

# ON-SITE

SPRINGFIELD NEWSLETTER ISSUE 35 June 2011

## Springfield's Multiple Hopes In Award Entries

THERE is potentially excellent news in the pipeline for Springfield this month as we wait for the outcome of our multiple entries in this year's Scottish Home Awards.

It's quite a raft for a company of our size with seven projects in with a chance.

The announcement is due to be made on June 9 and will come after we hit the headlines recently when our Moray Apartments in Edinburgh won an award in the 2011 Homes for Scotland lists.

That's continuing good news as summer looms and we look for signs of growing confidence in the market at this difficult time for the entire construction industry.

Springfield are still very much to the fore both on the national and local front as we strengthen our position with acquisitions and look positively at the future.

Difficult times in the Scottish house-building industry will continue and Moray has had a particularly cruel blow with the loss of RAF Kinloss and a continuing threat to the future of RAF Lossiemouth which ought to be finalised with a Government announcement on July 19.

Our sales team is rising to these challenging and uncertain times as Springfield fights back and does all we can to maximise opportunities and progress where we can in the North and South of the country.

Our land bank is growing and we continue to outperform other builders.

Remember 'On-Site' keeps you up to date with lots of Springfield news. It is your newsletter and if you hear of something you think could be of interest contact us by calling Jane Innes at the Head Office or drop her a line at Alexander Fleming House.

# Our Vision for Banff

## Golden Knowes Site Offers Outstanding Sea Views

SPRINGFIELD Properties has given early notice of a proposal that could see up to 130 new homes developed on an 18 acre site on the western approaches to Banff.

Although at an early stage our preliminary outline is for between 120 and 130 homes on land immediately west of Golden Knowes Road from where access would

be gained.

The 17.9 acre site between Golden Knowes Road and the Banff Springs Hotel to the east and Linksfield Farm to the west, would deliver spectacular and unrivalled views to the west and north over the Moray Firth, Banff Links and Whitehills.

Our Land Director Kenny Shand said: "We are really at the start of the process. The proposed site is allocated for housing and we have met with Aberdeenshire Council to discuss our plans and have submitted a planning application proposal.

"The next stage will be a 12 week period of consultation as part of which Springfield will stage a public meeting to gauge opinion and show local people our proposals in more detail."

An "indicative" layout for the site has been produced and if the development passes through the relevant planning process as anticipated construction could start in late 2012.

The planned public meeting will be advertised in advance, staged in Banff and be attended by senior Springfield staff.

We are not new to the Banff area having already developed the Golf View site in Macduff – another location that delivered new home buyers with fine vistas over the Moray Firth from an elevated position.



An indicative layout showing 127 homes on our proposed site to the west of Banff's Golden Knowes Road and close to the Banff Springs Hotel.

## Lucky Pair!

THERE'S some good news for two Springfield workers who have each won prizes in our monthly draw for £100 Tesco supermarket vouchers.

Our April winner is foreman fencer Austin Robertson who has worked with us for four years, covering all our sites with his squad of fencers.

The winner for the May draw is plant operator Stewart Bryne who has been with Springfield for 18 months and drives a forklift on our affordables site at Forres.

Well done both!

## This Top Duo Will Be The First Of Many



Maureen and Kim celebrate their recognition with sandy Anderson.

THE first two employees to be recognised in Springfield's Employee Recognition Scheme have been named.

It's a great honour as the recipients were nominated by managers and foremen who recognise extraordinary effort, particularly in relation to excellent customer service, commitment, add value, teamwork/knowledge sharing and creativity.

Our first line up starts with Maureen Mackenzie who is always willing to help out and has shown outstanding commitment to the smooth running of the office by taking on reception duties, often at short notice.

Maureen has had to learn new skills and has become a permanent member of the reception team.

Our second recipient is accounts assistant Kim Murray who, as well as always being ready to assist as part of her main job, has been recognised for her willingness to help out even outside working hours, staying behind to cater a meeting after 5pm was no problem for her.

Congratulations both – Maureen and Kim.

## Looking Ahead – Feeling Positive

**THERE** have been difficult times for the UK economy since last year, but our chairman Sandy Adam takes a positive view as he looks to the future.

He says: "In this edition of On-Site there is lots of good news for the future of our company including the submission of a planning application for more than 100 new homes in Banff, the announcement of our joint venture to build a new village near Aviemore and the opening of our Stirling office.

