

&Aberdeenshire

A particular take on property | ISSUE ONE

STRUTT
& PARKER

ALL ABOUT YOUR AREA:
A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE
FROM STRUTT & PARKER



Welcome

to *£Aberdeenshire*, a magazine showcasing local properties and giving you a taste of the area. Strutt & Parker is one of the most diverse property businesses in the UK, and the Banchory office is a focal point for the many departments and services we offer. The residential team specialises in selling a wide range of properties across Aberdeenshire. We also provide unrivalled expertise in farming, land management, resources and energy, and planning and development.

Read on to find out more

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David Strang Steel explains how the team at our Banchory office is perfectly placed in a dynamic and growing market

The Strutt & Parker office, in an old school in Banchory, plays a central role in this beautiful region in the northeast of Scotland.

Aberdeenshire covers 2,500 square miles and boasts a wealth of thriving industries, from cutting-edge oil and energy multinationals to traditional farms, small rural businesses and large estate concerns.

There is always a buzz in the air; quite literally, sometimes, from helicopters serving the oil rigs, but also the buzz created by the quality of shops and restaurants that have recently opened in and around Aberdeen. In a recent Bank of Scotland survey, Aberdeenshire was classified as the best place to live in Scotland due to the quality of life.

The northeast of Scotland attracts a wide variety of property applicants: those who come to work, those seeking privacy, those looking to retire and those keen to be close to quality salmon fishing or the area's active equestrian scene. The area is also renowned for the royal presence on Deeside, and many high-profile dignitaries come to the area. There are regular flights from Aberdeen to Europe and the south of England.

From the Banchory office we provide a diverse range of services, from the sale and valuation of large estates through beats of salmon fishing to quality farmland, country houses, cottages and farm buildings. We also offer a comprehensive management service, managing a range of interests including property portfolios, recording

studios, restaurants, biomass plants, wind farms and radio masts, while also covering all areas of the traditional rural property activities. As a result, we have become established as a well-known local company with national connections and we are proud of our track record for repeat business, working with many families and clients over decades.

Since 2010, the market for properties within a 25-mile radius of Aberdeen has been buoyant due to local economic prosperity. It is reported that 120,000 new recruits will be required by the oil industry in the northeast in the next 10 years and current plans to construct 70,000 new homes in Aberdeen city and shire is a sign of this continued affluence and investment.

The area is growing and changing fast. For an estate agent, and existing homeowners, this provides exciting opportunities. We endeavour to remain at the forefront of planning policy and to develop close links with local architects to ensure we stay one step ahead and offer truly expert insight. For our clients with rural properties in Aberdeenshire, we are confident that the future is bright.



SLOPE OFF FOR THE DAY

Aberdeenshire's powder hounds don't have to go far to enjoy the white stuff. The region is blessed with easy access to three of the UK's five best ski resorts. The largest, Glenshee, has 22 lifts and 36 runs – eight green, 13 blue, 13 red and two black – and offers beginners and experts alike a great day on the piste. The resort flanks the sides of the A93 (the highest public road in Scotland through Gleann Shith, which is Gaelic for Glen of the Fairies) and gives skiers and boarders the run of a 3,504ft winter playground covering four mountains and three valleys. Three mountain cafés offer on- and off-piste pit stops, while ski and snowboard tuition and equipment hire can be organised in situ or in advance online. ski-glenshee.co.uk

ABERDEENSHIRE UNCOVERED

*Between 2012 and 2014, the economic forecast GDP growth rate for Aberdeen City and shire is 6.8%, the highest growth rate of any UK local authority area.**

Aberdeen City and shire is home to 300 castles, from clifftop ruins to royal residences. For details of the Castle Trail, visit aberdeen-grampian.com/area-guide/trails/

Aberdeen Harbour Board, established in 1136, is Britain's oldest business.

HRH Prince Charles is patron of the Aberdeen-Angus Cattle Society. The Queen Mother was patron before him for 67 years.

COUNTRY VIEWS

Auld Kirk, Oldmeldrum

This secluded country house is surrounded by open fields and enjoys glorious vistas. The property includes excellent equestrian facilities, including a paddock, stables and arena. In the grounds is the historic C-listed Meldrum Mausoleum that dates from 1236.

