

## ENERGETICA WALKING & WILDLIFE GUIDE

## WALK ON THE WILD SIDE WITH ENERGETICA

**PETERHEAD HARBOUR**  
**THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN**  
**CRUDEN BAY**  
**COLLIESTON**  
**FORVIE NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE**  
**NEWBURGH AND THE YTHAN**  
**BALMEDIE**  
**DYCE**  
**THE ABERDEEN BUSINESS WALK**  
**AROUND ENERGETICA**



# FOREWORD



## ABERDEENSHIRE PROVOST JILL WEBSTER

AS PROVOST OF ABERDEENSHIRE I KNOW HOW MUCH THIS AREA HAS TO OFFER, FROM THE RICHNESS AND BEAUTY OF OUR LANDSCAPES TO THE DIVERSITY OF THE LOCAL WILDLIFE.

From the north of Aberdeen all the way to Peterhead, the Energetica corridor truly offers some of the most stunning scenery in the whole of Scotland. Long sandy beaches, sheer cliff faces, vast nature reserves and seashores teeming with life make this area the perfect hotspot for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages and abilities.

The Energetica corridor is abundant with a huge diversity of wildlife which also makes it well worth a visit. See thousands of seabirds including puffins at Bullers of Buchan, look out for otters at Haddo and spot dolphins swimming at Aberdeen Harbour.

May 2014 was the second year of the Energetica Walking & Wildlife Festival, which offers two-days of family-friendly outdoor activities showcasing how much there is to see and do in this part of Scotland.

All along the Energetica corridor there are great opportunities to spend time outdoors, from pond-dipping at Peterhead to coastal walks at Collieston and dolphin watching in Aberdeen harbour.

Many of these activities are available all year round, or at least during the spring, summer and autumn months. This guide highlights some of the best walks and activities to help you make the most of the Energetica corridor and all it has to offer.

See the sea cave at Bullers of Buchan, spot seals at Newburgh or stretch your legs in a walk to Aberdeen's beach after a long day at work. I hope you enjoy the walks and activities suggested in this guide and use it to kick start a new journey to discover the natural beauty in the Energetica corridor.



THE PROVOST OF ABERDEENSHIRE

## THE LORD PROVOST OF ABERDEEN GEORGE ADAM

ABERDEEN IS AN INTERNATIONAL CITY, LOCATED IN THE NORTH-EAST OF SCOTLAND. SINCE THE 1970S, IT HAS BEEN THE HUB OF THE UK'S ENERGY INDUSTRY AND IS HOME TO MANY PEOPLE OF MANY NATIONALITIES WHO HELP TO MAKE IT A FABULOUS MULTI-CULTURAL CITY.

Aberdeen is key to the UK and Scottish economies and an internationally recognised business centre with globally competitive industries, excellent academic and research capabilities and a highly skilled workforce. We have drive and ambition and the enviable position as one of the top five energy cities in the world.

Aberdeen is a cosmopolitan city with stunning architecture, superb dining, retail and leisure opportunities, surrounded by the outstanding Aberdeenshire countryside and stunning coastline which includes the Energetica corridor up to Peterhead.

The annual Energetica Walking & Wildlife Festival offers a programme-packed weekend of activities and events for all the family to enjoy. It also highlights the range of walks and opportunities amid the fabulous coastal scenery of the Energetica corridor which are on offer to everyone all year round.

I would encourage everyone to take time out of their busy schedules to get outdoors, enjoy some light exercise, breathe in some fresh sea air and learn more about the wonderful natural history and local history along the route of the Energetica corridor.



THE LORD PROVOST OF ABERDEEN



# PETERHEAD HARBOUR

**PETERHEAD HARBOUR IS TYPICAL OF WHAT ENERGETICA MEANS; THRIVING INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE RUBBING SHOULDERS WITH FANTASTIC WILDLIFE AND RECREATION.**

THE BUSTLING HARBOUR IS HOME TO BOTH THE BUSIEST WHITEFISH PORT IN EUROPE AND THE ASCO OIL & GAS BASE WHICH HAS SERVED AS THE GENERAL STORE TO THE NORTH SEA OIL INDUSTRY FOR NEARLY 40 YEARS. ECONOMICALLY THIS IS A MAJOR HUB, BUT IF YOU LOOK CLOSER YOU WILL FIND THERE IS A LOT MORE TO IT THAN INDUSTRY.

On warm summer days children build sand castles and swim in some of the cleanest waters in Scotland at Peterhead's award-winning beach. Meanwhile, local and visiting yachts bustle in and out of the sheltered deep water marina. Not the kind of activity you might expect in a busy industrial harbour.

For true birdwatchers a spell of extreme winter weather can bring in rare gulls from the north, with the iceland gull and the mighty glaucus gull sometimes seen in double figures. Peterhead Harbour is also one of the best sites to see the incredibly rare Ross's gull which is usually found at the edge of pack ice 1,000-miles north.

