

# Housing group helps Kane move into perfect home

**WHEELCHAIR** bound motorcycle accident victim Kane Roberts has the Totnes home he desperately needs so he can live near his family thanks to the latest initiative by a South Devon housing association.

The 19-year-old teenager spent 10 months in the spinal injuries department at Salisbury Hospital after his accident.

When he came out he ended up in bed and breakfast accommodation in Babbacombe in Torquay, miles away from his father in Dartmouth, his friends and any support network.

When he tried to move back in with his father, who is blind, the nature of the property meant he had to rely on friends just to carry him in and out of the house, leaving him mostly housebound.

Now Kane has a specially-adapted home of his own in Totnes thanks to the South Devon Rural Housing Association which managed to find a suitable bungalow at The Carrions and convert it to meet Kane's needs.

The two bedroom home was bought under the South Hams Intermediate Rental Enterprise scheme which is operated with co-operation from South Hams Council and provides homes at below market rents.

Kane moved in at the beginning of November and is delighted with the accommodation which enables him to keep in contact with family and friends and also access a transport system which is



■ **THRILLED:** Kane Roberts, front middle, and girlfriend Lucy Griffiths with flowers. Front right is Gordon Ruwald from South Devon Rural Housing Association

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wheelchair friendly and maintain his independence.

It also means he can get out to take part in his hobby of racing Nitro remote-controlled cars.

A spokesman for the housing association said the association had spent months trying to find suitable accommodation for Kane.

"It soon became clear 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," he said.

"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.

"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."

So far seven homes in the Totnes, Dartmouth and Ivybridge have been bought under the SHIRE scheme at a cost to the housing association of just over £1million. Another eight are under offer - three of which will be occupied by Christmas.