

# Development Matters

Issue 4 May 2006

A regular update produced by the Housing Development team of The Highland Council, designed to promote awareness by providing information about recent Housing Development activity in the Highlands.

## Just what the Doctor ordered!

After what has seemed like an inordinate amount of time and effort the Highland Council, working with the local Councillor Margaret Davidson, has achieved a breakthrough in Fort Augustus with Cairn Housing Association soon to complete the first new affordable housing in the village for several years.

The two new homes for rent were built on the site of the old doctor's surgery and the land was transferred from the Highland Council to enable the site to be developed.



### *The new housing in Fort Augustus*

One of the homes has 4 bedrooms and the other has 3 bedrooms which will provide housing for larger families who may have previously been living in overcrowded conditions.

A further eight houses will be developed at Jenkins Park, Fort Augustus on land previously owned by the Forestry Commission and transferred to Albyn Housing Society at a discounted land value as part of the Forestry Commission's commitment to affordable housing. The housing will be built making use of locally sourced timber as the main building material, illustrating the commitment of Albyn Housing Society and the Council to sustainable housing.

# Developments in Inverness

## MacLennan Crescent

MacLennan Crescent was originally built in 1926 and comprised 60 two bedroom flats built four to a block with open stairway access in the middle to the upstairs flats. Over recent years the flats had become difficult to let, their condition was deteriorating and the area becoming run down.

Working with the local Councillor Peter Corbett, we consulted existing tenants and neighbours of MacLennan Crescent in 2001 on how to improve the area, and with their agreement it was decided that it needed to be redeveloped but in a way that would benefit the community best. A mixed tenure development comprising properties of different size for rent, shared ownership and low cost home ownership was agreed.

As tenants wanted to keep the traditional design but retain a similar number of properties, it was decided that Highland Council should retain existing properties on one side of the street but redevelop them and that, following a Council design competition Albyn Housing Society should be the preferred partner for the demolition of the other side of the street and its redevelopment.



It was agreed in 2004 that Albyn Housing's design for a "Home Zone" should be extended to the whole of MacLennan Crescent. This enabled the introduction of new road surfaces, 20 mph speed limits within the scheme, different colours of road surfaces, a shared surface between pedestrians and cars where pedestrians are given priority over vehicles.

Working in partnership with the Council, Albyn Housing Society completed Phase 1 of the development in November 2005, building 35 new properties for rent, shared ownership and low cost home ownership. They were made up of 8 one bedroom, 22 two bedroom (two of which are wheelchair adapted) and 5 three bedroom properties on the even numbered side of the street.

Phase 2 is currently on site and will provide 14 units for rent.

As reported in Issue 3 of Development Matters, the Council has remodelled the housing on the other side of the street to provide 8 houses and 16 flats, with the ground floor flats being wheelchair adaptable.

## Developments in Inverness (continued)

### Woodside of Culloden

22 low cost home ownership flats are currently on sale at Woodside of Culloden in Inverness.

These high quality two bedroom flats are being sold by MacKintosh Highland (a private building company) at a price of £74,750 to £77,250 targeted at Council and housing association tenants and first time buyers. This gives people an opportunity to own their own homes in Inverness at a reasonable price and MacKintosh Highland have reported a high level of response to their advert inviting interest from people who are eligible to apply.



This scheme was grant aided by Communities Scotland under the Grant for Owner Occupation mechanism and has been delivered through the Council's affordable housing policy.

### Cradlehall, Castlehill Drive



Albyn Housing Society completed in January 2006 a mixed tenure scheme comprising 29 houses and flats in all made up of 17 units for rent, 11 units for Homestake and 1 wheelchair bungalow for shared ownership. The scheme was secured through a Section 75 Agreement with Tulloch Homes Ltd as part of the Highland Council's affordable housing policy.

### Strothers Lane



As part of a large mixed use development right in the heart of Inverness City Centre and through the Council's affordable housing policy, Cairn Housing Association is developing 13 flats for sale through the Homestake form of low cost home ownership.

Individuals will be able to purchase a stake in the property of up to 80% and again the scheme is targeted towards Council tenants, housing association tenants and first time buyers. This development is due for completion in July 2006.

Please phone Angela Kay at Homestake Highland on 01349 855991 if you would like further information about the flats at Strothers Lane or email [enquiries@homestakehighland.com](mailto:enquiries@homestakehighland.com). Angela's address is: Homestake Highland, 98-100 High Street, Invergordon IV18 0DL.

## Update from the Highland Housing Alliance



The Highland Housing Alliance has made great progress in acquiring new sites for the provision of housing developments in the Highlands over the last few months.

As well as our first site at Woodside of Culloden, Inverness we have now purchased, with the aid of the Highland Council and Communities Scotland land banking fund, new sites at Tain, Strathpeffer, and Ardersier all of which we aim to develop for a mix of housing.

- We have sold on our first site to Albyn Housing Society Ltd for the provision of 32 affordable new homes at Woodside of Culloden and these houses will be under construction before the end of 2006. The remainder of Woodside will be developed for good quality housing for sale, and also for plots for self builders.
- We have also acquired a significant property in Wick, for development as new housing for sale, in the Historic Lower Pulteneytown Heritage Area. We will be converting a listed building into 5 good sized townhouses with unique features and character. It is likely that the properties will be advertised for sale on the open market in 2007.
- Scotsburn Road in Tain has capacity for 80 houses in total and we hope to market the first phase of plots in June in response to overwhelming demand. We hope to move to Phase 2 in early course.
- The Alliance is currently in negotiation to purchase the prime site of the former golf course at Invergordon, to develop a mixed tenure scheme.

In other developments we hope to be able to include some 1 bedroom properties for rent and for sale to the many young single people wanting their first home.

Many more sites for development are in the pipeline and we would be pleased to hear from any landowner who would like to see if there are any opportunities to collaborate with us. Please contact Susan Torrance, Chief Executive, Highland Housing Alliance, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX, tel: 01463 702894 (email: [susan.torrance@highland.gov.uk](mailto:susan.torrance@highland.gov.uk)).



**This site at Woodside of Culloden, Inverness will be developed for good quality housing for sale as well as for plots for self builders.**

# LAND WANTED !

**Do you own land that is zoned for housing, or that you think will be suitable for housing? (Minimum 4 houses).**

**If so, please contact:-**

**Allan Maguire, Head of Housing Development  
Housing Services  
The Highland Council  
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**Tel: 01463 702528**

**Email: [allan.maguire@highland.gov.uk](mailto:allan.maguire@highland.gov.uk)**

**Alternatively, contact:-**

**Susan Torrance, Chief Executive  
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C/O The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness IV3 5NX.**

**Tel: 01463 702894**

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*For information about the Highland Housing Alliance, please see the previous page and Development Matters Issue 2 (November 2005).*

*Have you any comments or questions to be covered in future issues or at the Area Housing Development Forums?*

*If so, please write to the Housing Development team, Housing Services, The Highland Council, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX or send an email to Heather Bebbington at [heather.bebbington@highland.gov.uk](mailto:heather.bebbington@highland.gov.uk) (Tel: 01463 702831)*