

**OUR COMMUNITY ... A WAY FORWARD**

**DRAFT COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN  
CROMDALE**

**2008**

# **OUR COMMUNITY ... A WAY FORWARD**

## **Background**

Our Community ... A Way Forward was carried out as a pilot project, covering the communities of Grantown-on-Spey, Cromdale/Advie and Dulnain Bridge. The work involved gathering information on housing, social and economic issues; conducting a survey of all households; and organising a range of community consultation activities. Residents were asked to identify the best things about their community as well as improvements. Following an analysis of the information and community feedback obtained, priorities for action have been identified. Individual action plans will be finalised in discussion with the project Steering Group and each community.

## **Cromdale – An Overview**

Households from Cromdale and Advie were included in the same survey. Findings therefore relate to both communities. In addition, most of the statistical data and information obtained was for both Cromdale and Advie.

## **Population**

Cromdale's population has remained relatively static over the last few years but is projected to increase during the next decade, with the number of households increasing at a faster rate. The population is ageing with a growing proportion of residents aged 60 or over.

## **Employment and the Economy**

The local economy is reported to be relatively buoyant. Employment patterns are similar to the rest of Highland although there is a tendency for both male and female employees to work longer hours. Agriculture continues to be an important employer, together with the construction industry, with a relatively high proportion of skilled workers in Cromdale. Tourism is also important to the local area.

## **Housing**

Compared to the rest of Highland and Scotland as whole there is a higher proportion of empty properties in Cromdale and a much higher proportion of private rented accommodation and tied housing. There is a scarcity of social rented housing, added to which house prices have risen dramatically over the last few years, and continue to rise, making it increasingly difficult for people living and working locally to access affordable housing. The household survey identified an unmet need for affordable housing both to rent or buy/part-buy through the 'Homestake' initiative. Furthermore, feedback from the community consultation suggested that some Cromdale residents with adult children still living at home had not returned their surveys as they thought it would do nothing to help. Survey findings may therefore have understated the level of local housing need. Because of the shortage of affordable housing options, there is a growing reliance on private rented housing.

Whilst there is an ongoing demand for housing to buy on the open market, it is understood that a number of plots on a site in the village which were sold privately on an individual basis some time ago have yet to be developed.

### **Facilities and Amenities**

In Cromdale these include:

- Cromdale Hall – the Hall is central to the community and well used for community activities. Some improvement and repair works have been carried out but much more work is needed
- Haugh Hotel – the hotel has changed ownership several times in recent years. The local lunch club meets each week in the hotel
- Cromdale Church
- Football pitch, pavilion and play area
- Outdoor Centre - owned by Aberdeenshire Council.

### **Community Organisations and Groups**

Cromdale and Advie Community Council has recently been revitalised after a period without membership. Monthly meetings alternate between the two communities. The Community Council receives community funding from the nearby wind farm which can be paid three years in advance for specific projects.

Cromdale Hall Committee is presently concerned about much needed improvements to the hall and where funding will come from to enable works to be carried out.

Community groups in Cromdale include:

- Bowling club
- Football club
- Tumbling Tots toddler group
- Lunch club for over 60s
- Badminton club
- WRI

Almost half of household survey respondents said they or members of their family participated in local activities and events.

## **Community Issues and Views**

The community consultation and the household survey provided an opportunity for people to tell us what they thought about their community and what was needed for the future. Key findings are summarised below.

### **Living in Cromdale**

Survey respondents indicated that while a third of residents had lived in the community for over 20 years, a similar proportion had lived there for less than five years.

The things people liked most about living in Cromdale were the scenery and natural environment; the low crime rate; and living in a small village. Whilst public transport has improved, more improvements were felt to be needed.

### **High Points and Successes**

The introduction of the 30 mph speed limit and repairs to the Hall were identified as Cromdale's greatest successes. Improved pavements, football pitch facilities and road signs recognising the Battle of Cromdale were seen as additional achievements.

### **Cromdale's Strengths and Assets**

The people were regarded as the community's greatest asset, together with local clubs and facilities in the Hall and the valuable work of volunteers. The household survey indicated that almost one third of local people were involved as organisers/volunteers in their community.

### **Things to Value/Keep**

Feedback from community consultation activities and household survey findings highlighted the size and character of the village and the rural way of life as being the things most valued.

### **Change/The Future**

From a long list of issues, more affordable housing; improving facilities at the Hall; road and bridge repairs; and lorry parking were considered by community consultation participants to be the most important.

