

Discover North Kincardine

North Kincardine is a unique area to live, visit and discover. Its people have wrestled the sea and battled the landscape, creating a population of strength and character. Use the guide to start exploring this area of diverse landscapes and stories that have their origins in the old county of Kincardineshire.

To some, this area is a place to pass through, by road or rail, rarely stopping to study it in detail, but if you head off the main roads, into its villages, natural reserves and coastal paths, there is so much more on offer. We call it home and welcome you to visit, explore and discover why we love it so much. Welcome to historic North Kincardine.

1 North Kincardine Viewpoints

Local people and visitors remark how different the landscape of North Kincardine is from that of the Mearns in the South. You only have to look at the types of materials the dykes and houses are built with to see this distinction. Houses to the north of the Highland Boundary Fault are generally made from sparkly mica rich granite whereas structures south of the fault are rich brown sandstone from the much earlier Devonian period.

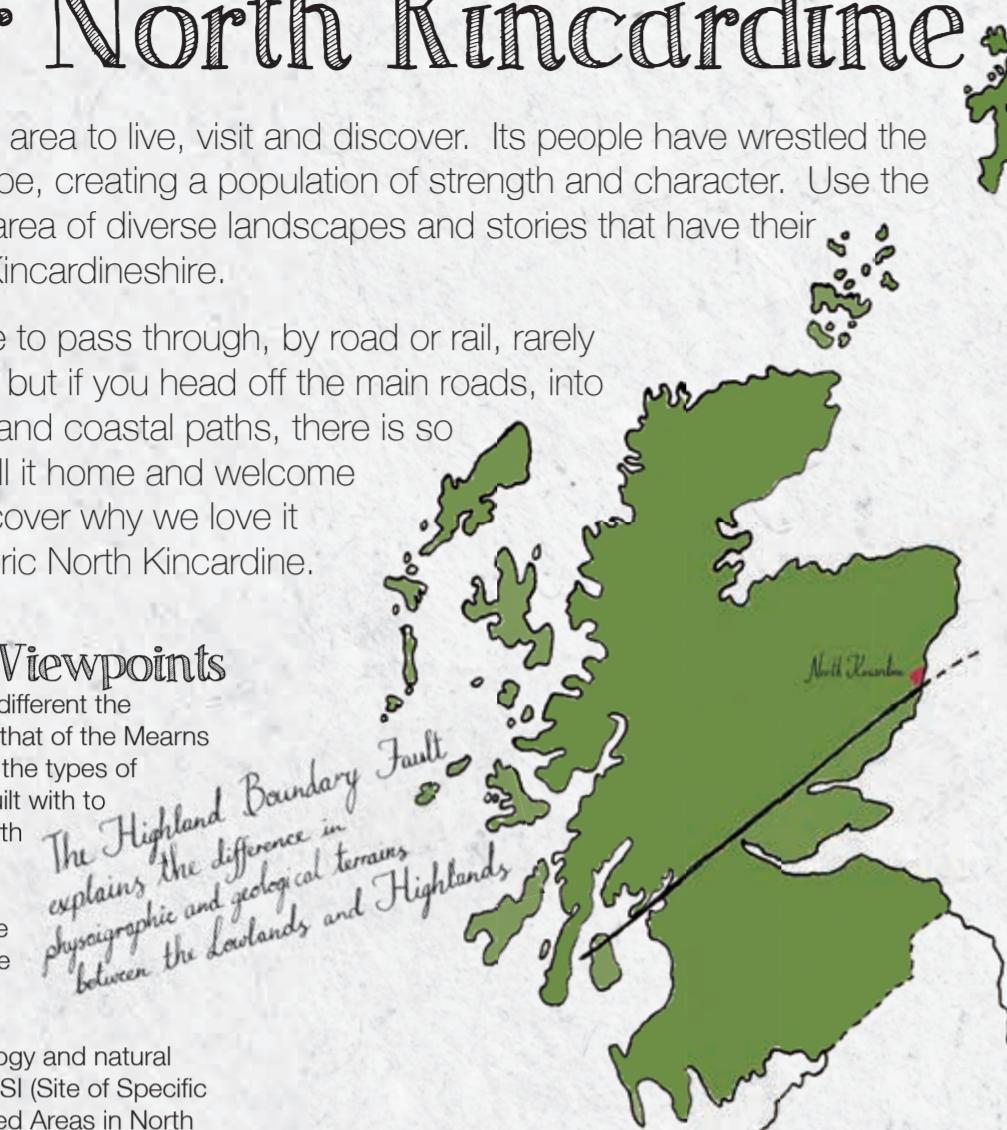
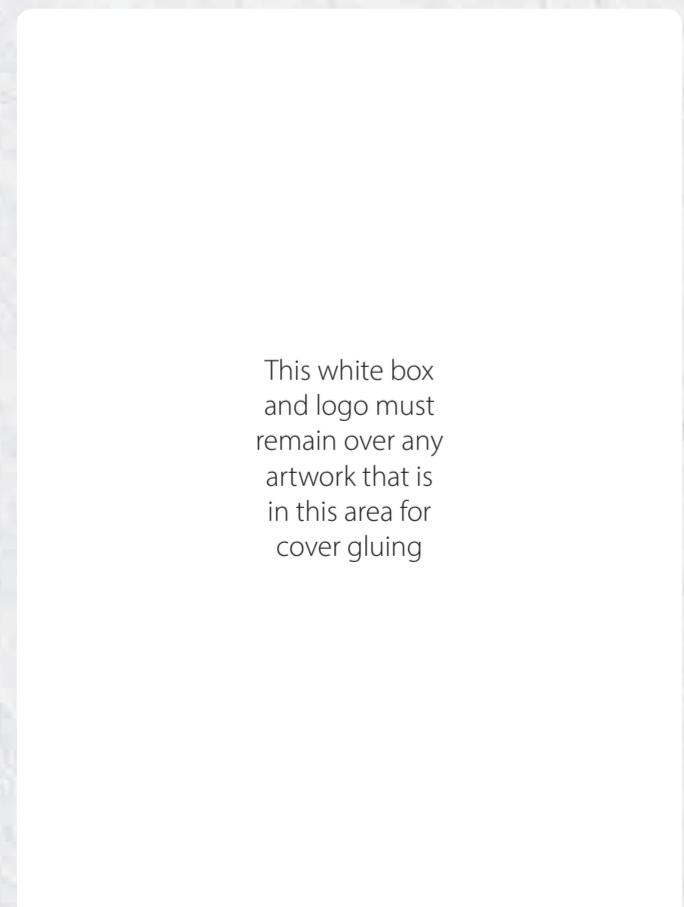
These fundamental differences in geology and natural habitats can be seen in the various SSSI (Site of Specific Scientific Interest) and Special Protected Areas in North Kincardine: geological features and fauna at Garron Point, heath lands at Findon Moor, raised bog at the Red Moss of Netherley. Furthermore there are Special Protected Areas at Crynoch Burn, River Dee, Cove Shore and a Local Nature Reserve at Kinorth Hill, Nigg.

