

# Platinum Jubilee Coastal Path Kincardineshire

## Update

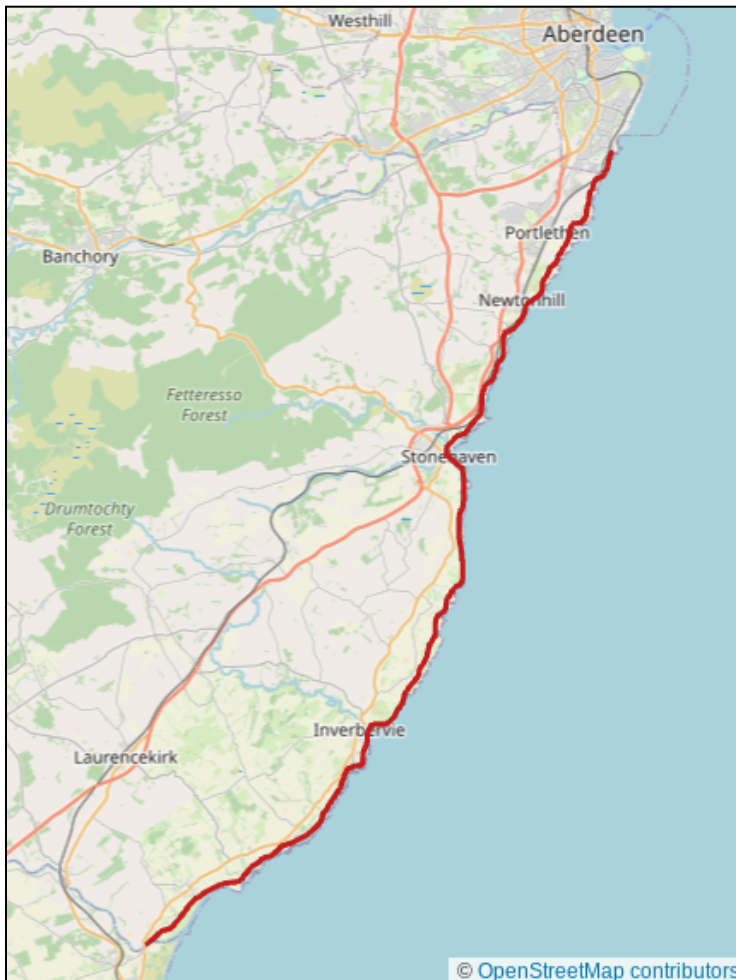
Autumn 2024

If you wish to receive further updates and / or would like to get involved then please sign up using the following link. <http://eepurl.com/ia0e1n>

If not, please let us know by emailing [platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com](mailto:platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com)

Please forgive us if there is some repetition of some parts of the Update. Our readership is growing each time we produce these Updates and we are keen to send out some key messages, especially regarding community engagement.

### Path Progress...



The autumn has seen us out on the path rather more. The overall route remains as on the map but there are numerous little alterations that we are having to explore as proposed routes become unfeasible for a variety of reasons.

We have had plenty of very constructive and encouraging conversations with various landowners and other agencies but the route itself remains a work in progress.

What has been particularly fantastic is the involvement of quite a few of our registered Volunteers on some of our route finding walks. Their local path and general knowledge is proving invaluable. Thank you to all of you who have been involved with this.

(For more about volunteering, see below)

**Photos from some recent survey walks looking at possible routes**



A wintery Bervie Brows

The Todhead Light across  
Braidon Bay



Read on for more news ....

## **But it's not just about the route survey ...**

### **Volunteer Days**

As we have suggested previously, Volunteers are absolutely key to the success of these longer distance paths. For example, the South West Coastal Path in SW England has over 100 volunteers and 7 paid staff covering the 630 mile route. Community involvement is central to the aims and purposes of the Aberdeenshire coastal path.

We now have 20 “registered” volunteers currently split into North and South groups (although this is not set; just pragmatic) and the range of skills being offered is considerable from practical, path maintenance skills through route finding to, broadly, heritage and environmental knowledge and communication skills.



On 21st September, the South group was back out on the path south of Johnshaven. This is an established section of the path which requires a lot of maintenance due to its low lying nature (coastal erosion is very topical among the local communities), the local land drainage and the enthusiastic vegetation. Here we see scything and willow cutting and replanting (to help bind the soil).

There have also been two Scything Training days run in conjunction with NatureScot's St Cyrus National Nature Reserve. Both days were well attended. Scything is our preferred method of vegetation control for a path which will be largely turf based. It is more environmentally friendly than strimming: not leaving behind lots of bits of strimmer wire, being able to rake up cut grass to mulch around trees; much cheaper: not having ongoing costs of fuel and strimmer wire; can be done for longer periods of time; and can be very therapeutic.

The “North” group has been out exploring the potential route north of Muchalls village. This is extremely useful as local knowledge - route, heritage, environment - is invaluable to the project.

