables decisions to be made on supporting higher investments in tenanted properties, with this year seeing a 25% increase to £2.5million.

As our new homes programme continues to make progress, our debt is rising as planned and Albyn have worked positively with our current lenders to support our ambition and deliver new homes to those that need them. Whilst the number of completed homes in year was relatively low, we are well on track to make good progress towards our 600-unit target with multiple schemes on site in year and on track.

The Highland Housing Challenge remains a key focus for our ambitious delivery plan, and we have worked positively and successfully with all of our key partners in making of contribution to this important objective a reality.

We have continued to work hard to keep rents affordable and a 2.7% increase in 2025/26 was amongst the lowest increases across the social housing sector.

There remain challenges to meet in the years ahead, including the ongoing improvement to energy efficiency and decarbonisation of affordable homes, which will need creative thinking and an honest appraisal to determine how this investment is funded and paid for. In all decisions that we make, we will involve our customers to ensure that their views contribute towards making the decisions which are in the best interests of the whole organisation.

Reflection from Robert Buchanan, Director of IT & Business Services.
Significant progress has been made during the year to modernise and enhance our technology platforms. A programme of targeted improvements across our core systems has strengthened our operational capability, streamlined key processes and laid the foundations for further digital transformation. These investments will support more efficient services and an improved customer experience for Albyn tenants in the years ahead.

Cyber Essentials Plus

To demonstrate our commitment to protecting our organisation, our tenants and our information, Albyn achieved Cyber Essentials Plus certification. The accreditation involved a rigourous assessment of our systems and security controls, helping ensure that appropriate measures are in place to prevent, detect and respond to potential cyber risks. This strengthens the resilience of our digital services and provides greater assurance that we are taking the necessary steps to keep information secure.

£25.3m	2.7%	£1.3m	£4.4m	3,887	2%
Turnover	Rent increase	Operating surplus	Planned and routine maintenance	Total Albyn homes	Gross rent arrears

Our Partnerships

We will continue to strengthen partnerships that deliver positive outcomes for our customers and communities. This includes building on our collaboration with New Start Highland to support tenancy sustainment, employability and community wellbeing, while also exploring new strategic partnership opportunities that enhance the services and support available to tenants.

Partnership working is central to how Albyn delivers its services and achieves its strategic ambitions. No single organisation can address the housing challenges facing the Highlands alone, and by working collaboratively with local authorities, community organisations, contractors, sector partners and support agencies, we can achieve far greater impact for our customers and communities.

Our partnerships help us address housing need, tackle poverty and inequality, strengthen community resilience, support successful tenancies and ensure that customers live in safe, secure and well-maintained homes. They also provide opportunities to share learning, develop innovative approaches and contribute to wider regional priorities such as the Highland Housing Challenge.

During 2025/26, partnership working remained a key strength for Albyn. Through collaborative relationships we supported tenants entering new homes, contributed to strategic discussions on poverty and housing, strengthened customer engagement, maintained excellent compliance performance and continued to play an active role in shaping housing solutions across the Highlands.

Partnership activity this year extended from frontline support for new tenants through to strategic engagement with national and regional stakeholders. Whether helping customers furnish a home, promoting community wellbeing, improving tenant safety or contributing to discussions about the future housing needs of the Highlands, our focus has remained on working together to deliver positive outcomes that matter to customers.

Performance highlights:

- Continued active participation in the Highland Housing Challenge.
- Maintained strong strategic relationships with The Highland Council, The Scottish Government and sector partners.
- Delivered a successful Staff and Tenant Day, strengthening customer engagement and organisational learning.
- Continued partnership working with New Start Highland to support new tenants through the Making a House a Home initiative.
- Contributed to the Highland Poverty Commission, helping shape discussions around poverty, housing affordability and community wellbeing.
- Maintained 100% gas servicing compliance through close partnership working with Cardo.

Reflection from Maureen Knight, Interim Albyn Group CEO and Executive Director of Operations.
One of the aspects of performance that I am most proud of this year is the depth and diversity of the partnerships that support our work. Effective partnership working is often not visible to tenants, but it plays a critical role in helping us deliver successful outcomes every day.

A particularly positive example has been our partnership with New Start Highland. Through our Making a House a Home initiative and links with the New Tenant Care Programme, customers moving into a new tenancy have been able to access practical support at a crucial point in their housing journey. For many households, particularly those experiencing financial pressures or moving from temporary accommodation, these initiatives have helped remove barriers to establishing and sustaining a successful tenancy.

