

THE NETWORK

Issue 64 Summer Edition June 2011

Infrastructure Services

keeping Aberdeenshire businesses in touch

VisitScotland expo 2011

Delegates from all across the world descended upon Aberdeen in April for the annual VisitScotland expo, where they were treated to a taste of all that Aberdeen City and Shire has to offer.

At the event the Aberdeen City and Shire stand won the award for 'Most Effective Stand for Doing Business' at VisitScotland expo 2011. The stand served as a base for over 20 local businesses at this year's expo event held at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

Whisky tasting and live music were on offer to give delegates a flavour of the warm welcome visitors can expect when they visit the region.

Featured on the stand was the Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms Destination Management Organisation (DMO), who partnered with outdoor activity businesses in the area – Balmoral Estate, Braemar Highland Safaris, Cyclehighlands, Deeside Activity Park, Fish Dee, Glen Tanar Estate and Walk Deeside.

Duff House, Grampian Transport Museum, Macduff Marine Aquarium and The Museum of Scottish Lighthouses also represented the very best of north east culture and entertainment.

Iain Gabriel, Director of Infrastructure Services for Aberdeenshire Council, said: "Visitors to the Aberdeen City and Shire stand were able to see



Musician Paul Anderson at the Aberdeen City and Shire stand during VisitScotland expo 2011.

for themselves just how much this extremely diverse area is able to offer the business and tourism industry.

"VisitScotland expo allows a unique opportunity to promote the area and to build on relationships with the tourism industry worldwide; in the current climate it is vital that we do all we can to promote the area and encourage people to visit Aberdeenshire, and events such as VisitScotland expo provides a wonderful platform to help us achieve this."

VisitScotland's Regional Director, Shona Anderson, said: "We were delighted to bring VisitScotland expo back to the north east this year.

"There are great benefits from hosting a travel trade show such as expo, not only for the host region city but also for the country as a whole as we work together with tourism businesses selling Scotland to the world."

Welcome to Network



We aim to keep you updated on the latest economic development news and events in order to help you and your business access the many resources provided by

Aberdeenshire Council and our partners.

This issue of Network looks at a new Food and Health Innovation Service, opportunities at the Peterhead Energy Hub, a case study of a small and growing local company Synergy Kitesports, and funding opportunities for local communities. We also provide you with details of upcoming events in 2011 including the Royal Highland Show.

Within Aberdeenshire Council we have recently formed a new department – Infrastructure Services. Its remit covers six core functions: economic development, property and facilities management, transportation, roads and landscape service, planning and building standards, and protective services and waste management.

This new service has the ability to ensure higher quality of services and from my point of view a great opportunity to ensure we get the conditions right for economic development and quality of life for all of us who live and work in Aberdeenshire now and in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Iain Gabriel, who after 16 years of service to Aberdeenshire Council has decided to leave his post as Director.

While I have only worked alongside Iain for a few months, in that time I have seen a commitment and dedication to his work that is second to none. In particular his commitment to the business community in the north east has been exceptional. The strength and quality of the work the Economic Development team have been able to do has stemmed from his strong leadership during his time here.

On behalf of everyone within the Economic Development team I would like to wish him the very best of luck for the future.

Belinda Miller, Head of Economic Development for Aberdeenshire Council

Shire Connections

The first Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce Shire Connections event of 2011 was held at the Waterside Inn, Peterhead, in March.

Sponsored by Aberdeenshire Council and supported by Aberdeen Journals, the theme of the event was the Peterhead Energy Hub with over 100 delegates from the town and across Aberdeenshire attending.

Feedback from the event was very positive, with one delegate commenting that: “the attendance proved that localised activity has real meaning to business and the community.”

Forthcoming events in the Shire Connections calendar include a Shire Networking Breakfast at the Turriff Show on Monday, 1 August, and Shire Networking Lunches on Friday, 16 September, and Friday, 11 November, 2011.

To sign up and find out more about these and other forthcoming Chamber events, visit the website www.agcc.co.uk/events or call the events team on 01224 343922 or email events@agcc.co.uk

Funding opportunity for Aberdeenshire's coastal communities



Portsoy Harbour

Aberdeenshire will receive an allocation of funding from Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF). Whilst proportions of funding for each region have yet to be finalised, it has been established that Scotland is to benefit from £4.5million in total.