## **Next Steps and Action Planning**

At the 'Next Steps' community consultation event, participants allocated all of the issues raised at the previous event against one of three categories of importance: high, medium, low, with some being moved from one category to another following discussion. The high priority issues were then grouped into the following themes for discussion:

- Housing
- Speeding/roads/lorry parking

- Village hall
- Village maintenance issues
- Community life

The draft Action Plan that follows has been developed by the project steering group. The Action Plan will be finalised in discussion with Cromdale and Advie Community Council and Badenoch and Strathspey (Community Planning) Partnership.

## Abbreviations used in Action Plan

<b>Agencies/Organisations</b>	
AoCC	Association of Cairngorms Communities
C/ACC	Cromdale and Advie Community Council
CHC	Cromdale Hall Committee
CNPA	Cairngorms National Park Authority
CS	Communities Scotland
GGs	Grantown Grammar School
GPS	Grantown Primary School
OCWF	Our Community .. A Way Forward
THC	The Highland Council
TRA	Trunk Road Authority
VABS	Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey

<b>Service Section</b>	
CLD	THC Community Learning and Development

<b>Individuals</b>	
FM	Fiona Munro
KD	Karen Derrick
CR	Claire Ross

<b>ACTION PLAN – CROMDALE</b>								
<b>THEME</b>	<b>AIM</b>	<b>ISSUES/OBSTACLES</b>						
<b>Housing</b>	<i>To increase access to housing for rent and low cost home ownership, with no infrastructure problems, over the next 5 years</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Household survey indicated an ongoing need for a modest provision of social rented housing and a demand for affordable housing through the ‘Homestake’ shared equity scheme.</li> <li>◆ Some households with adult children still living at home had not returned their surveys as they thought there was no chance of needs being met</li> <li>◆ House plots currently for sale too expensive for people living and working locally</li> <li>◆ Area around Auchroisk needs tidied up and infrastructure problems addressed to enable development to proceed</li> <li>◆ Future developments should be mixed and include social rented housing and housing for sale</li> </ul>						
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Lead Agency/ Section</b>	<b>Lead Individual/ Action Contact</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Local Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Level of Priority</b>	<b>Funding: sources &amp; est. costs</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>
<b>1.</b>	Proposals for affordable housing (rent and Homestake) on site identified in Local Plan to be discussed and taken forward	THC (Housing & Property)	/FM & B&SHF  THC – Murray Cochrane	CNPA CS Albyn HS Builders AoCC	<b>C/ACC</b>	High	CS THC	Long
<b>2.</b>	Update on current situation at Auchroisk to be requested	THC (Housing & Property)	/FM & B&SHF  THC – Murray Cochrane	CNPA CS	<b>C/ACC</b>	High		Short

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<b>THEME</b>	<b>AIM</b>	<b>ISSUES/OBSTACLES</b>						
<b>SPEEDING</b>	<i>To reduce the number of vehicles speeding within the village</i>	Reduction of speed limit from 40 to 30 a great success but many vehicles exceeding current speed limit - makes crossing a busy road even more dangerous. Thought that radar traps are effective when in place. Possible options to address problem include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ creating a 'gateway' into the village with lines on the road and warning signs</li> <li>◆ more 'children crossing' signs</li> <li>◆ a pedestrian crossing</li> <li>◆ a lollipop person</li> <li>◆ a speed sensitive warning sign</li> <li>◆ make more complaints to police</li> <li>◆ pavements on both sides of the road</li> </ul>						
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Lead Agency/ Section</b>	<b>Lead Individual</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Local Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Level of Priority</b>	<b>Funding: sources &amp; est. costs</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>
<b>3.</b>	Investigate effectiveness and viability of various options and invite agencies to a well publicised community council meeting (BEAR attending next C/ACC meeting)	Police		THC TRA VABS BEAR	<b>C/ACC</b>	High		Short
<b>4.</b>	Investigate possibility and funding availability for a speed sensitive sign	TRA		THC Police CNPA BEAR	<b>C/ACC</b>	High	OCWF £2k	Short