"Myself and the board are kept very busy at the moment on projects which will ensure that we have lots of work ready to go when the market picks up again.

"The site at Banff falls into this category and I am heartened to hear that submitting the planning application has generated sales interest already.

"An Camas Mor is the new village near Aviemore proposed by the local community



Our chairman Sandy Adam sees lots of good news.

to address a severe shortage of housing. Our reputation for high quality build and our experience in the delivery of affordable housing singled us out as the build partner on this prestigious project.

"This is the first time a new village has been built in a National Park and the big challenge is to make sure we deliver the vision of the community who have been working on bringing this very special place to fruition for many years.

"Finally, the opening of our Stirling office is a milestone marker in the planned growth of our company. We now have three live sites in Central Scotland with another coming on stream and more in the planning pipeline. The Stirling office will manage the sales and build of our Central Scotland sites with all accounting, IT, HR and materials procurement being managed from our head office in Elgin.

"We are working hard to achieve strategic moves which deliver our plans for growth in North and in Central Scotland, your ongoing support and consistent quality of workmanship is helping us to achieve deals now which secure work for when a strong housing market returns."

## Stirling Office Opens For Business



Springfield's new office in Stirling will service our Central Belt business.

IT was once the seat of Scotland's kings, a parliament and the ancient capital – now it's the base for Springfield Properties' Central Scotland office.

The opening of the office signals the confidence with which we are embracing our expansion into southern Scotland and will allow for more efficient working for sites managed from Stirling.

Springfield has reported a profit in every year of trading and the company has grown steadily. Geographic expansion has been planned to sustain growth and profitability and so the opening signals a milestone in the achievement of our plans for growth.

The office in Melville Terrace is centrally located and takes in the first floor of a grand Victorian house which was converted to offices some years ago. With six main rooms, including a board room, the office has the potential to be home to about

fourteen staffers who will run the sales, construction, design and commercial management of our Central Scotland sites.

Management of our North sites, accounting, IT, HR and materials procurement will continue to be serviced from our head office in Elgin.

Stirling and its vicinity were our search areas, sitting as they do at the intersection of Scotland's main arterial routes and with 80% of the Scots population living no more than one hour away it is the perfect location in terms of access to our current and planned Central Scotland development sites.

## Fingers Crossed For Top Awards Result

AS On-Site went to press everyone had their fingers crossed for a great outcome from this year's Scottish Home Awards.

On June 9 we'll all know – and at least we can be confident of having a pretty good stake in the outcome.

Springfield projects figure no less than seven times on the Scottish Home Awards shortlist – six submitted by us and another submitted by housing association.

In addition to our six entries in the Awards

that have reached the shortlist stage one of our properties, our much-admired Moray Apartments in Edinburgh, has reached the shortlist as an entry from Dunedin Canmore Housing Association.

More than 150 entries were received for this year's Scottish Home Awards and 109 made it to the finals so we're pleased with our success so far and have our fingers crossed for good news when the winners are announced in Edinburgh at a dinner on June 9.

Springfield Properties are in the running for:

- Apartment of the Year for Edina Apartments
- Community Partnership of the Year for Moray Apartments
- Environmental Excellence Award for our air source heat pump initiative
- House of the Year for the Moy at Knockomie Meadows
- Small Affordable housing Development of the Year for Linkwood East
- Housebuilder of the Year (small category)

## Employee Representative Minutes Available

THE latest Employee Representatives meeting was staged on May 25 and you can read the minutes in company premises.

The minutes are available in the office canteen and in all of our site huts.

If you would like to comment on any matter covered in the minutes or simply want to raise a separate subject, be sure to contact your Employee Representative.

Remember, we welcome all comments.

Current employee members are scaffolder Robert Thomson, site manager Gerry Devine (Central Belt), civil engineer Brad MacLeod, civils labourer Duncan Wilson and marketing and communications manager Jane Innes.

If you have any questions, concerns or ideas our representative wants to hear from you.

## There's No Stopping Our Cisca!



*Our London Marathon wonder – Cisca Cameron completed the event in under three and a half hours.*

THE 2011 London Marathon was a bit of a walkover for our very own long distance runner, Cisca Cameron.

Not only did our fleet-footed sales expert achieve her target time for the April event – she went on to beat it!