Wildlife finds a home here too; the harbour is a magnet for large hungry seals and during the winter, seaducks such as eider and the graceful long-tailed duck feed in the sheltered waters.



BUCHAN NESS LIGHTHOUSE



LONG-TAILED & EIDER DUCKS



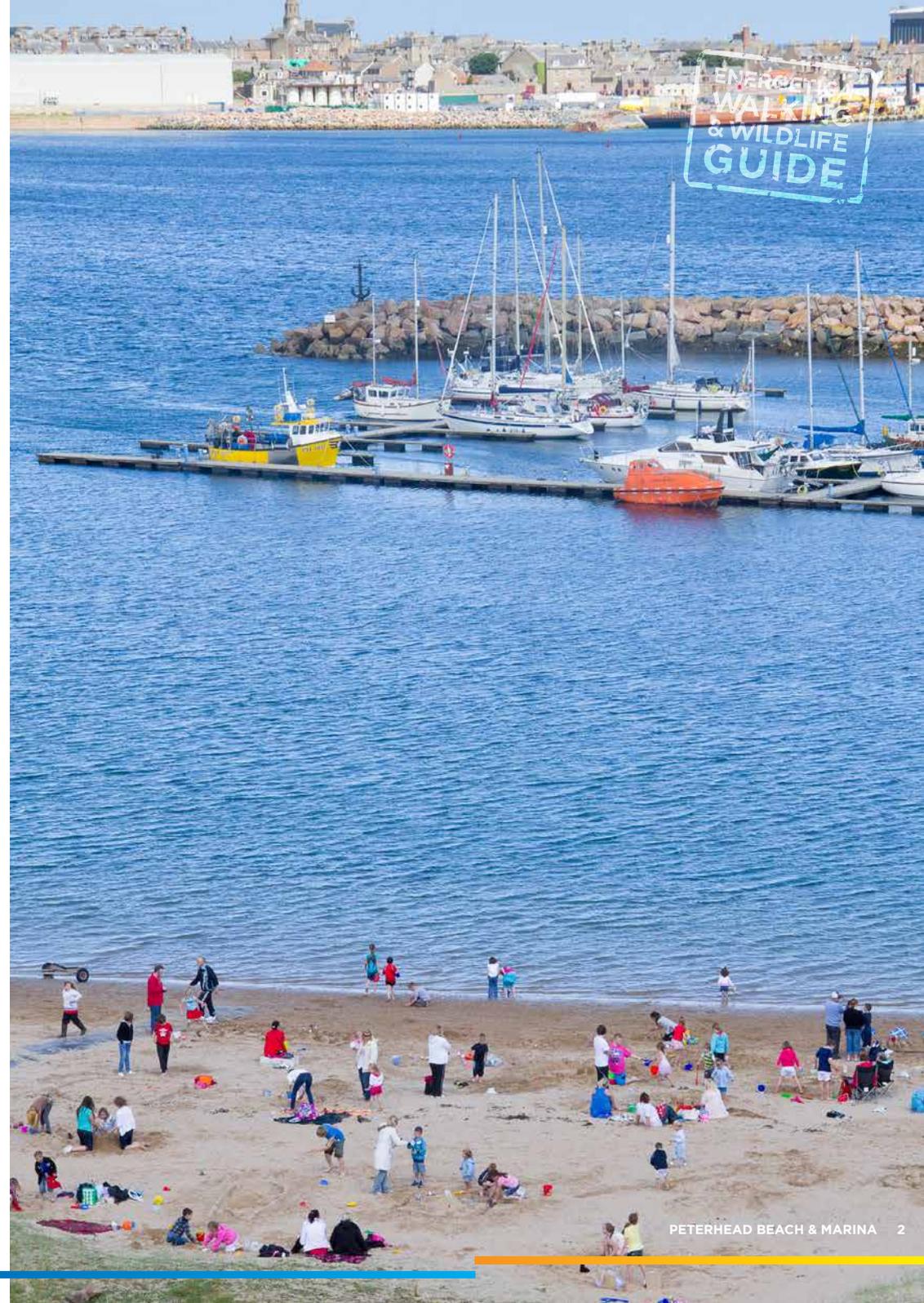
SEALS



PETERHEAD FISH MARKET



ASCO OIL & GAS BASE



# THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN

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HEADING SOUTH FROM PETERHEAD, THE COAST BECOMES INCREASINGLY ROCKY AND WILD AS IT SWEEPS PAST THE FISHING VILLAGE OF BODDAM. THE LONGHAVEN CLIFFS, A SCOTTISH WILDLIFE TRUST RESERVE, BRUSH AGAINST A HUGE QUARRY, WHILE THE NEW PATH NETWORK AT STIRLING HILL OFFERS GREAT VIEWS AND HISTORY FROM THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD RIGHT THE WAY THROUGH TO THE MODERN INDUSTRIAL AGE.