The fund will provide support to fishing communities which have been affected by decline in fishing activities. Eligible areas in Aberdeenshire have yet to be confirmed, although the area is likely to include fishing and coastal communities from St Cyrus to Portsoy excluding Aberdeen.

EFF Axis 4 will run in a similar manner as the LEADER programme and will encourage a bottom up approach to support economic diversification and an improved quality of life. A board of representatives from public and private organisations assess and approve project applications. This will be known as the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG).

It is anticipated that eligible applicants for EFF Axis 4 will include community groups as well as small and medium businesses, charities and public bodies. Beneficiaries must be located in a formerly fishing dependent community.

It is likely that match funding of at least 50% will be required. As EFF is a European fund, it will be suitable for match funding from sources such as Aberdeenshire Council initiatives, lottery and Scottish Government funds. This does not include LEADER.

Business development schemes may be considered; this could include fish processing factories exploring new labelling ideas or boats diversifying into tourism activities.

Further details regarding EFF Axis 4 will be provided in the next Network. For any enquiries contact: Belinda Miller, Head of Economic Development on 01224 664568 or email: belinda.miller@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Energetica developments in Peterhead



A number of events have taken place over recent weeks further confirming the important role Peterhead has within the Energetica project.

In March, First Minister Alex Salmond officially opened Peterhead Port Authority's Smith Quay and Smith Embankment development.

The £30 million deepwater berth was built to allow Peterhead Port Authority to attract new business and target previously untapped markets. The embankment incorporates a 200 metre long deep water berth, breakwater, dredging and land reclamation works.

Creating up to 60 full time job opportunities, it is estimated that the berth will contribute around £12 million to the local economy each year.

Following the purchase of 30 acres of land at Upperton in 2010, Scottish Enterprise has received planning permission in principle for building the Energetica Industry Park. The park will attract businesses operating in the sub sea, renewables and offshore decommissioning markets.

To be developed in two phases, it is anticipated that the development will offer a mixture of high quality office and industrial accommodation providing support to the emerging offshore renewables and decommissioning markets and the growing sub sea sector.

Peterhead Energy Hub (PEH) is aiming to sustain and increase activity within Peterhead Port by promoting it to key target markets, specifically within the renewable energy, decommissioning and subsea sectors.

Smith Embankment, Peterhead, was officially opened by First Minister, Alex Salmond in March.

PEH is a marketing initiative, headed by Peterhead Port Authority and ASCO, but will involve other major industry players including Score, Banff and Buchan College, The Robert Gordon University and Falck Nutec. As part of the initiative PEH will showcase the port and adjacent infrastructure to key industry figures.

Sara Budge, Scottish Enterprise Project Director for Energetica, welcomed the activity and said: "These developments signal a major step forward for Peterhead and the port which play an integral role within Energetica."

For more information contact Sara Budge on 01224 252060 or email sara.budge@scotent.co.uk

Energetica

Aberdeenshire projects boosted by £300,000 LEADER funding

Five local projects from across the region will go ahead following approval by the Rural Aberdeenshire Local Action Group (LAG) with a combined funding commitment from LEADER of more than £300,000 towards total costs of £1.4million.

The projects include plans for a new £1.1million sports and community hall in Newmachar; a series of skills development courses for secondary school pupils in Banff, Turriff and Huntly, the creation of a path network in Buchan, Countryside Live, an innovative event to be held in June at Dunecht Estate for families and school children and a feasibility study to revitalise a derelict vineyard at Duff House for future community use.

The Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER programme has now made a commitment of over £3.6million towards 107 projects across Aberdeenshire since the programme was launched in 2008.

Belinda Miller, Rural Aberdeenshire LAG Chairperson, said: "The latest round of LEADER funded projects exemplifies the breadth of the impact which the programme delivers."

"One project will support a key target group for LEADER through skills development for young people. Others will encourage outdoor access, rural skills and promotion of local food production."

Vicky Thomson, LEADER Coordinator, said: "It is particularly encouraging to see the professional approach by applicants in working up applications which will result in high quality projects for the benefit of local communities. LEADER provides the leverage for these projects to attract public and private sector funding from a wide range of sources."