If you would like to consider joining our group of volunteers, please simply get in touch with us via [platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com](mailto:platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com)

## **Volunteering**

We are actively looking for volunteers to help with the development, maintenance and management of the Path. Our hope is that this project will focus on Community use and engagement. To this end, we are keen to recruit a number of volunteers to help with the following:

- a. Path Ranger - to undertake to walk a local (to you) section of the path to keep an eye on the use and condition of the path and share observations and concerns with the Project Officers.
- b. Path development and maintenance volunteers - to join in with volunteer days when we will work on remedial work. The evolving path will need work on various stretches and, especially after storms and high tides - very topical - we will need to work on any damage.
- c. Behind the scenes - there will be a need for help with a whole range of things: writing press pieces and guides etc; collating the huge range of cultural, historical, environmental and geographical material we are already receiving from people along the coastal communities.
- d. And, I have little doubt, other, as yet unforeseen, activities.

Thank you very much for the many offers of support which we have already received from up and down our coastal communities, it is much appreciated. And, of course, many thanks to all of you who are already active, largely with maintenance work.

Should you be keen to volunteer, please do not hesitate to make contact with me, James Ferrier, or Caspar Lampkin via [platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com](mailto:platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com) We look forward to hearing from you.

## **Request for Information**

First of all, to everyone who has sent us information already, thank you very much. We are filing it ready for use in our planned interpretation boards, website and guidebook. There is a huge amount of information from our coastline rich in culture, history, ecology and geology and so we plan to use QR Codes on the boards (as well as displayed information) in order to enable access to all this information.

We are, however, still particularly keen to gather more historical, cultural, geographical and environmental information relating to the coastal communities through which the path will pass.

Should you have any information which you would like to share with us, please email us at: [platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com](mailto:platinumjubileecoastalpath@gmail.com) Thank You.

## **Charitable Trust**

The North East Scotland Coastal Trust (NESCoT) is closer to becoming a reality. An application to become a Charitable Trust is being finalised for submission to OSCR (the Scottish Charity Regulator). The resulting Trust with a Chair, currently 7 Trustees and, probably, a Chief Executive Officer, will oversee all aspects of the path's development and management. The Purposes of the Trust are quite extensive including: Heritage and Culture; People and Communities; Recreation, Health and Wellbeing (includes the actual path!); Environmental Protection and Improvement; Education; Charitable and Economic. Quite how these various Purposes will look in practice is still under discussion. Initially the Trust will have a single tier but the intention is for it to develop a second tier with a Membership of key stakeholders.

## **Path Development north of Aberdeen**

Our colleagues north of Aberdeen have been making great progress along the Moray Firth and the NE coast. The Council funded model in this northern section (in the south, we are privately funded) is concentrating on community engagement as a stimulus for path development. Our colleague, Environmental Planning Officer Peter, has been having great success along quite a number of coastal communities. In addition, we have been having regular meetings with Peter and fellow EPO, Murray, to share experiences. They have been able to share a lot of information regarding the proper specifications for path bridges, gates etc. as well as their knowledge and experience from other similar projects.

Recently, we also visited the path around the Newburgh area. It was most encouraging to meet



up with our Trust Chair-elect, Christo Shepherd, and Ron Macdonald (formerly a senior member of SNH, now NatureScot) and hear the depth of their local knowledge and broader experience. This stretch is outside our (southern) immediate remit but it is clear that long stretches of the beautiful coastal path are well established. There do remain some challenges, not least where the North Sea meets the US President-elect's new golf course as the High Water Mark creeps closer to the fence line.

The Trust is working on a plan to ensure that this stretch is developed along with the northern and southern sections.

## Fundraising

Charis and Ali continue to bring their extensive experience to this essential aspect of the project. Aberdeenshire Council is very supportive but, Peter aside, it is not in a position to fund any of the project management nor actual path development work. All other funding needs to be independently sourced. We, as Project Officers, have been very lucky to have been funded by the community fund of Macphie's of Glenbervie; while funds coming directly and indirectly from various onshore and offshore wind farms (via the Crown Estate) have enabled much of the ongoing development and maintenance work in the south to take place.

The costs of the further development and initial maintenance of the whole Aberdeenshire Project will rely on further funds from various sources, many from the renewable energy sector. The ongoing management of the project will require a different sort of funding which may well come from somewhere like the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

## Short Items

- **Mill of Benholm Enterprises:** we had a very encouraging meeting with MoBE ([Mill of Benholm](#)) recently. The Mill of Benholm lies just a few hundred metres inland of the coastal path just north of Johnshaven. With its link path and enterprising plans, MoBE is typical of the kind of link the coastal path project is trying to establish. To be honest, Benholm lies very close to where we - Charis, Caspar and James - live and so our local knowledge has been useful. We would welcome any ideas regarding where a similar link might be possible along other stretches of the coast.
- **Thistle Wind Partners:** we have had a very encouraging meeting with TWP, who are behind the Bowdun Offshore Wind Farm Project. We discussed the likely impact of the operation at the landfall site near the Haughs of Benholm both during the installation stage and subsequently. We also had an encouraging conversation regarding TWP's community projects' funding.
- **Education:** One of our Purposes is in the area of Education. Our role here is likely to be one of facilitator rather than deliverer (except for scything training etc) and we continue to enjoy our link with Johnshaven Primary School, who, we hope, will be able to develop using the path environment within their curriculum. The Scottish Curriculum, with its emphasis on Sustainability; Outdoor Learning; Community; Health and Wellbeing and more, lends itself to a close association with the path project. We hope to develop this and similar associations further as the project develops.