**AT THE HEART OF THIS RUGGED COASTLINE IS THE COLLAPSED SEA CAVE, THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN. A SHORT WALK CAN BE ENJOYED BY MOST, WHILST LONGER WALKS ARE A MORE SERIOUS UNDERTAKING AS THE PATH IS NARROW AND CLOSE TO A SHEER DROP.**



ARCH AN DUNSBY



BULLERS OF BUCHAN



PUFFINS AT THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN

## THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN TASTER WALK

From the large car park on the A975 road, walk down to the pretty hamlet of the same name, Bullers of Buchan. This is a classic fishing village with a steep walk down to the boats which must have been a challenge for the fishermen, and the walk back up the hill with the catch even harder.

Follow the path to the right of the hamlet and after 30 metres you leave the village following a well-maintained but narrow path. The views of the sea increase and in spring or summer the sound of countless breeding seabirds will be filling the air as you approach "the pot". The Bullers of Buchan pot

is a sinkhole, where the roof of a sea cave has collapsed leaving a large hole connected to the sea by a small arch.

It is possible to walk all the way around the edge of the pot, but please note this can be a treacherous route so please stick to the well-made path on the left. A little way past the pot, the high-quality path ends at a headland which gives a beautiful view out to sea and is a fantastic place for watching whales and dolphins with orca killer whales, Risso's dolphin and minke whale all seen from that spot in 2013.

This outcrop is also the best place locally to look for puffins, which can be seen at the entrance to rabbit holes close to the top of the cliffs to your right. Below, hundreds of guillemots and razorbills crowd onto the cliffs whilst shags build precarious nests at its base.

Fulmars are normally the first bird back to Bullers of Buchan in February. These birds may look like gulls, but they are in fact more closely related to the albatross, flying just above the waves on straight wings. People rock climbing soon learn to avoid these birds at nesting time as they can regurgitate oily fish with a high degree of precision if threatened.

Puffins and guillemots return by the end of March. During the spring and early summer this is a busy place with the noise of thousands of birds filling the air, but by early August the last of the chicks have left the cliffs and quiet returns.

This spot is a great place to sit and watch the amazing coastal wildlife. For a longer walk, continue following the path north, or you can return to the village and keep walking south. Both routes can be hard going, featuring narrow paths which are often very close to the edge of the cliff, so care must be taken.

It is also possible to leave your car in Cruden Bay village, take a bus to Bullers of Buchan and walk back to your car along the cliffs and past the magnificent New Slains Castle.

## BREACHING BOTTLENOSED DOLPHIN



PUFFIN

# CRUDEN BAY

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## CRUDEN BAY HAS A GLORIOUS BEACH, A STRONG COMMUNITY AND A FEW SECRETS.

TO THE NORTH, THE MIGHTY CLIFFS OF THE BULLERS OF BUCHAN DOMINATE THE VISTA, AND TO THE SOUTH THE LONG GLORIOUS SANDY BEACH SWEEPS ON ALMOST TO THE NEIGHBOURING HAMLET OF WHINNYFOLD. BEHIND THE BEACH A LINE OF SAND DUNES HOST CRUDEN BAY GOLF COURSE, ONE OF THE TOP COURSES IN BRITAIN.

SUNSET AT CRUDEN BAY

Indeed, in years gone by this was the place to be seen, with the upper classes travelling by train from all over Britain to stay at the famous Cruden Bay Hotel. One of the tramcars which transported thousands of visitors can still be seen at the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford.

The beach can be reached via the elegant Ladies Bridge. The beach is long and pristinely clean thanks to the commitment of the local community in removing litter that may have drifted in each day. Whilst the beach may be calm and tranquil, economic activity is never far away, as up to 1,200 litres of oil per second passes unseen or heard beneath the sand via the Forties Pipeline, which carries around 30% of North Sea oil to the Grangemouth Refinery.

Past the Ladies Bridge is the harbour known as Port Errol. Salmon nets dry on a small green while small pleasure boats and the odd creel boat use the harbour. In the summer children catch mackerel from the harbour wall.

No trip to Cruden Bay would be complete without a walk to New Slains Castle which perches on a cliff to the north of the village and famous for being the possible inspiration for Bram Stoker's Dracula. This can be reached via a well-made path that passes through fine woods before following the coast. In places the path is made up of thousands of scallop shells which have been used in place of gravel. The castle is an impressive sight and well worth a visit, however please do not pass the fence as it is not safe to explore.

If you have time, follow the narrow path north to view the Arch of Dunsby, a small island covered in breeding birds that has almost been split in half by the sea. It is possible to continue on this narrow path all the way to the Bullers of Buchan (previous page) and return by the bus. Be aware that this is a serious walk, being narrow and close to a big drop into the sea. Good weather and walking boots are highly recommended for this walk.



