

ChapeltonNews

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Introduction

by The Earl of Southesk

After several years of planning, work is underway to build Scotland's largest planned town, Chapelton, five miles south of Aberdeen.



We celebrated this exciting moment with a reception at Elsie House on Wednesday 2 October 2013. The event was attended by our business partners, members of the community, councillors and the media.

We marked the cutting of the first sod not only with a breaking ground ceremony but also the unveiling of a commemorative cairn. This modern cairn which takes the form of a seat is designed to be representative of the new community. It is located in the heart of what will be the town's park that will emerge around Elsie House where I grew up.

The vision of Elsie Development Company (EDC) has always been to create a place with a strong sense of community. Moving away from most current housing provision, Chapelton will be a self-sufficient town where residents can live, work and play.

From the early days we have always included the community and we will continue to do the same in years to come as the town starts to grow around us. We'll be publishing our newsletter once a quarter so that we can keep you informed of progress and give you some insight into what you can expect as we move ahead.

We very much want to hear from you the people who we hope will become part of the future Chapelton community as houses become available to move into.

We will introduce you to key participants involved in the project and address any concerns you might have. We'd invite you to have your say and contact us directly with any questions or concerns you might have.

We very much hope you will enjoy reading ChapeltonNews.

The founding ceremony



A practical commemoration was chosen to mark the start of Chapelton. Over 100 guests attended the ceremony where they witnessed the Duke of Fife unveil a cairn seat in the gardens of Elswick House, which will become a park at the centre of the town. From the seat residents will be able to enjoy attractive views of the house and the arboretum.

The cairn seat was created by Perth-based artist David F Wilson who used reclaimed materials from the site to create a landmark design.



Above:

Artist's impression of the Chapelton Visitor Centre

Chapelton visitor centre open to all

It is anticipated that a visitor centre will be open from late spring 2014. This centre will have a dual purpose - serving not only prospective buyers but also members of the local community. Those interested in moving to Chapelton will be able to drop in to learn more about the various house types which will be available for purchase and take a virtual tour of the neighbourhood by viewing an animated video showing viewers how the countryside will be transformed into an energetic Aberdeenshire community.

Unlike other visitor centres, Chapelton will have its very own tea room, allowing the community to start using the space immediately. Just as our guests at the founding ceremony did, both locals and visitors alike will be able to sample Anita Collin's tea and cakes and those living nearby will be offered the ideal place to drop in for afternoon tea or a refreshment at the weekend. Those who have come from further afield will have the ideal opportunity to take a break before setting off on their travels once again.

Our vision



The Chapelton masterplan has been developed in consultation with over 5,000 local residents, as well as local professionals, council officers and Scottish national agencies. Feedback received during this consultation process has helped shape critical elements of the town, as well as the architectural plans, resulting in a site which complements local history, location and climate.



It is fair to say the layout has taken inspiration from the vibrant urban settlements of north east Scotland, including Montrose, Stonehaven and St Andrews. Like these historic towns, Chapelton will include many types of traditional homes - and all within walking distance of attractive parks and community facilities. Sustainability remains at the core of the pedestrian-scaled neighbourhoods, making for desirable and fulfilling places to live and work.

The initial masterplan proposes the development of 4,045 houses, along with all associated amenities, such as shops, offices, parks, schools and medical facilities. These houses will be located in four neighbourhoods, the first of which will be Cairnhill.

Meanwhile, the town centre - including a main high street for the development - will form part of the second phase. Longer term, the Chapelton site will accommodate up to 8,000 houses within a total of seven neighbourhoods.

So, what about landscaping? Well, this is a very important part of the masterplan. The network of streets and parks will follow the features of the site's landscape, incorporating the contours of the land and existing trees and woodlands. The street network will maximise views, including the sea views from the neighbourhood of Cairnhill. Most of the site sits privately within a large bowl, so it will remain largely unseen by the existing settlements in the area.

Phase one – Cairnhill



Cairnhill is situated on a 270-acre site near Newtonhill. The hilltop neighbourhood site offers dramatic sea views, particularly from the high-street and park. The high-street links two key community hubs - a primary school to the west and a community building and park to the east.



This will be Chapelton's first public green, lined with traditional terraced houses and the town's first businesses.



Flats, terraced houses, semi-detached and detached houses make up the range of homes at Cairnhill, in addition to large family homes at the edge of the community. Shops and services within walking distance of these homes will include:

- *Retail and business facilities, providing opportunities for economic development*
- *A pedestrian-friendly high-street with space for a farmer's market*
- *An architect-designed primary school with meeting rooms and sports fields available for community use*
- *Community amenities, including meeting rooms*
- *Local greens and squares, comprising the hilltop park*

The first part of this neighbourhood will be Hume Square and the 255 houses surrounding it. This will be Chapelton's first public green, lined with traditional terraced houses and the town's first businesses.



Having your say



Since we hosted a charette to start the design process in September 2011 we have consulted the community at every stage of development.

As work gets underway we will continue to work closely with the organisations and people living around Chapelton through a Public Liaison Committee, which will meet every three months.



People and their views are at the heart of the community.



But if you have questions you'd like us to answer please get in touch at info@chapeltonofelsick.com. We'll respond directly and print some of the answers in upcoming issues.

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You can also find the latest news and submit your views on Chapelton of Elsick via our Facebook page and website:

www.chapeltonofelsick.com



www.facebook.com/chapeltonofelsick

Next issue:

Housebuilder profiles

Three housebuilders will be starting to build houses in the spring of next year. We will be highlighting the companies and giving you a taste of their styles.

Video

A video is in the last stages of production to show how the town will look when it is built. You will be able to view this on the website but we will show aspects in detail in the next newsletter.

Chapelton liaison committee

We are appointing two representatives from the local area to meet with EDC and ward and community councillors four times a year.

We will explain how this will work to ensure good communication.

The next issue of ChapeltonNews will be available January 2014



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Meet the team

David and Caroline Southesk – Directors of Elsie Development Company

What inspired you to create Chapelton?

We read that the Porlethen and Newtonhill area required additional homes within the Local Plan. It seemed at the time that so many of the attractive villages had outgrown themselves and much of the recent housing had been built without facilities to make residents' lives easier. The current housing also appeared to lack any variety with little provision for the retired or young families starting out. We felt that this situation could and should be improved for future residents and have strived to make Chapelton a great place to live.

What makes Aberdeenshire special to you?

It is a beautiful area with expansive skies and a thriving community. David was brought up at Elsie and we spent many happy weekends there before we were married and have many friends nearby.

What do you believe makes a good community?

We have learned so much during the three years of design, partly from visiting places that work well as a community. The main ingredients we have found that made places successful were a density and mixture of housing to appeal to everyone and a focus on giving people priority over the car. Making a place attractive to walkers does get people out and when they do they meet their neighbours.

What's your favourite building?

The Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. For 1,000 years mankind was not able to build a bigger dome, a remarkable achievement.

What's your favourite Scottish town?

We lived in Edinburgh and really enjoyed life in a city with easy access to the open spaces. Now most of our shopping life is focused on Brechin and Montrose. Both are historic and attractive towns with lots to offer although very different in character.

Do you enjoy working with your other half?

It has its challenges and it does mean that we probably continue to work too late in the evening. Mostly though it is great to be able to share problems (and the fun bits). David is the real brains behind the scheme and the one in charge of finances while my background is in marketing.

How do you relax?

I love riding and spend all my free time with horses and dogs, come rain or shine. David plays badminton because he says that doubles is the least exercise you can take in the name of sport.