£850,000 FOR SALE

Contact 01330 826800



VILLAGE PEOPLE

Kincardine o'Neil may be a small historic village on the banks of the River Dee, but its local store packs a punch, attracting visitors from miles around. Following many fishing trips to the area, Susan Brooks took over the store in 2002 and, beyond providing Post Office services for the community, has created a treasure trove of unexpected treats. Head for the deli section for local meats, cheeses and specialities, such as smoked and poached salmon. And look no further for local ales, fine whiskies and chilled bottles of Bollinger. It's a favourite haunt for fishermen, who drop in to pick up picnic sandwiches, flies for all water heights and hot bacon butties to take away. kincardineoneilvillagestore.co.uk



MAKING A SPLASH

Swimming in the chilly North Sea may not sound too enticing. However, at Stonehaven, you're in for a surprise. The local Olympic-size outdoor swimming pool and lido boasts clean, heated seawater set at a balmy 29 degrees centigrade plus an excellent café for post-dip refreshments. Originally built in 1933, the lido has been modernised and updated thanks to the efforts of local volunteers The Friends of Stonehaven Open Air Pool, and is now a thriving focal point for locals and visitors.

stonehavenopenairpool.co.uk



HARBOUR HIGHLIGHTS

If there's one place that captures the energy and spirit of this dynamic city, it's Aberdeen Harbour. Steeped in seafaring history, the modern port area on the eastern seafront is the beating heart of the city and a symbol of Aberdeen as an economic powerhouse. Each year, the port handles around 8,000 vessel arrivals and around 5 million tonnes of cargo for a wide range of industries. Ferries also bustle back and forth, adding to the hive of maritime activity. With splendid harbour views, the award-winning Aberdeen Maritime Museum and the Aberdeen Harbour Gallery and café are perfect places to explore Aberdeen's North Sea heritage with exhibitions and displays on the North Boats, the offshore oil industry, shipbuilding and clipper ships. You can even have a go at parking your own container ship – virtually, of course.

www.agm.co.uk/aberdeen-harbour.co.uk



A PLACE IN HISTORY

Stracathro House, Brechin

Built in 1824, Stracathro House is a magnificent A-listed Palladian mansion with a coach house, cottages and policies. Previous owners of note include Sir James Campbell (1790-1876), Lord Provost of Glasgow and father of Prime Minister Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836-1908). In 1938, it was used as a residence for doctors and nurses coping with the military and civilian casualties of World War II. It has since reverted to private ownership and has been sensitively refurbished as a stunning family home.

£1,455,000 **SOLD**

Contact 01330 826800



◀ Craigieden, Ellon

Set in mature landscaped gardens, this fine Victorian villa has been upgraded recently while retaining splendid period features. New upgrades include heritage sliding sash and case windows, a Laings kitchen, new bathrooms throughout, and a surround sound and visual entertainment system.

£815,000 **FOR SALE**

▼ Martin Cottage, Alford

This charming traditional cottage has two bedrooms and is located in a lovely rural position in the Don Valley.

£215,000 **FOR SALE**



▶ Durno House, Inverurie

Durno House is a captivating period property with five bedrooms and elegant proportions.

It has been significantly extended in recent years.

£590,000 **FOR SALE**

▼ Leanin Tree, Turriff

This exceptionally well-presented property boasts the highest energy-performance classification. It also enjoys an outstanding outlook and fantastic equestrian facilities.

£495,000 **FOR SALE**



▼ House of Aquahorthies, Inverurie

On the market for the first time in 38 years, this elegant A-listed house is a hidden gem of Donside. Set amid 38 acres in a prime location, it comes with a bothy and gardener's cottage.

£1,300,000 **FOR SALE**



For further details of any of these properties, contact 01330 826800





◀ **St Aidans, Inverurie**

Built in 1840, this outstanding B-listed Georgian manse has seven bedrooms and is set in attractive grounds with picturesque countryside views.

£975,000 **FOR SALE**

The Old Rectory, Turriff ▶

This C-listed five-bedroom family home is steeped in charm and history. Built around 1877, and sympathetically upgraded, it is ideally located on the edge of a hamlet surrounded by beautiful open farmland.

£565,000 **FOR SALE**



^ **Breda Park, Alford**

This four-bedroom detached family home, built by Lorimer Homes in 2006, is located on a quiet country road and enjoys fine farmland views.

£360,000 **FOR SALE**

^ **Rosehill Steading, Aboyne**

Located on the edge of Aboyne with loch views, this outstanding converted steading is exceptionally well presented. The U-shaped building offers spacious living accommodation full of natural light.