Community conservation groups meet at Portlethen Moss, Portlethen Community Woodland Park and Maryculter Woods. These are places where you can get "hands on" experience as well as a chance to volunteer.

North Kincardine is at the far eastern edge of the Grampian Range providing a more accessible introduction to this geological feature. The best viewpoints are at Clochandighter, Tullo Hill, Maryculter and Meikle Carewe.



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2 Portlethen Moss Walk

Portlethen Moss is a rare area of natural raised acidic bog which supports a wide variety of plant and animal species.

The moss formed after the last ice age. The glacial retreat left an undulating landscape with a hollow that filled with water creating a lake, which over time filled in with decomposing vegetation. It takes about 100 years to form a mere 5cm of peat, formed from decomposing plant residues that are compacted, which then build up slowly over time. In recent coring studies, certain areas of the living bog have been measured to more than 3 metres in depth!

From the main entrance off Bruntland Road, there is a larger noticeboard which provides information for visitors and it shows the paths that lead through the moss. Some are very boggy in wet weather so wellingtons are recommended. A second noticeboard is situated further along the all-ability path, just before the dry moss comes to an end and the wet moss (living bog) starts.

Look out for roe deer, frogs, toads, newts and migrant birds. Common Cotton-Grass dot the brown boggy moss. Beautiful Marsh Orchids, Bog Asphodel, Devil's Bit Scabious and Sun Dew. Dragonflies and damselflies, butterflies and moths and a wide variety of bees.