Cisca ran the gruelling event in an amazing three hours, 29 minutes and 35 seconds and raised over £1000 pounds for charity.

Delighted with her time she says now she has broken three and a half hours she is happy and she would not mind if she never broke it again.

But ever competitive Cisca had to eat her words when she took part in the more recent Edinburgh Marathon and finished in an amazing three hours, 27 minutes and 31 seconds.

She performed exceptionally well in her 35+

age group and finished around 29th out of 1032 runners while ending up 86th out of 2919 women who ran the Edinburgh event.

"It was tough, but really satisfying to break the three hours 30 minutes barrier," said. "Better still was the response I got to my fund-raising for Cancer Research that has raised well over £1700 from both the London and Edinburgh marathons."

So, has Cisca got a summer of putting her running shoes in cold storage ahead? Not a bit of it!

On August 27 she's off again – this time to run much further than the two marathons she's just completed. The 2011 Speyside Way Ultra is a demanding 36.5 mile course and Cisca is determined to give it her best.

We're sure she'll do it.

Spectacular stuff Cisca – keep it up!

## David Knocks Them Out at Buckie

### Charity Event Success Helped by Springfield

ONE of our site managers was packing a lot of sand in mid-May – but it was all in a good cause.

David Milton volunteered to help the Friends of Seafeld Hospital in Buckie add an attraction for their fund-raising It's a Knock-Out that was staged at Buckie's Linzee Gordon Park on May 14.

The ever-resourceful David, who looks after our Letterfourie site in Buckie, provided a load of sand and decanted it into a paddling pool to provide a base for a "lucky straws" competition



*The Springfield It's a Knock-Out team ready for action at the Buckie Friends of Seafeld Hospital event.*



*These fun and games for Seafeld Hospital received a big boost thanks to Springfield site manager David Milton.*

that went on to raise £102.

One of the organisers of the 'Knock-Out' event was Denise Thomson from Cornhill.

She said: "It was a cold day but we still managed to attract a good attendance and we were delighted that we not only had David Milton's help but also a team sponsored by Springfield."

The event was designed to generate funds to pay for a palliative bed for the town's Seafeld Hospital and raised a superb £5400.

## Homes for Scotland Awards Honour

IN April On-Site reported the handover of our first affordable housing development in Central Scotland.

It was a first in more ways than one because it was the pilot project for an innovative funding model which should see more affordable mid market rentals hit the hard pressed market.

And now our part as the Build Partner in the pilot project has been recognised with an award from Homes for Scotland, our industry representative body.

Springfield chairman Sandy Adam is delighted with the recognition.

"We knew this was a good scheme as soon as we looked at it," he says. "Constraints on Government funding for the foreseeable future mean that we need innovative ideas like this to drive private finance into affordable housing and keep this industry doing what it does best – building the homes that the people of Scotland need."

Our Moray apartments property has been successful on many fronts – Dunedin Canmore have been delighted with the property which has proved popular and has been fully let in record time.

## And The Results Are...!

YOU may have heard through your employee representatives that the results of the Best Companies Employee Engagement Survey are in.

This year we achieved 'one to watch' status which is one category down from last year – indicating a slight drop in engagement levels.

While improvement is required in areas such as 'My Manager' and 'Leadership', our staff scored the company high in areas of 'Wellbeing' and 'Personal Growth'.

Recommendations to improve engagement levels have now been put to the board and we also welcome your input either by suggestions to your managers or via your employee representatives on ways to make you feel more involved and engaged with Springfield.

Our HR Manager Heather Henderson has thanked all those that took the time to complete questionnaires and says if anyone would like to view the results in more detail she will be happy to arrange this.

Heather says: "It is only with your honest input that we can work to make things better. Thank you to everyone who took part"

## Our Deeside Site Takes Off

Interest in this new development started early – even before the homes were release and we expect good levels of business over the summer.

The designs were specially drawn to satisfy the stringent standards set for new homes built by the National Park Planning Authority.



This is a taste of what is to come at our Middleton of Canmore site in Braemar.

## An Camas Mor Launched

SPRINGFIELD is taking a leading role in an exciting new Highland project that will deliver the first new village ever planned in a National Park.

An Camas Mor will take shape on 105 acres in Rothiemurchus to the east of the River Spey at Aviemore and could see up to 1500 new homes provided for the community over the next quarter of a century.