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<b>VILLAGE HALL</b>	<i>To improve the condition of and range of facilities at the village hall</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Hall is now in a relatively good condition but problems in funding ongoing repairs + improvements needed, e.g. parking, windows and range of facilities in the hall</li> <li>◆ Recent cut in grant funding from Highland Council</li> <li>◆ Hall Committee needs new members</li> <li>◆ Hall Committee working with Karen Derrick to address energy use, starting with a survey by a community energy company</li> </ul>						
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Lead Agency/ Section</b>	<b>Lead Individual</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Local Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Level of Priority</b>	<b>Funding: sources &amp; est. costs</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>
<b>5.</b>	Committee to continue to work with CDW on energy use and other funding applications for a more general survey of the building to identify the most cost effective programme of improvements	VABS	KD	THC/CLD CNPA	<b>CHC</b> + <b>C/ACC</b>	High	OCWF	Short
<b>6.</b>	Investigate who owns gap between road and the fence and approach re sale for village hall parking	VABS	KD	THC CNPA	<b>CHC</b> + <b>C/ACC</b>	Medium		Medium
<b>7.</b>	Continue to seek new members, e.g. poster in pub, community council newsletter			THC/CLD VABS	<b>C/ACC</b>	Medium		Ongoing

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<b>LORRY PARKING</b>	<i>To provide legitimate spaces for lorries to park in the village</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Around 8 HGV drivers living in the village but no licensed lorry parking space.</li> <li>◆ Community Council has already been in touch with Councillor Jaci Douglas to find out about lorry parking in Grantown who has confirmed there are problems with space available and conditions of use. The costs and conditions of use likely to be imposed within licensed space in Cromdale are a potential barrier</li> </ul>						
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Lead Agency/ Section</b>	<b>Lead Individual</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Local Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Level of Priority</b>	<b>Funding: sources &amp; est. costs</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>
<b>8.</b>	Examine all possible options with a view to finding an appropriate solution to lorry parking	THC (TECS)	THC – Iain Wallace	VABS	<b>C/ACC</b>	Medium		Medium

Iain Wallace has written to the Community Council providing them with a number of options (**OPTIONS TO BE LISTED**). HC can provide them with support in submitting a planning application.

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<b>VILLAGE MAINT-ENANCE ISSUES</b>	<i>To create a village newsletter and use other means to highlight issues raised by the community and ask for assistance in tidying up and recycling</i>	Issues include: ♦ dog fouling – felt that more signs would have little effect ♦ maintenance of graveyard wall – the Church is progressing this issue ♦ recycling – a facility for recycling plastic is needed ♦ bus shelter – is being taken forward by Community Council ♦ upkeep of gardens – a small minority of residents do not maintain their gardens, in addition to which the area around some newly built houses remains an eyesore after completion of the construction works.						
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>Lead Agency/ Section</b>	<b>Lead Individual</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Local Lead Organisation</b>	<b>Level of Priority</b>	<b>Funding: sources &amp; est. costs</b>	<b>Time-scale</b>
<b>9.</b>	Raise awareness and keep residents informed through an annual newsletter produced by the Community Council, including information on any assistance available, e.g. garden tool schemes for Council tenants.	VABS		CNPA THC/CLD AoCC	<b>C/ACC</b>	Medium	OCWF THC VABS	Ongoing
<b>10.</b>	Look at possibility of information being provided and awareness raised via: ♦ general letter from Community Council to all residents regarding the need to tidy up and keep area tidy ♦ article in Highland Council newsletter to tenants ♦ article in/letter to Strathy ♦ article in CNPA newsletter ♦ school bag leaflet drop	VABS		THC CNPA GGS GPS	<b>C/ACC</b>	Medium		Medium

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<b>COMMUNITY LIFE</b>	<i>To maintain local services and facilities</i>	Felt that size of village and proximity to Grantown means it is unrealistic to be able to improve the level of local services to any great extent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ community shop – considered not viable as too small a village</li> <li>◆ caravan site – proposals for this no longer being taken forward</li> <li>◆ more people on Community Council – there are now two new members. It was thought that awareness of the Community Council should be raised.</li> <li>◆ More local employment – considered there could be no influence over this issue</li> <li>◆ More traditional music – ceilidhs etc. are regularly held but it was felt more should be done so similar events appeal to more and younger people.</li> </ul>						
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<b>11.</b>	Community Council through proposed community newsletter and articles in Strathy to let people know how Community Council works, that meetings are open and how people can join Community Council.			AoCC VABS	<b>C/ACC</b>	Medium		Ongoing
<b>12.</b>	Feis Spey Committee to be contacted about the possibility of running more traditional music workshops locally	CNPA	CR	THC VABS AoCC	<b>C/ACC</b> + CHC	Medium	CNPA	Medium

<b>CROMDALE – TOP PRIORITIES</b>		
<b>QUICK WIN</b>	Action 5 (partial)	Village hall – repairs to floor and windows
<b>FIRST PRIORITY</b>	Action 8	Lorry parking