



New housing in Keith

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In previous years rents were increased by between 4% and 5% a year to help fund the council's new-build programme.

A recent report to the council's Communities Committee stated that a number of factors over the past two financial years, including lower borrowing costs and low rent arrears, have enabled the council to deliver its new-build programme without the need to further increase house rents.

Moray Council's programme of new-build adds 70 homes a year to its estate to tackle the area's affordable housing shortage.

Chair of the committee, Cllr Louise Laing, said: "While the majority of tenants previously accepted the increase on the basis that it would help fund new build housing, a recent survey showed that affording rent and heat were still issues for a large number of households.

"The Scottish Housing Regulator requires local authorities to take the views of

tenants into consideration when setting rent increases.

"The committee considered their views and I am pleased that we agreed to freeze rents at the current levels for 2019/20."

The average council house rent based on a 52-week year is £59.84 a week. Of the 5,909 tenants that were surveyed, 40% responded.

The results show that:

- 8.4% of tenants not receiving full housing benefit said their rent is difficult to afford;
- 34% of tenants said it is just about affordable;
- 45.2% of tenants stated that they have experienced fuel poverty in the last year.

Famous for its colony of dolphins, fabulous beaches and more malt whisky distilleries than any where else in Scotland, Moray is a thriving area and a great place to live. Nestling between Aberdeenshire and the Highlands, Moray stretches from Tomintoul in the south to the shores of the Moray Firth, from Keith in the east to Brodie Castle in the west.

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