NEWBURGH BEACH



CRUDEN BAY



SLAINS CASTLE



CRUDEN BAY GOLF CLUB & COASTLINE

# COLLIESTON

**COLLIESTON IS A PICTURE PERFECT VILLAGE WHICH PRIDES ITSELF ON BEING SO REMOTE IT HAS NO MOBILE PHONE SIGNAL OR EVEN A VILLAGE SHOP.**

WHAT IT DOES HAVE IS A STUNNING BEACH, GREAT VIEWS AND A PICTURESQUE SETTING WITH ITS WHITE COTTAGES NESTLING ON THE SLOPE THAT LEADS TO THE HARBOUR.

The village is also notable for the beauty and abundance of its local wildlife. For seven months in 2011, three humpback whales took up residence in the waters just outside the Collieston. The surprise appearance of these magnificent marine mammals proved to be a distraction for the village residents lucky enough to be self-employed or work from home and productivity in Collieston fell sharply until the whales departed from the local waters!

In 2013 the village was in luck again as 14 orca killer whales were spotted just outside Collieston and spent the day slowly heading north.

The local dialect in Collieston, and the north-east of Scotland, is Doric. A key coastal Doric phrase is 'veit suite' - this is the local term for bikini or speedos. Given the water temperature at Collieston, the local 'veit suites' are normally made of neoprene and cover the whole body, vital to helping the local people swim in the harbour during most months of the year.

There are good walks to the north and south of Collieston, but please park in the large car park just north of the village and follow the signs to the beach, as there is little parking in the village itself.



EIDER DUCK



HUMPBAC WHALE



# FORVIE NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

**FORVIE NNR IS A FANTASTIC PLACE TO SPEND A DAY AND IS LARGE AND DIVERSE ENOUGH FOR A LIFETIME OF EXPLORATIONS. THE RESERVE CAN BEST BE DIVIDED INTO THE DUNES AND THE YTHAN ESTUARY.**

## THE DUNES

The best place to start is the NNR Visitor Centre which is about a mile out of Collieston. The centre contains a wealth of information about the nature reserve and the wildlife which call it home, and there you will find the excellent staff who manage the reserve.

One of the way-marked trails, the Heath Trail, runs from the centre past the sand loch and to the coast. From there it runs south along the coast until a path cuts across the heath and returns to the starting point of the visitor centre. Between the centre and the sand loch, the track is an all-ability route which can be accessed by a sturdy buggy (with a bit of care and effort it is possible to get as far as the coast). Beyond the sand loch the path is not accessible with a buggy.

This walk can be enjoyed at any time of the year, but May and June is the best time for a visit if you want to see the glorious wildflowers which grow all over the Dunes. In winter the trail is a great place to try and spot short-eared owls which travel from Scandinavia for our mild winters.

From April until August the southern peninsula of Forvie NNR is closed to the public to make sure nesting birds are not disturbed. This is particularly important for four rare species of tern. If you keep to the waymarked paths, avoiding this area will not be an issue.



YOUNG SEAL AT DAWN

Leaving the visitor centre, you meet the main A975 road at a crossroad, and if you travel straight ahead for a couple of miles you can follow a small track to the Waulkmill Hide which gives great views over the Ythan Estuary.

Return to Newburgh by backtracking to the crossroad, before turning south onto the A975 and travelling down a long hill with stunning views spanning across Aberdeenshire to the distinctive shape of Bennachie's peak. A couple of laybys by the river are well worth a stop as this is a good place to look for ospreys in the summer or otters at anytime of the year.

Just before the bridge over the River Ythan is the main Walkermill car park. From here, the new shelter and information point gives information on the Dune Walk and the tern viewing point during the spring and summer.



YTHAN ESTUARY AND SOUTH TO ABERDEEN CITY

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SEALS BASKING ON THE BEACH

# NEWBURGH AND THE YTHAN

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VIEW UP THE RIVER YTHAN



SUMMER TURNSTONE

**NEWBURGH IS A QUIET AND PLEASANT VILLAGE WHICH MADE ITS FORTUNE FROM THE CLIPPER SHIPS THAT USED TO SAIL THE WORLD FROM ITS NOW SILTED UP HARBOUR.**



GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

## THE YTHAN ESTUARY TASTER WALK

If you have a couple of hours to spare, this walk is a highlight of the area and comes highly recommended. The walk is good all year round but is best when the tide is low.

Either park on the main road or travel by bus using the Stagecoach Bluebird number 63 Buchan Rider service. From the town's main village store, walk north until you reach Errol Place then follow this short road and cross the bridge over the Foveran Burn. Already the wildlife will be on display with small yellowhammer birds singing from the gorse.

After the bridge turn left, following the path towards the mouth of the burn; you are walking in the area between the water and the golf course which is marked with a series of white marker posts. Please stay on the seaward side of the markers.

