

# energy sector potential

**GIVE IT A BLAST:** Piper Norman Fiddes is hanging on to his headwear in suitably blowy conditions as First Minister Nicola Sturgeon looks on at the official opening of the Aberdeen Bay wind farm. Photograph by Colin Rennie



## Gearing up for unique chance to travel on and celebrate new road

### FESTIVAL

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon surveyed miles of AWPR carriageway yesterday, as it was readied for this weekend's GoNorthEast Road Festival.

The SNP leader met Aberdeen City Council co-leaders Jenny Laing and Douglas Lumsden and Aberdeenshire Council leader Jim Gifford on one of the road's many flyovers.

Earlier this week, Ms Sturgeon apologised after she mistakenly stated the route would open fully this weekend.

There were no such missteps yesterday and Ms Sturgeon can only hope the thousands of motorists

who use the AWPR have a similar experience.

Ahead of its eagerly-awaited opening later this year, the GoNorthEast festival will see cyclists from across the north-east saddling up to travel the newest addition to Aberdeen's road network.

The weekend-long event will celebrate the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route/Balmedie to Tipperty project with people of all ages and abilities invited to take part in Borrow a Bike, and travel their choice of distance along a closed 4km loop of the route.

Visitors will also experience the history of travel in the north-east with an outdoor exhibition laid on by the Grampian

Transport Museum. In addition, international street theatre performers will be dotted along the stretch of road.

For safety and security reasons, the only way to access the festival site is by using a free shuttle bus service provided by Stagecoach, which will operate from two locations at Union Terrace and the Kingswells Park and Ride.

Further shuttle buses will be available from Craibstone for cyclists who wish to attend the festival tomorrow from 10am to 4pm.

Despite the festivities on the AWPR, hundreds of cyclists are planning to ride into Aberdeen city

centre tomorrow to protest about the lack of cycle lane provision on the £745 million project.

The Aberdeen Cycle Forum is expecting at least 400 supporters to voice their concerns outside council offices on Broad Street.

The "peaceful" protest is being organised by the group's spokeswoman Rachel Martin who said it was "unbelievable" that no cycle provision had been included in the project.

She said: "I can't believe that in 2018 so much money is being spent on a road built without cycle provision.

"We are disappointed. It is a huge oversight." **Comment, Page 26**

## Scotland's energy capital

opportunity to take in the excellent vistas and new perspectives on the Aberdeenshire countryside.

Over the last few months several sections

**"Thanking people for the patience they have shown"**

of the road have opened and Transport Scotland is continuing to work with the contractor to identify further sections that

can open early to traffic. The AWPR is not just important for the north-east, it will be beneficial to people across Scotland. It will breathe new life into the city and improve connectivity within and outwith Scotland's energy capital.

Once operational it will provide safer journeys, reduced journey times, improved journey time reliability, better local access and reduced congestion, every day.

As you would expect with a major road like this, cyclists will not be permitted but reduced traffic on other routes in

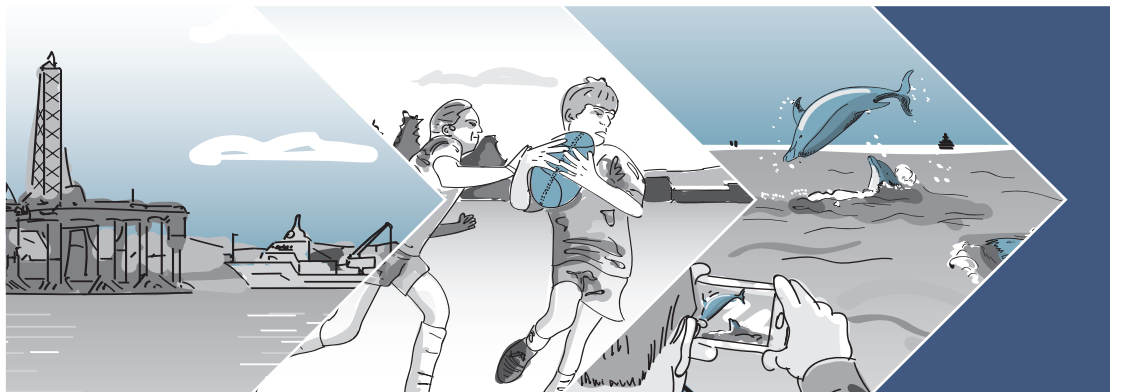
and around the city and Shire means safer, cleaner cycling opportunities.

The economic benefits of this infrastructure cannot be ignored.

It is estimated to generate over £6m in additional income for the north-east. 14,000 jobs are expected to be created in the next 30 years. Anticipation is growing for opening the full route and this festival is a unique way of building on this. I would encourage people who will soon feel the full benefits of the new road to join in this weekend's celebrations.



## BE A PART OF OUR FUTURE



### ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

The Port of Cromarty Firth is holding its Annual Public Meeting on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September** at the Kincaig Castle Hotel, Tomich, Invergordon, Ross-Shire, IV18 0LF at 6pm. The Chief Executive and Chairman will present a roundup of recent port activities, with a focus on the future. All are invited to attend, this is your chance to be involved and speak directly to the Board.

Places are limited at the Kincaig Castle, so to reserve your place(s) please email [joanne@cfpa.co.uk](mailto:joanne@cfpa.co.uk) or call **01349 852308**.

Registration closes on **Thursday 20th September**.

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