The planning process has been led by Rothiemurchus Estate with assistance from a strong professional design team led by Gehl Architects.

Planning permission in principle was granted,

with conditions, for the proposal on June 11 last year and the immediate next steps include the preparation of a landscape and ecology plan together with a masterplan which must be approved by the Cairngorms National Park Authority.

It is hoped that the first Springfield-built homes will be ready for occupation by next year in a first phase that is expected to include 150 affordable homes prioritised for those on local housing lists and 50 for the open market.

The brief for this new Highland community is founded on the wish of the local people for essential housing to be provided in a planned way that benefits Aviemore and the wider area in the long term.

Local people initiated the idea and have been involved in developing an outline masterplan for a 'new community in the Highlands'.

The vision is for a special place with housing, community and work space for all, acknowledging the relationship with Aviemore for higher level services.

At the core of the proposal is a goal to create a 'good habitat for people' by concentrating on life, space and buildings in that order.

Cairngorm National Park and in particular, Aviemore, is a vibrant place where families have lived for generations.

For 40 years there has been a chronic shortage of housing, business premises and community facilities for local people and An Camas Mor was proposed by the Aviemore and Vicinity Community Council in 1989 as the solution.

Although the site could include up to 1500 residential units and associated businesses community facilities and infrastructure, the plan will be subjected to regular reviews.

Springfield was chosen as the development partner because we are a family business with a reputation for caring about what we do.

We are focused on delivering the quality product and service our clients ask for and have an excellent record in the provision of high quality affordable housing.

Springfield has also been identified as able to share in the vision of what needs to happen to successfully deliver a new village in an important National Park.

We are preparing for the next step which requires us to put a team together to deliver a masterplan for ecology, landscape and the built form.

The project is ecology led to deliver a village designed to fit into the ecology and increase biodiversity. The team will be announced shortly.

The completion of the masterplan will allow us to press ahead with an application for full planning consent for the first phase of 200 homes which will be delivered within the framework of the masterplan. We have been tasked with submitting this application within six months from now.

This is a prestigious project for Springfield and the challenge is to deliver the vision of the community.

The architecture needs to be uplifting in a place that is already very special and the new community needs to have a positive impact on ecology and landscape.

Chairman Sandy Adam says: "We are delighted to have been chosen and to join a project which has such impetus and vision".

## Hard work pays off on the sales front

It's onward and upward for sales in the South. Tricia Malek, our Central Scotland sales manager is now based at Springfield's new Stirling Office and after seeing our Edinburgh Edina Apartments bucking all trends by selling out in a record 20 weeks, she's hot on the heels of a sell out at Broxburn with more than half the homes already sold.

Brunstane Apartments, which were released on May 21, has generated a steady flow of potential clients for sales consultant Mary Forrest. Seven apartments have been sold and Mary is very optimistic this sales rate will persist.

On Deeside our Middleton of Canmore homes in Braemar started selling before they were officially released. These homes are proving popular with the local market and as second homes. The properties are being sold from our Stirling office but built from our Elgin base and offer our clients the rare opportunity to buy a new home in this popular and beautiful village.

The North has been having a tougher time but sales manager Joyce Napier remains ever upbeat and says some reservations have been coming in for homes and that interest in sites like Knockmie Meadows in Forres is still good.

"Our problem is that many of our would-be clients have houses to sell and until they can secure that it means they are not in a position to sign for a new home," she says.

"It's very frustrating for them, and us. We know we could sell more houses but the indecision over RAF Lossiemouth and the ongoing difficulty over mortgage availability is taking its toll."

The decision on RAF Lossiemouth is due to be announced on July 19 and Joyce believes we'll begin to see a change in the market following the announcement.

On the bright side our IV30 apartments in Elgin have sold like hot cakes with only four left while initial interest in our proposals for more than 100 new homes in Banff is already taking off. We are also expecting an upturn in interest at Buckie when we release Middleton at Letterfourie and its mix of larger, higher specification homes.

## Mary Makes it Home

During the recent high winds the Forth Road Bridge was closed and purchasers at Edina Apartments were concerned that Mary Forrest our Brunstane sales consultant would not make it home. Three of them offered to put Mary up for the night - it just goes to show how popular she is with Springfield purchasers who have bought from her! They are going to miss you when you sell out at Brunstane Mary!