£575,000 **FOR SALE**

Kinfauns, Aboyne ▶

This elegant period property in the popular village of Aboyne has been lovingly improved and maintained by its current owners. It has a beautiful mature garden and a bothy in the grounds.

£465,000 **FOR SALE**



Trends & analysis

Strutt & Parker experts reflect on the nationwide property picture



Regional growth

Cost considerations, lifestyle choices, local economic factors and government efforts to kick-start the housing market are creating a complex UK residential property picture, according to **Michael Fiddes, Head of Agency at Strutt & Parker.**

‘There’s definitely been a stimulus at the bottom of the market because of what the government’s sought to do for first-time buyers,’ says Fiddes. ‘Secondly, while more people are selling up in London and benefiting from fantastic value outside of the capital because of the large price differential, buyers are becoming much more conscious of the costs such as commuting, property maintenance and heating, and education.’

Lifestyle choices, too, are resulting in more people living in an urban or suburban environment beyond London. That’s been good for Oxford, Cambridge, St Albans and

Guildford in particular. ‘These key regional centres are seeing more growth in residential value than their rural counterparts, although there are hotspots around the UK where different economic factors affect the marketplace,’ says Fiddes. ‘An example is around Aberdeen, where the oil industry creates a massive number of jobs.’

A complex market then, but one in which Strutt & Parker remains best placed to negotiate, with the interests of clients always paramount.

‘When people are moving house, they’re usually dealing with their most valuable asset, something that’s going to have one of the greatest effects on their lives,’ says Fiddes. ‘Selling a house is about getting the best possible deal for the client, but also about helping them on a journey. We always endeavour to look after them and proactively make things happen, rather than merely hoping they’ll happen.’



Getting stronger

The country house market has weathered the worst of the recession and although last year’s 2% rise in stamp duty did have an impact, **James Mackenzie, Head of the Country Department at Strutt & Parker** believes that this was a just a blip. ‘People take these things on the chin and move on, particularly when you’re talking about buying a family home.’

And while the hard winter of 2012/13 did little to encourage buyers out into the country, Mackenzie believes the market is making up for lost time. ‘It’s heading back to where it should be, with the potential to get stronger over the next 12 months.’

Little regional variation exists – it’s all about properties and prices – but the robust London market remains a key driving factor, with buyers recognising the potential that city budgets have beyond the capital. Equally, international and expat interest remains steady and it’s here that Strutt & Parker’s relationship with Christie’s International Real Estate comes into its own.

‘Many more international buyers are being pushed in our direction,’ explains Mackenzie. ‘Our auction house colleagues are also helping introduce potential sellers to Strutt & Parker. It’s simply a much bigger playing field for us now.’

80%

of people in the country are using their homes for primary use

up to 32%

of London buyers are planning to move to the country





WHY STRUTT & PARKER?



A holistic view

The new research team at the company's London head office is making its presence felt with vital insights into short- and long-term market trends. While many industry researchers have a narrow focus, this department takes a 'holistic' approach, keeping abreast of developments across the full range of Strutt & Parker's interests.

'Our work is about understanding the markets, knowing what the trends are, and identifying where the demand and stock is coming from,' says **Stephanie McMahon, Head of Research at Strutt & Parker.**

But examining statistics is just part of the process. 'We're interested in the behaviour of buyers and vendors,' explains McMahon. 'It's important to understand what's driving their decision-making.'

Downsizing, or 'right-sizing' as McMahon calls it, is one of the trends currently being tracked by the team. 'Outside London, 25% of our vendors are looking to move to smaller properties,' she says. 'And out in the country, over 80% of people are using their homes for primary use. Even in London, that figure is almost at 55%.'

McMahon is seeing evidence, finally, of movement in the mortgage market: 'It's becoming a little bit more accessible for some buyers, so that's a positive sign.'

OUR BRAND

For more than 125 years, Strutt & Parker has created a brand that signifies outstanding results delivered through high-quality and integrity-rich service.

OUR MARKETING EXCELLENCE

We are committed to constantly evolving our marketing approach to ensure that your property is seen ahead of the rest. Our dedicated in-house marketing and PR team ensures that our brand and your property is consistently and strongly represented in every media outlet.

