



# SOUTH DEVON RURAL

HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

## PRESS RELEASE

South Devon Rural Housing Association is pleased to announce the Association's latest purchase of a home under the South Hams Intermediate Rental Enterprise (SHIRE) scheme. The scheme, operated in cooperation with South Hams District Council, has already provided 7 much needed affordable homes in South Hams, at typically, 80% of the prevailing market rent. The scheme is also set to provide a further 3 family homes which will be let before Christmas and 5 more family homes which will be let before the end of March 2010.

The accommodation is a two bedroomed bungalow, close to the town centre of Totnes, which has been specially adapted to accommodate a paraplegic man, Kane Roberts. Kane, the new tenant, was referred to the Association by South Hams District Council.

Kane was the victim of motor cycle accident which left him with spinal injuries. After spending 10 months in the spinal injury department of Salisbury Hospital, Kane was keen to get back to South Hams, his family, his friends and support network. As his father, who is blind, lived in a property with steps, Kane was not able to move back home, so he accepted temporary accommodation in a Babbacombe B&B as this was the closest he could get to home. The Association was asked if it could find suitable accommodation under the SHIRE scheme. The Association acted quickly to source a suitable property for sale on the open market. It soon became clear that a flat was not going to meet the needs of Kane, who has a lot of equipment including a number of wheel chairs, to help support his desire to live independently. Property prices in Totnes remain high and particularly for bungalows, which it was clear Kane would need. However, after several months of searching in vain, a bungalow came onto the market near the town centre in Totnes, which was capable of being adapted to meet the needs of Kane and bringing him nearer to his family and support network. In the meantime Kane had moved back in with his Father in Dartmouth, as he had struggled to maintain contact with family, friends and his support network. Unfortunately this solution was also fraught with problems as he relied on the availability of friends to carry him in and out of the property. In fact he was mostly housebound, only going out once a week to indulge his passion for his hobby of Nitro Car racing with friends.

Having sourced a potential home for Kane it was a collaboration of the agencies, individuals and officers from South Hams Council, who working together, made it all happen.

The Association particularly wants to thank the following individuals involved:

Councillor Mike Saltern, Housing Portfolio Holder, Liam Reading, Affordable Housing Manager, for supporting the SHIRE scheme; Occupational Therapist, Lorna Maunder and Mark Nicol, Environmental Health Technician for working on the Disabled Facilities Grant needed to adapt the property to meet Kane's needs. Along with all the contractors and Association staff who also worked to give Kane a secure home and future.

A broad smile comes across Kane's face now when he describes what his '*home for life*' has done to improve his quality of life. He has easy access to good transport links, he can come and go as he pleases and is close to a support network of friends and family who help him in his desire to maintain independent living. Oh, and he can now race his Nitro remote controlled cars whenever he wants to. The Association wishes Kane all the best for the future in his new '*home for life*'.

The event will be marked by a visit to Kane's home at 1pm on Thursday 10 December 2009, where he will be presented with his 'New tenant welcome pack', and visitors can view the accommodation. Invited guests are welcome to continue the celebrations at a buffet lunch in the Seven Stars Hotel, Totnes from 1.45pm.

Any questions regarding this press release should be directed to Steven Prime, Chief Executive of South Devon Rural Housing Association on 01803 863550.

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