Close to the burn mouth, the path turns to the east with a wooden shelter visible in the distance. Walk on the sand or on the grass and head towards the shelter which is a great place to spend a few minutes watching the wildlife and taking in the stunning views. During the summer, the sight and sound of the ternary just over the river will be impressive. Four species of terns breed here, including the rare little tern which are likely to be fishing close by.

From the shelter follow the coast past the fishing huts and the boathouse, along to the upturned shipwreck. At low tide the wreck is around 30 metres from the river and at high tide it is almost covered with wading birds roosting whilst their feeding is underwater.

From here you should be able to spot the hundreds of seals which take residence on this beach. At times over 400 seals haul out onto the north bank just over the river. Eider ducks are common on the river and roost close to the seals. Walking past the seals it is possible to reach the river mouth to take in the view spanning all the way to the city of Aberdeen, with the ships awaiting their turn to enter the harbour.

From here, walk back to the boathouse where a path cuts inland. Follow this path to the car park and you can take a spur up into the dunes with a well-made path including sections of boardwalk. When leaving the car park, follow the road back towards Newburgh, cutting off at the North Sea Trail path which goes through the golf course and over a smaller bridge over the Foveran Burn, back onto the main road close to the shop.

# BALMEDIE

**ENERGETICA HAS GLORIOUS LONG SANDY BEACHES THAT STRETCH AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE, BACKED BY MILE AFTER MILE OF SAND DUNES LIT BY THE SUN SHINING BRIGHT OVER THE SHIPS OUT AT SEA.**



KITESURFING



STAR AMONGST THESE IS BALMEDIE COUNTRY PARK, JUST FIVE MILES NORTH OF THE CITY. THIS A GREAT PLACE FOR A DAY WITH THE CHILDREN AND THERE ARE PICNIC TABLES AND CHILDREN'S PLAY EQUIPMENT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF AND BARBECUE FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR HIRE.

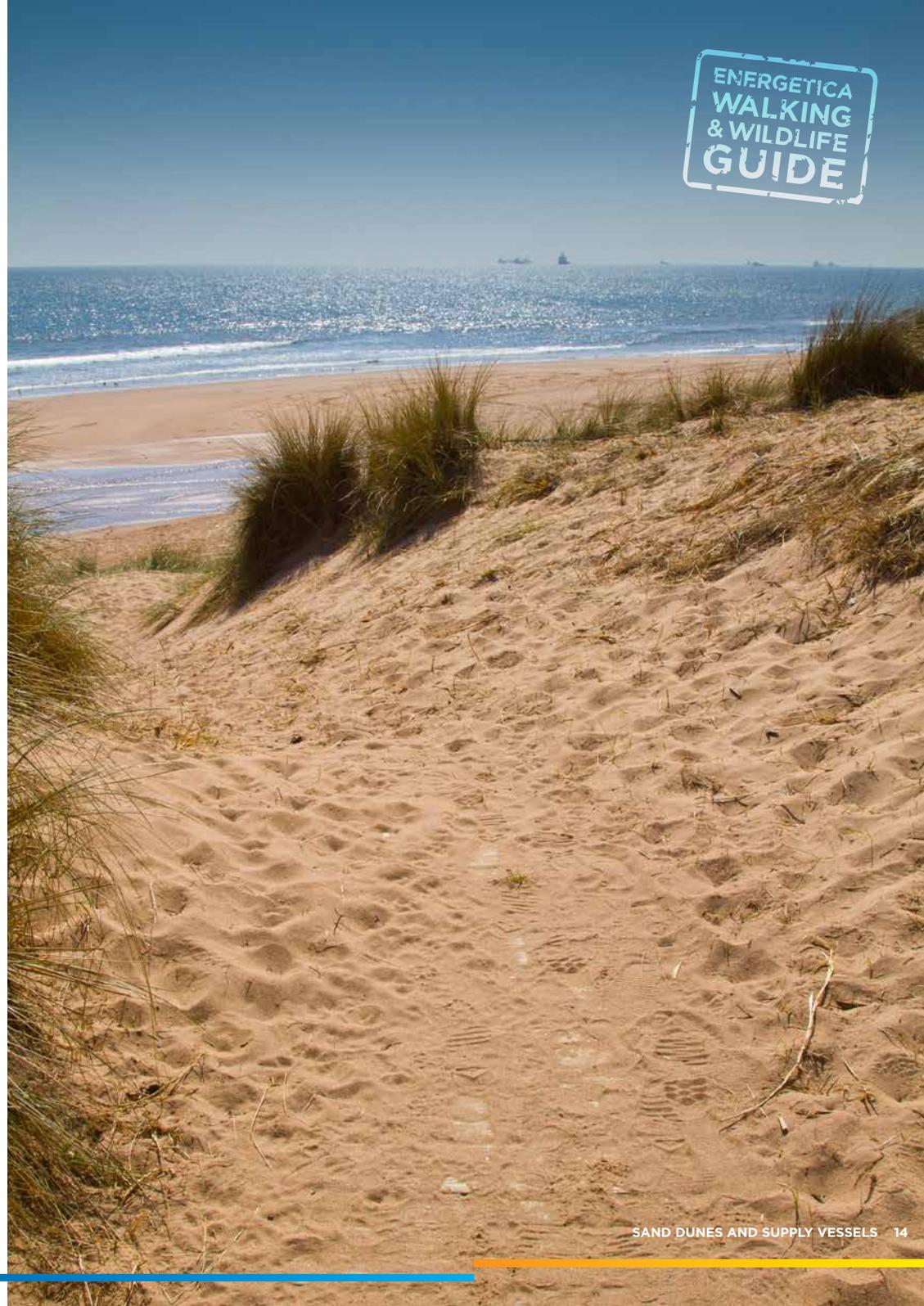
To get to the beach either take the Stagecoach Bluebird bus number 62 from Aberdeen and walk the last mile following the signs, or drive through the commuter village of Balmedie and follow the signs. Just out of the village, the road becomes narrow with passing places. Once you arrive at the car park, a nominal parking charge applies from April to September.

