

# **BALLATER & CRATHIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

## *Local Plan Inquiry*

**Housing Land-supply B&CCC 091 a,b,g,h,j,k,l,m,n., Ballater and Crathie Community Council and agreed with 437 k,o, Mrs Jane Angus**

Ballater was built as a 'North-East Planned Village' from the 1840s. The mixed housing needs developed together under the eyes of a feudal land-lord owner with aesthetic competence. Under the present and lately improved system of a comparatively enlightened regime, now commended by the recent governmental 'consultation' on Street Design, Ballater and Crathie Community Council hopes that the principles of Enquiry by Design will allow for the expected increases in National Population, a sensible use of minimum reduction in productive land and a grid pattern with the '10 minute safe walk concept'. This does mean having a Plan and we would support that, after due consultation takes place, rather than the recent isolation of four separate developments which barely connect with the old heart of the village or directly by car with each other.

B&CCC wants to see a natural demographic variation with satisfying and viable occupations for the highly intelligent and hard-working indigenous population as well as 'newcomers' who appreciate their culture and customs. It is appreciated that the Local Plan cannot deal with enterprise or services, but the Community Council and all its members, have tried to help and encourage these with integration of modern communications and businesses and believes this to be possible with good will. The Local History Group is an example of a lively mixed group working together in a relaxed and progressive manner. However any new developments must include workshops and storage as well as retail and secure IT facilities.

It is unfortunate that the Homeless Acts have not allowed local provision of social and affordable housing locally so that even recent buildings have not allowed young people to set up house together, or older ones to downsize, in the convenience and socially helpful movement within the community, which would give us mutual constructive support. The figures for housing need remain above 90 and even if there was a 40% provision in the Plan, at a recent level of 10 units a year, would take us the whole period until 2030.

Residents of other areas in Aberdeen and Shire, let alone furth of Scotland, who apply for housing in Ballater show figures about quadrupling those of local applicants. Improvements in other Aberdeenshire services may increase demand in upper Deeside. Transport, education, ambulance services and slow IT have all had their effects in drawing families down the strath, as well as lack of large-scale employers and the recent restriction of credit, especially on small businesses. There are a large number of people occupied in these, including home-based part-time, free-lancing, consultation and contracting, besides off-shore and in foreign countries. Their families also need support from and in the community and co-operation in self-build housing should be encouraged – within the design systems being developed in the Cairngorms National Park.