3 North Sea Trail & Creel Walk

North Kincardine has an enduring relationship with the coast which goes back thousands of years to the earliest settlers in Aberdeenshire.

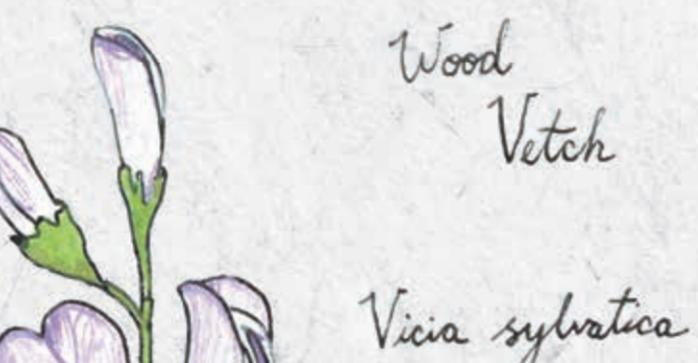
There are various paths and trails between Cowie and Torry, which are suitable for walking, cycling, horse riding and exploring the history, nature and scenery of this beautifully hidden treasure in Aberdeenshire. The North Sea Trail is an ongoing, multi-country project to develop the route that circumnavigates the whole of the North Sea coastal bay through Norway, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Netherlands and England to the North of Scotland, a lot of the trails are formed from the old farm and fishing tracks used for the transportation of fish and goods in and out of the villages.

Muchalls (Stranathrow), Newtonhill (Skateraw), Downies, Old Portlethen and Findon were all busy fishing ports including creel fishing, salmon fishing and more leisurely sea angling. Sea angling competitions to win the Douglas Cup (which resides at the bar in the Neuk in Old Portlethen) took place between 1896 and 1921 where local villages competed to see who could catch the most fish.

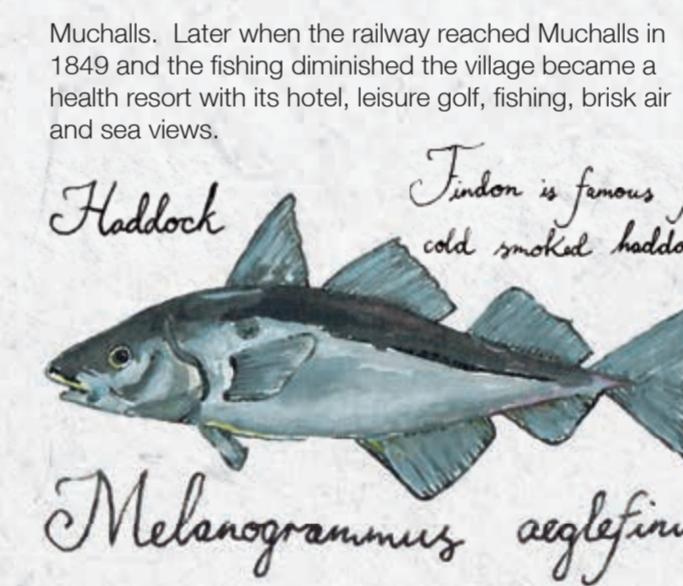
North Kincardine's coast attracts a host of wildlife. Salmon enter the rivers to spawn upstream. White beaked Dolphins have been observed from Portlethen. Bandit Pipistrelles, Geese, sea trout, wading birds and common seals feed on food around the shores and mosses. Plants and flowers only found in the area's mosses and heaths show the diversity and variety of the ecology of the area.

Around the area of Muchalls there are signs of smugglers caves which lead to the bay being known as the 'Gin Shore' and there are records of people living in the caves during the summer months.

Muchalls itself wasn't the first village in the southern end of North Kincardine, previously there had been Seaton of Muchalls, about a mile south of the centre beyond Doone's Point, which was badly hit by the loss of their fishing fleet in the late 18th century leading to the village relocating to the community of Stranathrow now named



Jun to Oct
a stout perennial to 1m
Dry and grassy areas avoiding heavy soils.