Starting at the disused ranger base, the excellent and child-friendly park lies to the right. The best path to the beach runs past the park and through the gorse, joining the access road for the park keepers. From here, you can see the boardwalk that leads across a small stream and on to the award-winning beach.

The dunes behind the beach can be explored or you can simply walk north or south as far as you like. If walking south, turn back if you see red flags flying as there is a shooting range.



GEESE AND BALMEDIE



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**DYCE BUZZES WITH LIFE, HOME TO THE WORLD'S BUSIEST COMMERCIAL HELIPORT AT ABERDEEN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND MANY OF THE BUSINESSES WHICH SERVE THE NORTH SEA OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY.**



**BUT DYCE HAS ANOTHER SIDE AND TO MANY OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE, IT IS THE FLIGHTS OF THE MARCH BROWN AND OLIVE UPRIGHT MAYFLIES THAT CATCH THE ATTENTION. AN EARLY SPRING DAY SEES ERUPTIONS OF FLYING INSECTS FROM THE PRISTINE RIVER DON WHICH LOOPS AROUND THE EAST OF THE VILLAGE.**

These 'rises' of life attract both fish and anglers. Both the quality of the River Don, and a band of limestone high in the catchment, make this possibly the best river in Europe for wild brown trout which share the waters impressive runs of salmon and sea trout.

The easiest way to get to know the Don is to follow the River Path. Starting at Dyce Railway Station head south (back towards the city) on Victoria Street – this is the main street through Dyce with a good selection of shops, restaurants and cafes. Soon you will come to a small community garden with a large sculpture of a flower/

ruptured oil pipeline. Dyce has a long and proud gardening tradition, having won the Urban Community trophy of the Beautiful Scotland awards on many occasions, including 2013.

Continue to the large roundabout and turn left onto Riverside Drive. Soon the road turns and the river and a way-marked path descends a slope on your right. Follow this well-made path down to the river. Once you reach the river, turn left (or right if you want to explore further or walk to Persley Bridge 3 miles downstream). The path is very well made and is suitable for prams or bicycles. On the river, rising trout can

often be seen along with dipper and red-breasted merganser birds. A quiet morning or evening visit also offers a chance to see otters or in summer ospreys. In late winter (normally from mid-February) a heronry in the pine trees on the opposite side of the river offers a spectacle of herons flying into their nests to feed hungry youngsters.

After around a mile, the path returns to the Riverside Drive and soon you will reach the junction with Victoria Road, turn left and follow the road back to the station.



#### OTHER WALKS IN DYCE

The nearby Kirkhill Forest, Tyrebagger Hill and Craibstone Estate offers a range of woodland walks, sculpture trails, archeology and bike rides for all the family. Kirkhill can be reached from a footpath behind Kirkhill Industrial Estate. Dyce Station also marks the start of the Formartine and Buchan Way, one of Scotland's Great Trails. An impressive and safe pathway, suitable for all abilities of walkers, cyclists and horse riders, the Formartine and Buchan Way links Dyce with Peterhead and Fraserburgh, giving a multi-day walk or a very long day's cycle.



FORTMARTINE AND BUCHAN WAY

# THE ABERDEEN BUSINESS WALK

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**THIS WALK BEGINS AT THE ABERDEEN EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE CENTRE AND PROVIDES THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO STRETCH YOUR LEGS AND SEE SOME MORE OF THE CITY AFTER A DAY SPENT DOING BUSINESS.**

THE DAY IS COMING TO AN END, YOU HAVE NETWORKED WITH DELEGATES, TALKED TO SUPPLIERS AND CLIENTS AND NEED TO REFRESH YOUR BRAIN. THIS WALK CAN BE DONE IN UNDER AN HOUR, OR LONGER IF YOU TAKE TIME TO ENJOY THE VIEW, AND BRINGS YOU INTO THE HEART OF THE CITY.

