



**From mountain to sea**

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# News Release

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## **North East showcased as cycling destination spot, with the first stage of the Tour of Britain**

A fortnight of cycling promotion and activity finished in spectacular style on Sunday (Sept 4) when stage one of the 2022 AJ Bell Tour of Britain got underway.

Following months of preparation and coming hot on the heels of the North East hosting the finish of the race back in 2021, some of the best pro cyclists took to the roads of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire for the start of the 2022 event, considered by many to be the ultimate in UK cycle racing.

A fortnight of cycling activities began in Aberdeenshire in a programme called Cycle Aberdeenshire. It saw multiple events and schools, projects taking place across Aberdeenshire, talks with pro cyclists, and activities to keep kids active and create a legacy.

The headline event, Bike Blethers, gave people a chance to hear from Paralympians and Commonwealth gold winners Neil and Lora Fachie.

The Getabout Aberdeen Cycling Festival then took place on Saturday where the city centre played host to a day of fun, free activities and races, including face painting and bungee trampolining, culminating in the Scottish Criterium Championships, with the best of Scottish talent on display.

Sunday was race day. The professional riders 'geared up' and started the epic 2022 event in Aberdeen City Centre and finishing spectacularly at the Glenshee ski centre.

The opening stage was sponsored by TotalEnergies, marking the furthest north that the Tour has ever departed and saw riders cross the finish line on the highest public road in the UK.

Lord Provost of Aberdeen, Councillor David Cameron, said: "It was fantastic to see so many people turn out this weekend in the city centre to celebrate a whole weekend of cycling. After having a toned-down event last year due to restrictions, we were thrilled to welcome back both the Tour and the crowds to our city again."



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Riders cycled the 180-kilometre (112-mile) route, with Israel – Premier Tech’s Corbin Strong winning this first stage.

Aberdeenshire Council Leader Cllr Mark Findlater was at the finish and said: “We knew we were going to be able to provide a finish for the 2022 race that would be unforgettable for spectators, TV audiences and riders alike, and the organising team made sure of that. My thanks to everyone whose hard work went into putting on this event. I feel sure that the legacy we created here is one which will see cyclist flock to our part of Scotland for years to come and will cement the reputation we continue to attract as a cycling destination.”

Chris Foy, CEO, VisitAberdeenshire, added: “Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire’s reputation as a destination for hosting large scale events has been further strengthened by the spectacular start to this year’s Tour of Britain. The region is also making tracks as a growing destination for cycling, and we look forward to further promoting the area to cycling enthusiasts.”

Luc Guiziou, Managing Director, TotalEnergies E&P UK, said: “It has been a privilege to sponsor the Tour of Britain’s Grand Depart this year. We have seen a spectacular weekend of activities, thrilling and fun in equal measure. In particular I have enjoyed watching the finale of the main race this afternoon. The organisers have done a great job in bringing together a range of experiences for our communities to participate in and feel part of and I feel sure that the events of this weekend will be remembered by all for some time to come. Well done to the winners of the earlier corporate race and to the winner of this leg of Tour of Britain. Bon Courage for the rest of the Tour!”

Paul Bush OBE, VisitScotland Director of Events, said: “EventScotland has been delighted to work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council to bring the Tour of Britain back to the region for a second year in a row. The city and region have put on a truly memorable weekend of cycling with the Aberdeen Council’s Getabout Aberdeen Cycling Festival also providing the ideal lead up to Grand Depart of this year’s Tour.

“Scotland is the perfect stage for cycling events and both the Tour of Britain and the Festival are part of an exciting portfolio of events taking place across the country as we build towards next year’s 2023 UCI Cycling World Championships in Glasgow and across Scotland.”

Kathy Gilchrist, President of Scottish Cycling, added: “As the Tour of Britain heads south, we can all reflect on the fantastic racing in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire during the weekend. From professional riders to those who dream of being the best they can be. On behalf of Scottish Cycling, I thank all those who made this weekend of cycling one to remember. The AJ Bell Tour of Britain stage two starts in Hawick today (Monday).”

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