Jindon is famous for cold smoked haddock

Melanogrammus aeglefinus



4 Newtonhill/Skateraw Walk

Since the 17th Century the fishing villages around North Kincardine were a hive of activity. The many bays along the Kincardine coast from Torry to Cowie were filled with boats and inshore fisherfolk. The fishing peaked in the mid to late 1800s with over 130 people employed in the fishing. While the men were out fishing the fishwives would gut and prepare the fish for taking to the markets in Aberdeen and Stonehaven, some 10 -12 miles away. Women worked long and hard to prepare nets, haul in the boats and give piggy backs to the men so they didn't get wet getting onto the boats. They often did this bare footed and when the men were away they collected peat and sawdust for fuel and smoking the herring. In the late 19th and 20th century women travelled up and down the east coast following the herring and acquiring the name of 'silver darlings' as they travelled north as far as Thurso and south to Great Yarmouth to prepare the catch during the herring season.

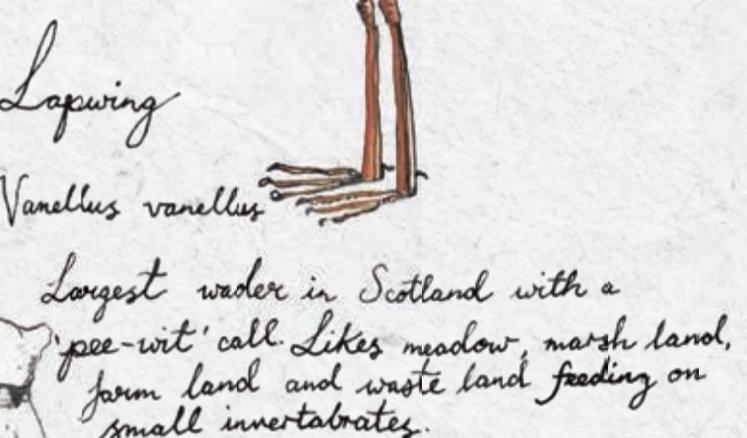
There is a lovely short walk of about one mile around this historic village, it's quite steep and sometimes may be slippery and muddy after a lot of rain. Look out for the original fishing cottages and smoke house.

The walk starts and finishes at Newtonhill Pharmacy and local store close to the bus stop.



Standing Stones - evidence of human habitation in North Kincardineshire from around 8,000 - 4,000 BC

Kincardine Fishwife



Largest wader in Scotland with a 'pee-wit' call. Likes meadow, marsh land, farm land and waste land feeding on small invertebrates.

5 Mouths, Post and Templars
North Kincardine has a network of interesting routes both very old and new. Just a few meters away from the A90, the Aberdeen Western Peripheral route and the railway line, you step back in time to routes with stories of highway men, ghosts, knights, kings and the church.

When you slow down and look more closely at the landscape it is possible to see signs of earlier communities – cairns, hut circles, stone circles, field systems, more recently to the 'improvements' in land management and features such as Bridge of Dee and Boswell's Monument. The changing priorities and status of land owners has shaped this area as it has passed through the hands of the people, kinships, clans, between kings and church, to estate owners, communities and individuals.

These routes can be travelled by car, but for their full effect and to get a feeling of how your predecessors discovered the landscape they are better appreciated on foot, on horse or bicycle.



North Kincardine is an area which has been created from the old county of Kincardineshire and borders onto Aberdeen City and Stonehaven.