Details of all approved projects to date and information on the application process are available on the Rural Aberdeenshire LEADER website:

www.aberdeenshireleader.org

Vicky Thomson, LEADER Co-ordinator,
Tel: 01467 628383 or email vicky.thomson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

New LEADER Project Officer



Jamie Wilkinson who started in the role of LEADER Project Officer in February.

A new member of the LEADER team was appointed earlier this year. Jamie Wilkinson started in the role of LEADER Project Officer in February. He joins LEADER Co-ordinator Vicky Thomson and LEADER Administrator Anne MacLennan at Gordon House, Inverurie.

With a strong rural background and interest in rural development, Jamie is well placed to join the team. In his first few weeks in post Jamie has represented LEADER at promotional events, met with potential applicants and will shortly commence on project monitoring, a key area within his responsibilities.

Welcoming his new role, Jamie said: "I am delighted to have joined the team to help with the successful delivery of LEADER throughout Aberdeenshire."

"I can already see the benefits which the LEADER programme has provided through funding towards a wide variety of community projects. I look forward to working with new and existing projects in the coming months."

Jamie can be contacted on 01467 628262 or email jamie.wilkinson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

New role in Economic Development

Derek McDonald, who has been working in economic development since 2008, has recently added to his rural industry responsibilities and is now the Aberdeenshire Council contact for the maritime industry in Aberdeenshire.

His new role includes, but is not confined to, the fish catching and processing sectors, which contribute enormously to the local economy.

Derek said of his new role as Rural and Maritime Industries Development Officer: "I look forward to engaging with local businesses and representative organisations from our coastal communities."

Contact Derek McDonald on 01224 664606 or email derek.mcdonald@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

SAB case study – Synergy Kitesports



courtesy of Synergy Kitesports

To be eligible for support under the SAB scheme, a business must be able to demonstrate that it has the potential for growth and will bring economic benefit to Aberdeenshire.

Applications are considered by the SAB panel at regular intervals.

For more information contact Christine Webster by phone on 01346 519881 or by email at christine.webster@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or visit www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/support/finance/sab.asp

Contact details for Area Offices around Aberdeenshire are available on the back page.

It may be thought that coastal Aberdeenshire is not a prime spot for adrenaline sports, but staff at Synergy Kitesports, based in Fraserburgh disagree. Kite sports include power kiting, kite bugging, kite land boarding, as well as kite surfing and snow kiting.

Synergy are an International Kiteboarding Organisation (IKO) registered training facility for power kiting and kite surfing which means that courses here are recognised throughout the world. The Support for Aberdeenshire Business (SAB) scheme last year helped the company gain accreditation to train instructors in power kiting.

More recently, Synergy Kitesports are embarking on an expansion project to be able to teach larger groups at one time and have embarked on the purchase of equipment to enable them to do this.

Mark Davies, of Synergy Kitesports, said: "2010 was a good year for us and we had to expand the business. There is such a great opportunity for activity based tourism in Scotland and the coast around Fraserburgh and the north east provides some of the best environments for kiting in the UK.

"We were successful in applying for a SAB loan, which has helped us purchase equipment and given the business working capital to expand.

This is enabling us to improve our core teaching activities as well as develop holiday packages which we hope will encourage further tourism growth within the north east."

Maggie Cleeve, a partner in Synergy Kitesports and the 2008 women's snowkite world champion, said: "Kiting is a great sport for any age or fitness level, but you need the knowledge and skills to really make it work. This is where we come in, making the sport safe whilst bringing you the perfect way to have fun and de-stress."

For more information call Synergy Kitesports on 01346 531166, email info@synergykitesports.com or visit www.synergykitesports.com

Following the award of LEADER support in October, Aberdeenshire Farmers' Markets Association (AFCMA) has appointed Katrina Barclay as its Marketing Co-ordinator. Katrina will play a key role in providing co-ordinated support to markets and raising the profile of farmers' markets in Aberdeenshire.

Chairman Kenny Groat commented: "We are delighted to announce the appointment of Katrina and look forward to working closely with her to support and build the profile of the local markets.

"One key target is to increase footfall; more successful markets will enable new and existing producers to invest further in their businesses and products."