OUR ONLINE PRESENCE

Strutt & Parker has built an industry-leading website for buyers of quality real estate,

with more than 200,000 visitors to struttandparker.com every month. We also have a mobile-friendly website and use QR codes and NFC technology to give access to properties on the go and from any mobile device.

OUR NATIONAL NETWORK

Strutt & Parker's extensive and growing network of 50 offices covers the whole of the UK, from Exeter to Inverness. Our 400+ sales professionals work as a team to help achieve great property results for you.

OUR BUYERS DATABASE

With 2,000 buyers registering with us every month, we have more than 26,000 active buyers – all of whom are shared across

our network of UK offices, showcasing your home to more prospective buyers nationally.

OUR GLOBAL REACH

As the sole UK affiliate of Christie's International Real Estate, we have access to 920 affiliate offices in 41 countries worldwide, bringing global buyers to your door.

OUR EXPERTS

We offer a total solution approach. Our specialist teams include Residential Sales, Lettings, Building Surveying & Architecture, Farms & Estates, Land Management, Farming, Commercial, Planning, Development, Resources & Energy and Professional Services.



BRINGING BUYERS AND SELLERS TOGETHER

Fiona Stewart, Head of Marketing & Communications at Strutt & Parker, explains why Open House Days are a must

Q What is Open House Day?

A It's a day when we throw open the doors of all the houses we're selling, so that prospective buyers have the chance to view as many properties as they wish, without the need to make appointments. We run Open House Days twice a year, in the spring and autumn.

Q How does it help buyers and sellers?

A Buyers like it because it gives them the freedom to see lots of properties on one day. They can plan their own route and it's really time efficient. They also like the opportunity to meet vendors. From a seller's perspective, you've got a lot of prospective buyers coming through the door to see your

house on a single day. We know that 90 per cent of searches start online, but nothing replaces the value of seeing a property for real.

Q How effective is Open House Day?

A We had 700 properties take part in our last event, with one in ten receiving offers on the day, to a value of more than £85 million. The results speak for themselves.

Q What do you have to do to get involved?

A You can register to take part online at struttandparker.com/openday or with your local Strutt & Parker office. Once you've provided your details, you'll receive a registration card. You can then view as many houses on the day as you wish.





◀ 'I have lived in the area all my life, working for Dunecht Estates on the Lower Crathes beat on the River Dee for 37 years. The Dee Valley is a most beautiful place with the Grampian mountains to the west and the city of Aberdeen in the east. It's a wonderful place.'

Robert Harper, ghillie, Dunecht Estates

Why we love Aberdeenshire

What makes the county such a special place to work and live in? We ask a few local residents

▲ 'Only 25 miles from the hustle and bustle of booming Aberdeen, Finzean is nestled in the Feugh Valley and is a real gem of a place. The Farquharson family has been here for more than 400 years, but we are all part of a rather special, vibrant and pro-active community that embraces all ages. So many people have a connection with the Farm Shop – the village school, parish church and village hall; the local famers; and the many talented artists, musicians, craftsmen/ women and artisan food and drink producers – what is there not to love?'

Kate Farquharson, co-owner (with sister-in-law Catriona Farquharson), Finzean Estate Farm Shop & Tearoom



▲ 'Aberdeen has a very buoyant local economy that punches well above its weight nationally. I love the fact that a 20-minute drive from the city offers boundless amounts of natural beauty thanks to Aberdeenshire's amazing coastline and mountainous scenery.'