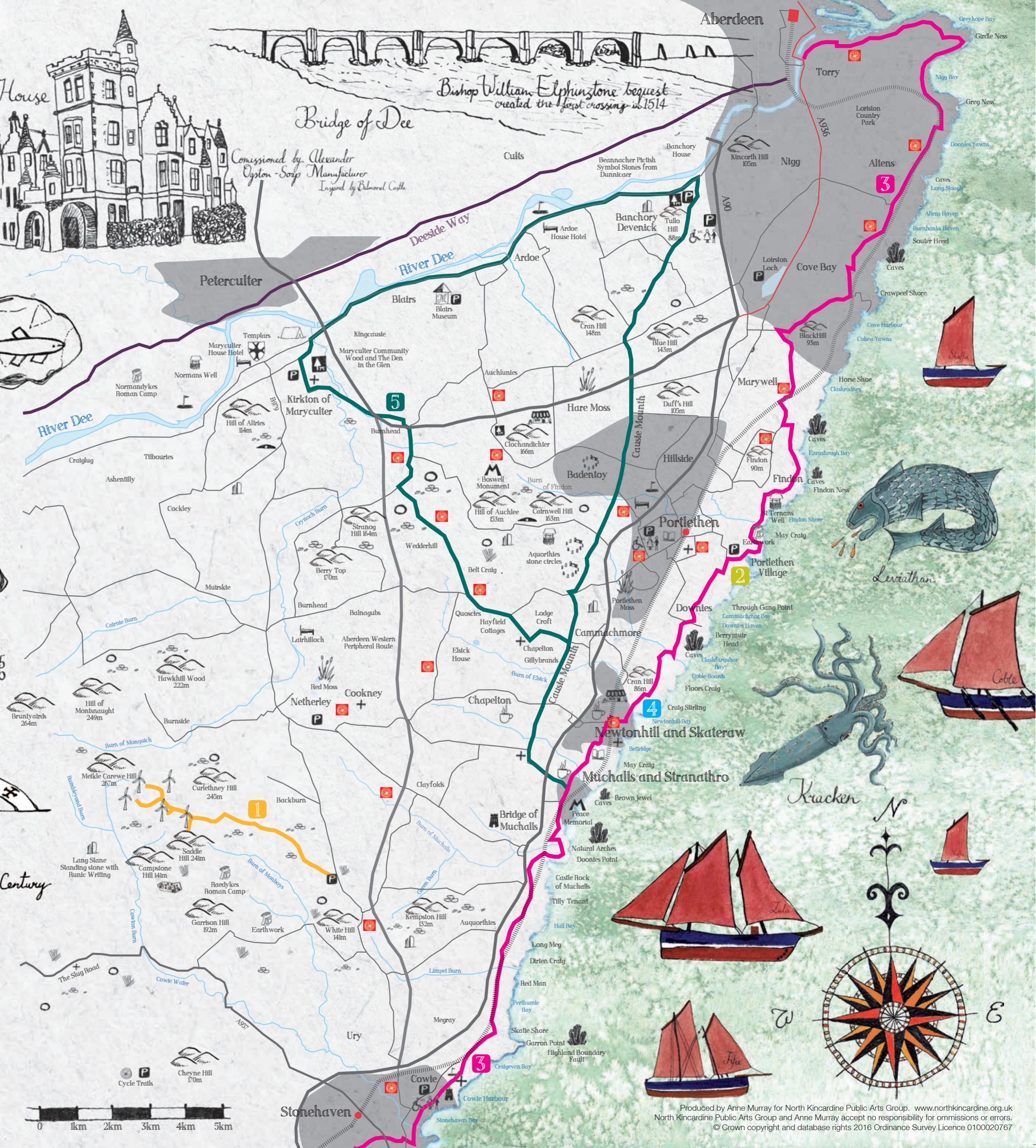
It has many different attractions from ancient stone circles, to the remains of Roman camps and a shoreline rich in the histories of its people and geology. The geology includes outcropping of many different rocks including semi-precious stones alongside fossils on the Great Highland Boundary Fault south of Muchalls at Garron Point. The Knights Templar are reported to have set up camps in the area leaving many place names as their legacy.

There is so much to see and enjoy, accompanied by a warm welcome in the many cafes, bars and restaurants where locals will tell you stories both old and new. Away from the hustle of the A90 the pace of life slows down to allow you to explore a landscape that has changed dramatically in some parts whilst in others remain the same as that of our forefathers over 10,000 years ago.

This map and guide has been created to give an introduction to the fascinating culture that makes up North Kincardine. We call it home and we welcome you to visit, explore and discover why we love it - we hope you do too.

North Kincardine Trails Key

- 1** — North Kincardine View Points
- 2** — Portlethen Moss Walk
- 3** — Creel Walk - Part of the North Sea Trail
- 4** — Newtonhill/Skateraw Walk
- 5** — Mounth, Post and Templar Trail



Discover, North Kincardine



An introduction to
our landscape, culture,
heritage and people

Walk in the footsteps of the Romans, Knights Templar and fish wives to discover the landscape and history through their eyes. All this is waiting for you to explore in North Kincardine.

For more information and detailed maps, visit:

www.discovernorthkincardine.org.uk



Garron Point

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A project in
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