Katrina will work closely with the AFCMA committee to help co-ordinate events and resources, produce area-based promotional materials, create and organise a common

Farmers' Market Co-ordinator appointed



Katrina Barclay has been appointed to a new role at Aberdeenshire Farmers' Markets Association.

Aberdeenshire farmers' markets website and social media. Katrina will also generate press and PR materials and respond to media enquiries.

Aberdeenshire Council match funded the association's own contributions, to which was added valuable support from the Scottish Agricultural College, SAOS and the Scottish Farmers Markets Partnership to prepare the LEADER application which has resulted in a total budget of £52k over two years to fund the part-time co-ordinator post and deliver the AFCMA marketing plan.

Project work such as liaison with local schools and training for stallholders is also planned.

For further information please contact Katrina Barclay on 07851 156988 or katbarclay@hotmail.com

A new £4 million project to help Scottish food and drink companies tap into global opportunities in the rapidly expanding health and nutrition sector was unveiled in February by Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment Richard Lochhead.

The new Food and Health Innovation Service, funded by Scottish Enterprise, will help 400 Scottish companies over the next five years to access Scotland's leading research in food and health to develop and launch new or improved products.

It is estimated that the project will help to grow turnover in the participating companies by a combined £80 million within five years, contributing to the industry's overall ambition to grow turnover from £10 billion to £12.5 billion by 2017.

The project aims to build on Scotland's international reputation for quality natural products such as berries, fish, meat and oats, as well as research expertise at

Scottish food and drink sector to target £348 billion global health market



institutions such as the University of Aberdeen Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health, Queen Margaret University, the Scottish Crop Research Institute and Heriot-Watt University.

Research has shown that while food and drink companies recognise the potential of the health and nutrition market for their business, they lack the research and development capabilities and food technology expertise to take advantage of new opportunities.

Paul McLaughlin, Chief Executive of Scotland Food and Drink, commented: "The food and drink industry has set ambitious targets for growth and I am delighted that the Food and Health Innovation Service has been launched to help achieve these, as a key delivery mechanism of the Scotland Food and Drink Industry Strategy."

For more information call 0845 6078787 or visit www.foodhealthinnovation.com

Food Hygiene Information Scheme

A scheme aimed at improving public confidence in the hygiene standards of local establishments selling food is now nearing completion.

Aberdeenshire Council is one of over 27 Scottish Local Authorities taking part in the Food Hygiene Information Scheme, initially developed by the Food Standards Agency in Scotland.

The scheme provides food businesses in Aberdeenshire – takeaways, cafes, hotels, restaurants, pubs and shops – with certificates and stickers relating to their last food hygiene inspection to be voluntarily displayed in their premises.

The scheme was initially introduced in Aberdeenshire in March 2010 as part of an ongoing roll-out in 20 pre-determined launch zones throughout Aberdeenshire.

Food businesses meeting the legal food hygiene requirements have received 'Pass' certificates while those falling short of the standard have received 'Improvement Required' certificates.

New food businesses which have not yet received an initial inspection have been issued with 'Awaiting Inspection' certificates.



Ian Robertson, Head of Protective Services and Waste Management congratulates Huntly 'Pass' Businesses

By participating in this scheme, Aberdeenshire Council offers consumers easy access to the information they need to make informed choices with confidence about where they choose to buy food, eat out or to hold events, such as birthday parties or wedding receptions.

Ian Robertson, Aberdeenshire Council's Head of Protective Services and Waste Management said: "The scheme has confirmed that around 90 percent of food

businesses passed their last inspection. We expect all 'Pass' businesses to display their inspection results and thereby encourage others to improve their standards."

Further details on the scheme and Aberdeenshire food business results, which are updated every 24 hours, are available at the Food Safety section of Aberdeenshire Council's website at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/foodsafety/fhis/index.asp

Audit Scotland report highlights good condition of Aberdeenshire roads



You can report potholes and road defects to the council by calling: 08456 081205, texting: 07624 820722, or emailing: roads@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

In February, Audit Scotland published a report 'Maintaining Scotland's Roads' in which they provided an overview of road conditions across the country. The report highlighted the good condition of Aberdeenshire's road network.

The report noted that 70% of Aberdeenshire roads are in 'good' condition, making the area one of the highest scoring in Scotland. Aberdeenshire Council maintains more than 5,400 kilometres of roads throughout the north-east and is fully committed to their maintenance.