From the main exit of the AECC walk straight ahead to the main road and turn left, walk along the dual carriageway and pass the old army barracks before reaching the bridge over the River Don. The Don has changed greatly over the last few decades from a heavily polluted river with little life to one of the best fishing rivers in Scotland.

If you have time for a short detour off the beaten path, cross the road before the bridge and follow the path marked Brig o Balgownie along the side of the river until you reach the Brig before returning on the south bank. The island in the river is often the resting place for a group of seals. This will add an extra 30 minutes to your walk, and you may need to be prepared to get a little mud on your shoes.

Back on track, cross the bridge over the River Don and follow the large path that runs alongside the river towards the sea (on your right is a large golf course while the Donmouth Local Nature Reserve on your left is a haven for wildlife).

The path soon reaches the sea and turns south. At this point you have three choices: keep on the high path next to the road; follow the lower path closer to the sea, or - tide permitting - walk on the beach.

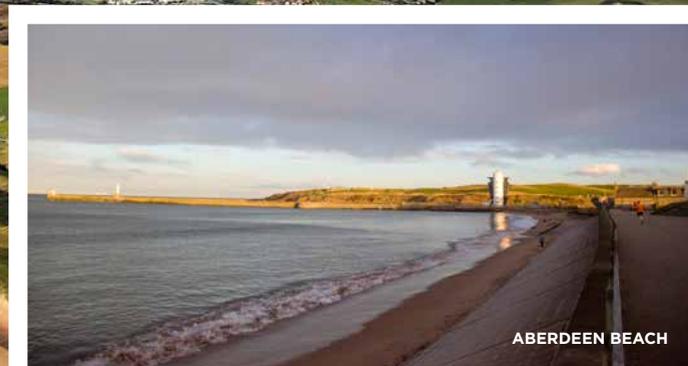
As you walk south along the beach, the harbour and headland of Girdleness will be visible in front of you whilst the oil supply vessels await entry to the port. On a windy day this is a popular beach for surfing and when it's hot and sunny the beach is enjoyed by thousands of local people and visitors.

As you walk along the beach, take time to look out to sea as you have a good chance of seeing dolphins or even a minke whale. Your chance of a sighting increases the closer you get to the harbour. Dolphins use the harbour entrance to hunt fish that will pass through the port on the way up the River Dee.

Soon you will reach the Hamlet of Footdee, an old fishing village that has been consumed by Aberdeen and dwarfed on all sides by industry. Follow the narrow streets and it feels like you are a hundred miles from the city. Once you reach the harbour, stop and have a look around; the sheer scale of the port is fascinating and it is not unusual to see dolphins this far into the harbour.

At the other side of the river is Torry and the Girdleness and if you have time the Torry Battery is well worth a visit and the coastal path can be followed all the way to Cove. Along the way look out for locals catching mackerel in the summer and rock climbers scaling the sheer cliffs.

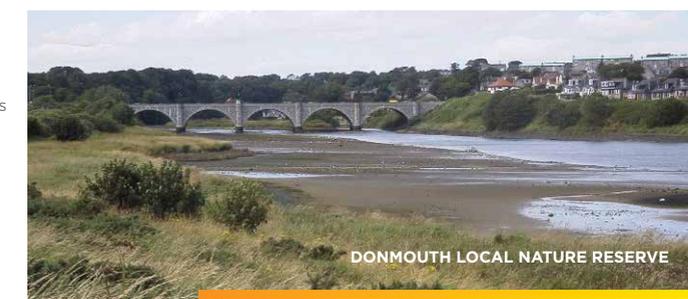
Follow the road into the city, remaining as close to the harbour as possible, and soon you will reach the main road which can be crossed near the harbour offices. Pass the Ibis Hotel and climb Shiprow, past the Aberdeen Maritime Museum before you emerge onto Union Street, the centre of Aberdeen. From here you will find a wide range of restaurants, bars and hotels to enjoy and easy access to the train and bus stations to take you where you want to go.



ABERDEEN BEACH



DOLPHINS OFF ABERDEEN BEACH



DONMOUTH LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

# AROUND ENERGETICA

WHILE THE ENERGETICA CORRIDOR PRESENTS MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR WALKS AND DAYS OUT, THERE ARE A HOST OF HISTORIC AND UNIQUE SPOTS ACROSS THE REST OF THE NORTH-EAST OF SCOTLAND WHICH ARE WELL WORTH A VISIT. HERE ARE JUST A FEW SUGGESTIONS.



## DUNNOTTAR CASTLE & STONEHAVEN

Twenty-five miles south of Aberdeen is the picturesque coastal town of Stonehaven. The popular seaside town is home to a small and historic harbour, an Olympic-sized, heated, outdoor pool and some great walks, including the coastal trail which takes you past the dramatic cliff-top fortress Dunnottar Castle and the pleasant woodland walk through Dunnottar Woods.



