

Challenge set in stone for builders of Harris project

By Taylor Edgar

Lewis Builders never typically shirk from a challenge, not even when it is several steps away from their usual bread and butter business.

This was certainly the case when it came to their involvement as the main contractor on the Borge development in Harris. The twin structures of the Rock Cottage and The Broch stand unobtrusively, yet proudly, on low hills beside the road to Leverburgh and overlooking Borge Lodge. The Lewis Builders team that worked on this project thoroughly relished the opportunity to work on such a prestigious contract.

Co-founder, Dan MacIannan, states that Borge will undoubtedly be marked as one of their more unusual building contracts.

"It was nice to be asked to carry out a project so unique. It was not a typical job by any means and everyone involved found it highly interesting. During the project we met with a great deal of challenges, each of which we managed to successfully overcome," he comments. "We really had nothing to compare it with. We hadn't worked on anything like that before, so we were really grateful to have been given the opportunity to work on such a flagship development."

As well as facing challenging weather conditions, the work on the Tower and the Rock House were also a real test of skills and, at one stage or another, involved just about every discipline Lewis Builders have at their disposal. Such skills ranged from not only electrical and joinery but also to renewable energy and data cabling, to name but a few.

Dan adds: "I think that everyone who worked at Borge took away something new and positive from the experience. Everyone got something out of it and even managed to cultivate new and different skills. It was good for us as a company in a number of different ways and is certainly one for the CV."

The Borge development not only gave the company's human resources a good workout, but helped to underline Lewis Builders versatility, willingness to take on new challenges and most importantly, come up with solutions.



A view of the new Broch

"Ultimately, the client and the architect have the vision of what they want; our job is to turn that vision into reality. This is not a task to be taken lightly, especially on a job like this. However, we are always up for a challenge and thrive in finding ways to make our client's dreams come true, as far as humanly possible," remarks Dan.

Now he hopes the Borge project will put Lewis Builders into pole position for future bespoke projects of this type in the future, given their first hand experience and success in Harris.

"We certainly hope to be considered in future for this type of work. The project in Borge shows that we are a company capable

of delivering and producing such unique works. Although the outer facade looks entirely ancient, what lies underneath is a thoroughly modern building heated by a renewable energy air source heat pump and cabled for modern communications," says Dan.

As a showcase piece, Lewis Builders would be hard pressed to find another project to top Borge in the way it blends - so naturally - the ancient, the traditional and the modern, calling upon the full spectrum of building trades.

Ancient and modern ... brought together on the coast of West Harris
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