We also continued to play an active role in wider discussions about poverty and inequality through our involvement with the Highland Poverty Commission. Housing is a key factor in tackling poverty and improving life opportunities, and we have welcomed the opportunity to contribute our experience and insight to help shape future solutions across the region.

Tenant safety remains one of our highest priorities. Working closely with Cardo, we have continued to deliver a robust compliance programme which ensured we maintained 100% gas servicing compliance throughout the year. This achievement reflects the commitment of both organisations and provides important assurance that tenants are living in safe homes.

Looking ahead, partnership working will remain fundamental to our success. The scale of housing demand across the Highlands, together with ongoing affordability pressures and wider economic challenges, means collaboration has never been more important. We will continue to work with partners to strengthen communities, deliver housing solutions, support successful tenancies and ensure Albyn remains a trusted and influential contributor to the Highland Housing Challenge.

Gas Compliance Prize Draw

Albyn arrange for gas boilers to be serviced every year in order to ensure tenant safety and the efficient operation of heating systems. These checks are a legal requirement and are undertaken by trained Gas Safe engineers. We teamed up with Heatcare (since acquired by Cardo Scotland) back in November 2025 to launch a quarterly prize draw for tenants who provide first time access for their gas safety check.
To be in with a chance of winning, all tenants have to do is provide access on their first scheduled appointment. Tenants will then automatically be entered into the prize draw to win a £50 voucher, and Cardo will be in touch with the lucky winner.







Invergordon Off The Wall

'Off the Wall' are a voluntary community initiative who aim to address the social and economic deprivation in Invergordon, their aims are to promote the heritage of Invergordon and take care of the incredible mural trail, which started with The Loch, painted on Albyn's offices in 2004 by Ken White.

Regular events are organised by Off the Wall in order to fundraise, and celebrate the mural trail. Albyn were delighted to participate in an event that marked the 21st anniversary of the mural trail. The celebration took place in The Natal Gardens, and was packed with fun activities, a kids art competition and live music. Albyn representatives were able to speak with community members and promote the work of Albyn around Tenancy Sustainment and Community Fund.







Councillors, MPs, MSPs

We maintain regular communication with Councillors, MPs and MSPs across the Highlands to build strong relationships and ensure the voices of our tenants are heard. This provides an opportunity to engage directly on local issues, advocate for our tenants and understand the challenges facing people in the communities we serve.

Emma Roddick, in now the MSP for Inverness and Nairn. However, when she visited in 2025 with Fithomes tenant, Chris, she was a regional MSP for Highlands and Islands.



Chris (tenant) with Housing Officer, Emily Forbes and Emma Roddick MSP

Governance

The Albyn Board is elected by our shareholding members and supports the effective governance of the organisation through strategic oversight of its activities.

All Board Members volunteer their time to freely to Albyn and the organisation is extremely grateful for their commitment and the important role that they play in providing affordable housing to people in the Highlands. It is the responsibility of the Board to set Albyn's strategic direction, overseeing its performance and ensuring it remains focused on delivering our objectives and commitments.

2025/26 saw a continuing focus upon building, refreshing, and strengthening the skills and knowledge of the Board. Members undertook a variety of training which included a programme of eLearning modules, courses, and attendance at conferences.

Meetings have continued to be delivered in a hybrid format which gives Members the flexibility to be an active part of the Board in a way that is most suitable for them. This has contributed to the continuing excellent levels of attendance achieved at meetings.

The Board also recognise the importance of all Members coming together in person and the Board Strategy Day, and Staff and Board Day, offered an opportunity for this.

During 2025/26, the Board consisted of:

Lesley McInnes: Chair of the Board
Clea Warner: Board Vice-chair
Carl Patching: Chair of Audit and Risk Committee
Scott Macleod
Jackie Bugden
Lynne Holburn
Niall Owen
Craig Levy
Ewan McGarrie
Annice Newlands
Terri Semple



Our Board



LESLEY MCINNES
CHAIR



CLEA WARNER
VICE CHAIR



CARL PATCHING
CHAIR OF AUDIT AND RISK



NIALL OWEN
BOARD MEMBER



LYNNE HOLBURN
BOARD MEMBER



SCOTT MACLEOD
BOARD MEMBER



JACKIE BUGDEN
BOARD MEMBER



CRAIG LEVY
BOARD MEMBER



ANNICE NEWLANDS
BOARD MEMBER



EWAN MCGARRIE
BOARD MEMBER



TERRI SEMPLE
BOARD MEMBER

Our Leadership Team

The Leadership Team is responsible for day to day management of Albyn.