The area's roads network is spread across a diverse area from mountain to sea and is affected by a number of different urban and rural considerations such as volume of traffic and extreme weather.

The last two winters have been particularly challenging and this endorsement goes a long way to highlighting the good work done by roads crews throughout the year.

Roads inspectors carry out regular inspections of the roads network and residents are encouraged to report potholes and road surface defects to the authority for inspection and repair on a priority basis.

Scottish Skipper



Scottish Skipper Expo will take place at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre on June 24 and 25. This new exhibition for the fishing industry is organised by Mara Media Ltd, owners of the Irish Skipper publication.

Aberdeenshire Council will have a stand at the event promoting the work which is done to support the north east fisheries sector and fishing dependent communities and to provide advice on funding opportunities, including the European Fisheries Fund. Aberdeenshire Council's harbours will also be on the stand showcasing the many and varied harbours in the area and what they have to offer.

More information is available on the website, www.scottishskipperexpo.net

Royal Highland Show

Eight north east food and drink companies are to participate under the Taste of Grampian banner at this year's Royal Highland Show, which takes place from 23-26 June, in Ingliston, Edinburgh and annually attracts around 150,000 visitors.

Elizabeth Mathie, Grampian Food Forum Coordinator, said: "After last year's success, we are delighted to be heading back. The aim is to take Taste of Grampian outwith the area and highlight the wealth and quality of food and drink produced in the north east.

Companies exhibiting include Dean's of Huntly Ltd, Mackie's of Scotland, Mackintosh of Glendaveny, Isabella's Preserves, Duncans of Deeside, Huntly Herbs, Grampian Oat Products and Ola Oils.

For further details contact Louise Stratton on 01224 664575, email louise.stratton@aberdeenshire.gov.uk



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HIGHLAND
SHOW 2011

• 23-26 JUNE •

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Farmers' Markets Dates

Farmers' Markets have become a popular fixture across Aberdeenshire, presenting valuable opportunities for producers to increase sales, add value to their own produce and gain closer links with the customer. The markets also have a proven spin off for local traders and businesses by attracting increased numbers of customers to market towns on market day.

TOWN	LOCATION	WHEN	TIME
Huntly	The Square	First Saturday of the month	09:00 – 13:00
Peterhead	Drummers Corner	First Saturday of the month	10:00 – 15:00
Stonehaven	Market Square	First Saturday of the month	09:00 – 13:00
Westhill	Ashdale Hall Car Park, Westhill Drive	First Saturday of the month	09:00 – 13:00
Inverurie	Market Place (Town Centre)	Second Saturday of the month	09:00 – 13:00
Banchory	Scott Skinner Square	Third Saturday of the month	09:00 – 13:00
Turriff	High Street Car Park	Third Saturday of the month	09:30 – 12:30
Alford	Alford Heritage Centre	Fourth Saturday of the month	10:00 – 14:00
Aberdeen	Belmont Street	Last Saturday of the month	09:00 – 16:00
Macduff	Fishmarket	Last Saturday of the month	09:00 – 12:30
Ellon	Neil Ross Square	Fortnightly including Saturday, June 11 and Saturday, June 25	09:00 – 12.30

For more information please contact Katrina Barclay on 07851 156988 or email: katbarclay@hotmail.com

Produced by Aberdeenshire Council GDT13678 May 2011

Although the content of The Network has been checked for accuracy, no legal responsibility will be accepted by the publishers for any errors or omissions.

Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development

About Economic Development

Economic Development within Aberdeenshire Council serves and supports local businesses and community initiatives throughout the area, as well as promoting Aberdeenshire and its diverse capabilities in new and existing markets. A team of experienced Business Development Executives and Industry specialists is strategically located in area offices to provide support and information on a wide range of topics including all aspects of business and trade development, financial assistance, European initiatives and marketing. The primary programme for assisting local companies is the flexible Support for Aberdeenshire Business (SAB) scheme. Aberdeenshire Council is also the lead authority in Business Gateway which supports start-up and growing businesses. In addition, Aberdeenshire Council promotes industrial and commercial development through the provision of sites and factories, with units currently available in a number of locations throughout the area. Economic Development services are listed and explained on Aberdeenshire Council's website, www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

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