

Old Town Inverness

New 'virtues' unveiled in city centre

IT'S expected to take at least another nine months, but the £6 million investment project taking place in Inverness Old Town is already taking shape.

A recently completed part of this ongoing transformation is being officially unveiled today (Thursday).

The Three Virtues at the High Street end of Church Street forms the centrepiece of a new public space and entrance to the Old Town.

Conceived as an informal meeting place and focal point to attract more people into the area, the Three Virtues is a new art installation recalling the Victorian statues of the classical virtues Faith, Hope and Charity which once looked down on this spot from the top of the building on the opposite side of the road, on the corner of the High Street and Castle Street. The statues are due to return to the city in the near future.

In the meantime, the new Three

Advertising feature

Virtues – perseverance, open-heartedness and insight – have been chosen by the people of Inverness to represent the modern aspirations and qualities of the city.

Inspired by the Highland landscape and the Caledonian faultline which formed the Great Glen, artist and sculptor Matt Barker created the new virtues using three native trees emerging from sloping platforms of Caithness stone, with the virtues inscribed on the bases in English, Gaelic and Old Norse.

Three Virtues will be officially presented to the city on Thursday evening from 6.15pm at a free public event. A Gaelic choir, pipers, contemporary percussion and a dance piece coordinated by Libby Daye will take part in this "christening" to celebrate the rebirth of Church Street. Rendezvous Café



Perseverance, one of the new three virtues installed on Church Street.

will serve a number of treats including Caithness soup, gingerbread trees and hot toddies.

A series of themed shop windows inspired by the list of other virtues suggested by the public will also be set up along the street.

Artwork plays an integral part in the vision for the redevelopment of Inverness city centre. When work is complete, the Old Town will no longer be a hidden gem. Instead it will shine as the jewel at the heart of the city.

Good value at Blindcraft

OFFERING outstanding value for money, Highland Blindcraft has a full range of mattresses, divans, headboards and chairs – all handmade in Inverness.

To complement the bed range, there's also a selection of traditional and contemporary bedroom furniture for both commercial and domestic use.

Currently in the showroom on Ardconnel Street, there's 50 per cent off Mayfair mattresses and divans until the end of March.

This is an ideal time for hotels, guest houses and B&Bs, residential and nursing homes to consider refurbishing and Highland Blindcraft is offering 20 per cent off the contract bed range and discounts on all furniture, bunks and

headboards throughout March.

Beds are a speciality at Blindcraft and the range is impressive. Beds are handcrafted to exact specifications and Blindcraft specialises in non-standard sizes.

A van regularly makes deliveries to every part of the Highlands and Islands, so beds are usually delivered within a week, if not sooner.

Established more than 140 years ago, Highland Blindcraft's factory was set up to give employment to blind and visually impaired people in the region. Today, Blindcraft employs people with disabilities who manufacture to the highest of standards.

Highland Blindcraft continues to build on its long history and reputation for high quality and service.

Market set to get even better

INVERNESS Victorian Market is a local landmark providing an eclectic mix of specialist and individual shops. From fresh produce to jewellery, crafts and cafés, the market holds more than 40 independent businesses.

The pavilion style roof and traditional styling creates a welcoming shopping experience, located in the heart of the city centre.

Plans are under way to improve access, with the introduction of auto-

matic doors at the four entrances and three new external features for the Union Street, Church Street and Queensgate entrances.

Louise Mor, an experienced public art curator and project manager, has been appointed to work with traders to guide the process of designing the new entrances. The project is one of five being funded by a £100,000 grant awarded by the Scottish Arts Council National Lottery Capital programme.

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The Victorian Market in the heart of the Old Town is a unique covered shopping area with 41 retail shops offering a wide variety of choice.

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