DUNNOTTAR CASTLE



HADDO HOUSE



SWANS AT HADDO HOUSE

## HADDO HOUSE & COUNTRY PARK

There are more castles in Aberdeen City and Shire, per acre, than anywhere else in the UK, and the area has its fair share of stately homes too. The castles of Fyvie, Crathes and Balmoral are all worth a visit, however for walking and wildlife Haddo House near Ellon stands above the rest.

A new visitor centre at Haddo House was opened in 2014 and the new squirrel hide is one of the best places to photograph our native red squirrels. A visit to the loch early or late in the day may give you a good chance of seeing otters. The house is run by the National Trust for Scotland and the grounds by Aberdeenshire Council.



LOCH OF STRATHBEG

## LOCH OF STRATHBEG

The Loch of Strathbeg is the RSPB's premier spectacles in the north-east of Scotland. It is the best place in the area for bad-weather birdwatching which can be done from the comfy chairs of the warm visitor centre, complete with tea and coffee machine.

During the autumn, the Loch of Strathbeg plays host to one of the greatest wildlife spectacles in Britain, as up to 80,000 geese use the site as a stop off point on their migration south. RSPB staff hold regular early morning goose-spotting events in October and November.

Whilst visiting the reserve, a trip to the Rattray Head Lighthouse for a walk on the beach is well worthwhile, especially in late summer when basking sharks can sometimes be seen patrolling the waters.

# WILD CALENDAR

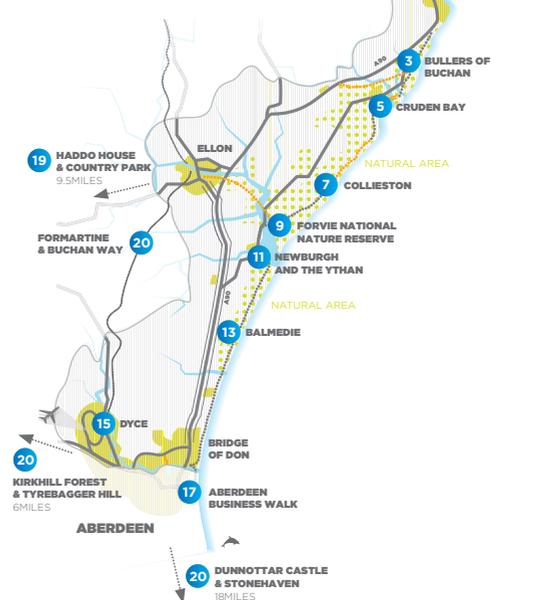
**LIVE**  
**VISIT**  
**WORK**  
**INVEST**

## WHERE AND WHEN TO SPOT WILDLIFE IN AND AROUND ENERGETICA.

SPECIES	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	WHERE	CHANCE OF A SIGHTING IN 1 HOUR IN REASONABLE CONDITIONS:
Bottlenose Dolphin	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Girdleness, Aberdeen	90%
White-Beaked Dolphin						■	■	■	■				Aberdeen to Catterline	50%
Risso's Dolphin			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			Bullars - various	20%
Harbour Porpoise	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Coastal Headlands	90%
Minke Whales			■	■	■	■	■	■	■				Coastal Headlands	20%
Basking Shark													Ratray Head	50%
Seals	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ythan	90%
Guillemot/Razorbill				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Bullars, Fowlsheugh	50%
Puffins				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Bullars, Fowlsheugh	50%
Terns				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ythan	50%
Great/Arctic Skua							■	■	■	■	■	■	Coastal Headlands	50%
Iceland Gull	■	■	■								■	■	Peterhead/Fraserburgh	20%
Waders - Wintering	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Strathbeg, Ythan	90%
Geese											■	■	Strathbeg	90%
Migrating Birds			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Coastal Headlands	50%
Osprey							■	■	■	■	■	■	Ythan	50%
Waxwing	■	■	■								■	■	Aberdeen	50%
Butterflies						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Various	50%

ENERGETICA, AN ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE ECONOMIC FUTURE (ACSEF) FLAGSHIP PROJECT, IS A 25 YEAR PROGRAMME TO CREATE SCOTLAND'S ENERGY CORRIDOR - THRIVING IN A NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. TO READ MORE ABOUT THE AIMS AND WORK OF ENERGETICA AND FOR FULL DETAILS ON ALL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS, VISIT [ENERGETICA.UK.COM](http://ENERGETICA.UK.COM).

ENERGETICA WALKING & WILDLIFE GUIDE ILLUSTRATED MAP



### LIABILITY & FITNESS

Participants on any of the walks in this guide must take part at their own risk and should consider their own abilities and medical requirements before undertaking any of the activities.

### SPECIAL THANKS

Words and Photos of Walks and Wildlife by Ian Hay of EGCP  
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