Gareth Trebarne, oil and gas lawyer

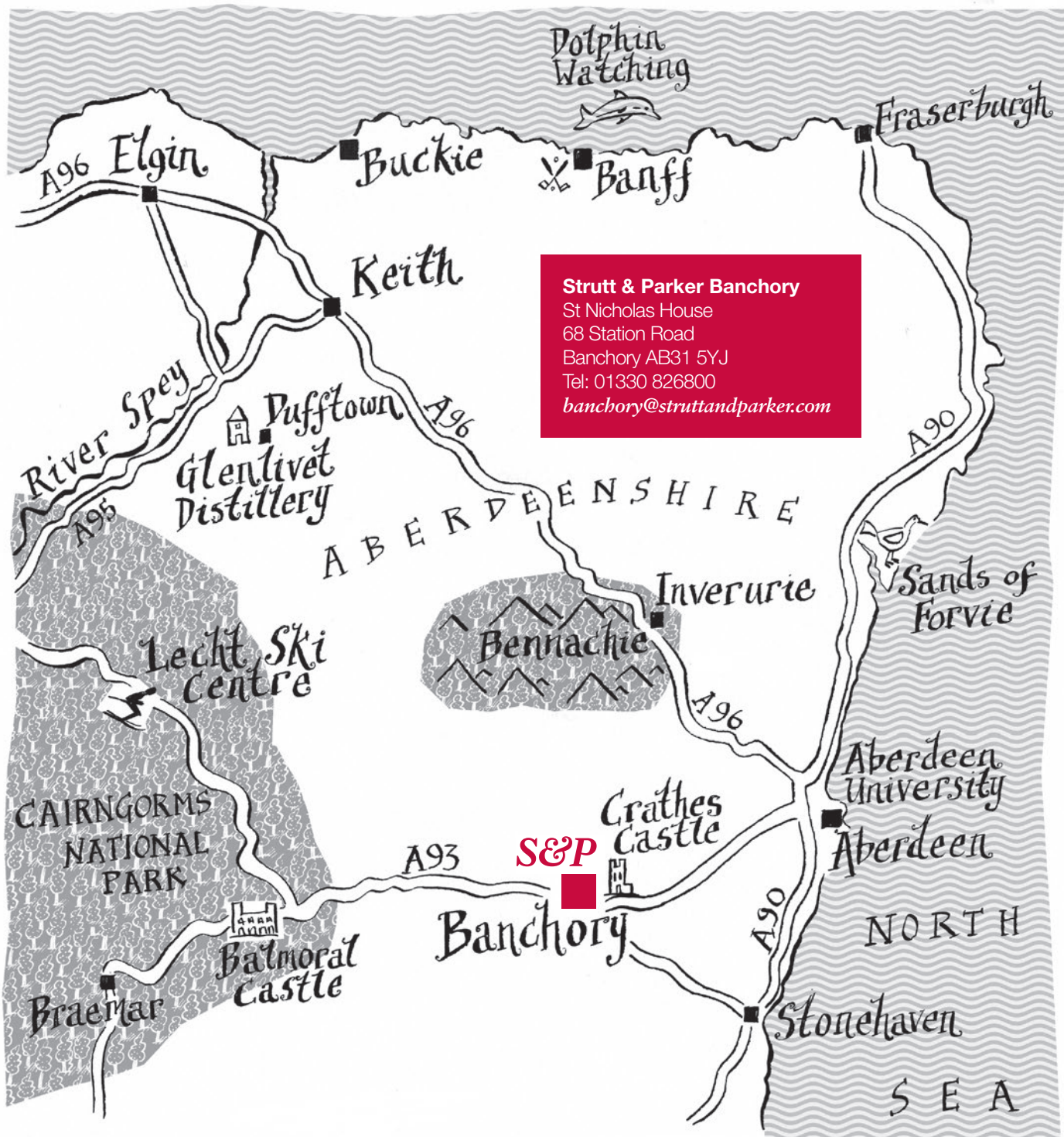


▲ 'With its dynamic local economy, Deeside is the ideal location for our diversification project at Deeside Activity Park. In summer and autumn there is nowhere better to be. Shooting and fishing are very important to me, and Aberdeenshire has some of the very best.'

Ken Howie, director, Deeside Activity Park

◀ 'I work in the city and live in the country, so in no time I can be out riding my horse after work or fishing on the River Dee at the weekend. That's the great thing about Aberdeenshire – a thriving city centre close to stunning countryside and the perfect setting for a wide range of outdoor pursuits.'

Rosemary Michie, director, CountryWays.Com



Strutt & Parker network and services

Strutt & Parker Banchory is part of a national network with 50 offices around the UK, including 10 offices in central London. As sole UK affiliate of Christie's International Real Estate, we also work with a network of 393 affiliate offices in 45 countries around the globe.

To complement our Residential Sales team, we offer clients a complete service with experts across a wide range of disciplines, including:

Farming – our specialist agricultural advisers work with farmers and landowners to help manage their land and increase profitability.

Land Management – we offer advice to estate and land owners managing thousands of acres with diverse business interests.

Valuation & Enfranchisement Services – from property valuations to client support on planning processes, we offer many specialist property services.

CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

**STRUTT
& PARKER**

Resources & Energy – we help clients seize the opportunities and manage the risks that energy issues present.

Planning & Development – we advise on planning strategy and submit applications for clients, as well as advising on development value and selling land with consent.



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