They work closely with the Board to set the strategic direction of Albyn and ensure this is translated into clear organisational priorities. This guides the Extended Leadership Team, which is made up of Leadership Team, Heads of Service, and Operational Managers to turn these priorities into effective operational plans that deliver high-quality services to our customers.



MAUREEN KNIGHT
INTERIM ALBYN GROUP CEO / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



ANDREW MARTIN
DEPUTY CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GROUP SERVICES



ROBERT BUCHANAN
DIRECTOR OF IT AND BUSINESS SERVICES



LAURIE MACLEOD
HEAD OF HR AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our Subsidiaries

Subsidiaries

Albyn has three wholly owned subsidiaries and together we are called the Albyn Group.

- Highland Residential (Inverness) Limited – undertakes factoring and low cost home ownership and rental.
- Albyn Enterprises Limited – undertakes activities of a non-charitable nature that will help Albyn to meet its objectives.
- Sunnd Limited - formed for the potential exploitation of innovation. Currently a dormant company.

As the parent of these subsidiaries, the Board provides strategic oversight to ensure that they operate in a way that is consistent with and contributes to our values, purpose, and objectives

Highland Residential

highland residential

SALES • LETTING • FACTORING

Highland Residential (Inverness) Limited is Albyn Group's wholly owned subsidiary, providing Mid-Market Rent homes, factoring services and affordable home ownership support across the Highlands. Through these services, Highland Residential helps widen housing choice, supports sustainable communities and contributes positively to the wider Albyn Group.

During 2025/26, Highland Residential continued to grow its Mid-Market Rent portfolio, provide property management services to owner occupiers and support affordable home ownership through the Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers (LIFT) and shared equity re-sales. The business also completed important digital and operational improvements, strengthening customer services and improving efficiency across the organisation.

Reflection from Maureen Knight, Interim Albyn Group CEO and Executive Director of Operations. 2025/26 has been an important year in Highland Residential's development. While continuing to deliver strong financial performance, the year also marked significant progress in strengthening the organisation's operating model, improving services and preparing for future growth.

Across the Mid-Market Rent service, Highland Residential continued to demonstrate the benefits of a proactive and customer-focused approach. Strong arrears performance, high tenancy sustainment levels and continued growth in the portfolio reflect the team's commitment to supporting customers whilst maintaining a financially sustainable service. Through initiatives such as the Tenant Support Fund and closer collaboration with Albyn Group teams, practical support was provided to customers facing financial challenges, helping more households sustain successful tenancies.

The year also highlighted the increasing importance of Highland Residential's role in providing affordable housing choices across the Highlands. Continued investment in Mid-Market Rent homes and the successful acquisition of additional properties has expanded opportunities for people who may not qualify for social housing but continue to face challenges accessing suitable accommodation within the private rented sector.

Factoring services remained a significant area of activity, supporting owner occupiers and mixed-tenure communities across a large geographical area. During the year, particular emphasis was placed on strengthening governance arrangements, reviewing policies and improving service standards. Customer feedback highlighted opportunities to further improve communication and service consistency, helping to shape priorities for the year ahead.

The sales and home ownership service delivered an excellent year, exceeding targets for LIFT and shared equity re-sales and helping more households access affordable home ownership opportunities. A major operational milestone was the successful completion of Highland Residential's migration to the Civica Cx housing management platform alongside the upgrade of the CPL Factoring Solution. These investments have strengthened reporting, improved operational efficiency and created a stronger platform for future service improvement, providing staff with better tools and information to support customers effectively.

Looking ahead, Highland Residential will continue to improve customer satisfaction, strengthen the factoring service, grow the Mid-Market Rent portfolio and make greater use of technology, insight and customer feedback to shape services while balancing growth with strong governance and customer focus.

95%
Tenancies sustained for 12 months

3%
Mid-Market Rent arrears

1%
Gross rent arrears

2.8m
Turnover

2,000
Factored properties

48
Re-sales completed



albyn group

building homes...supporting communities

Scottish Housing Regulator

OSCR
Scottish Charity Regulator
www.oscr.org.uk
Registered Charity
SC027123

sfha
Scottish Federation of Housing Associations

Scotland's Housing Network
Your partner in housing