



News Release

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Communities put best foot forward as wraps come off impressive coastal path improvement projects

Lord Lieutenancies launch Platinum Jubilee Coastal Path initiative

Communities across Aberdeenshire are putting their best foot forward in a bid to improve the region's coastal paths.

Works to restore the coastal path connecting Stonehaven Harbour to the Bervie Braes and onwards to the war memorial and Dunnottar Castle have just been finished after the project - led by Stonehaven Town Partnership - received funding from Aberdeenshire Council's 2021/22 Coastal Communities Fund and Roads Service budget along with £1,500 from Paths for All.

Coastal Communities funding distributes revenues generated by the Crown Estate Scotland to projects which have a tangible link to the coast and/or sea and the site of the project or community is within one mile of Aberdeenshire's coastline.

The Stonehaven coastal path was officially opened on Tuesday, June 21 by Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire Alastair Macphie and Kincardine and Mearns area chair Cllr Wendy Agnew who were joined by members of the Stonehaven Town Centre Improvement Group and council officers.

The Bervie Braes path restoration project has been delivered in partnership with Stonehaven Town Partnership and Aberdeenshire Council's Roads Service. The works have seen the steps leading up to the path replaced, the surface upgraded with a more durable and textured finish to improve grip and the addition of a handrail along the majority of the path.

Chair of Stonehaven Town Partnership, Jim Stephen, said: "These path works build on the improvements completed last year to replace the wooden boardwalk and provide additional seating areas along the seafront. All of these improvements have been designed to improve the amenities for the benefit of the Stonehaven community as well as visitors to the town.



From mountain to sea

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“The new steps and the addition of a handrail, as well as the improved surface texture, have made a huge difference in making this path more accessible for those wishing to walk along our coastline up towards the iconic war memorial and Dunnottar Castle. Huge thanks must go to local firm Bridgefield Services for their excellent work in finishing this job to a high standard working in difficult terrain.”

Kincardine and Mearns area committee chair, Cllr Wendy Agnew, said: “It is truly heartening to see our communities working together in partnership with ourselves and others to bring such worthwhile projects such as this magnificent coastal path to fruition.

“Our Coastal Communities funding enables local organisations to tap into additional financial streams to make their dreams for improvements a reality. I would strongly encourage others to learn from these successful projects and think about how they could be making a real difference in their own areas to safeguard and improve our coastline for the benefit of residents and visitors alike in the future.”

Meanwhile, a new project to create a path in Kincardineshire was recently launched at Macphie Ltd, Glenbervie.

At the event, the Lord Lieutenants of Banffshire, Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire pledged their support to an ambitious community project to complete a coastal path from St Cyrus to Cullen in recognition and celebration of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.

The route - which would be known as the ‘Platinum Jubilee Coastal Path’ - would extend 90 miles and link 30 settlements taking in some beautiful scenery including castles, stacks, beaches, waterfalls and beaches.

While some sections of the coastal paths are already in place and with work having been underway to enhance/improve the path network for a number of years, completion of the coastal path will take significant collaboration from various partners including landowners, community and tourism groups, Aberdeenshire Council and the Lord Lieutenants.

The primary focus for the council over the next 10 years is to extend and enhance stretches of these coastal paths. It will also be looking to build capacity in local communities to identify and take forward its own projects to upgrade or deliver new or missing stretches of coastal path with the intention to facilitate the creation of a continuous route.

On the north coast, for example, a Coastal Path Forum is currently being piloted to act as a focal point for community groups along Banffshire and then further along the Aberdeenshire coast. The Forum will provide guidance, assistance and support and will also provide an opportunity to develop a sustainable model for longer term maintenance and promotion of the coastal path for visitors and the communities along its length.



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External funding has also been secured to employ a project manager to oversee future path development in Kincardine and Mearns and the Lord Lieutenants are keen to see landowners, community groups and volunteers come together to assist in the initiative and help join up the existing sections of the coastal path.

In a joint statement, Andrew Simpson, Sandy Manson and Alastair Macphie, the Lord Lieutenants of Banffshire, Aberdeenshire and Kincardineshire, said: “We are delighted to support such an ambitious and enduring project which will not only benefit so many people and communities in the north-east of Scotland but will also be a lasting legacy to Her Majesty’s remarkable and tireless service to our nation over seven decades.

“We hope that the vision of completing the Platinum Jubilee Coastal Path will capture the imaginations of coastal communities throughout the north-east and wider afield. Hopefully, with time, the path will provide walkers with linked-up access to our most stunning coastline and a unique outdoor experience.”

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