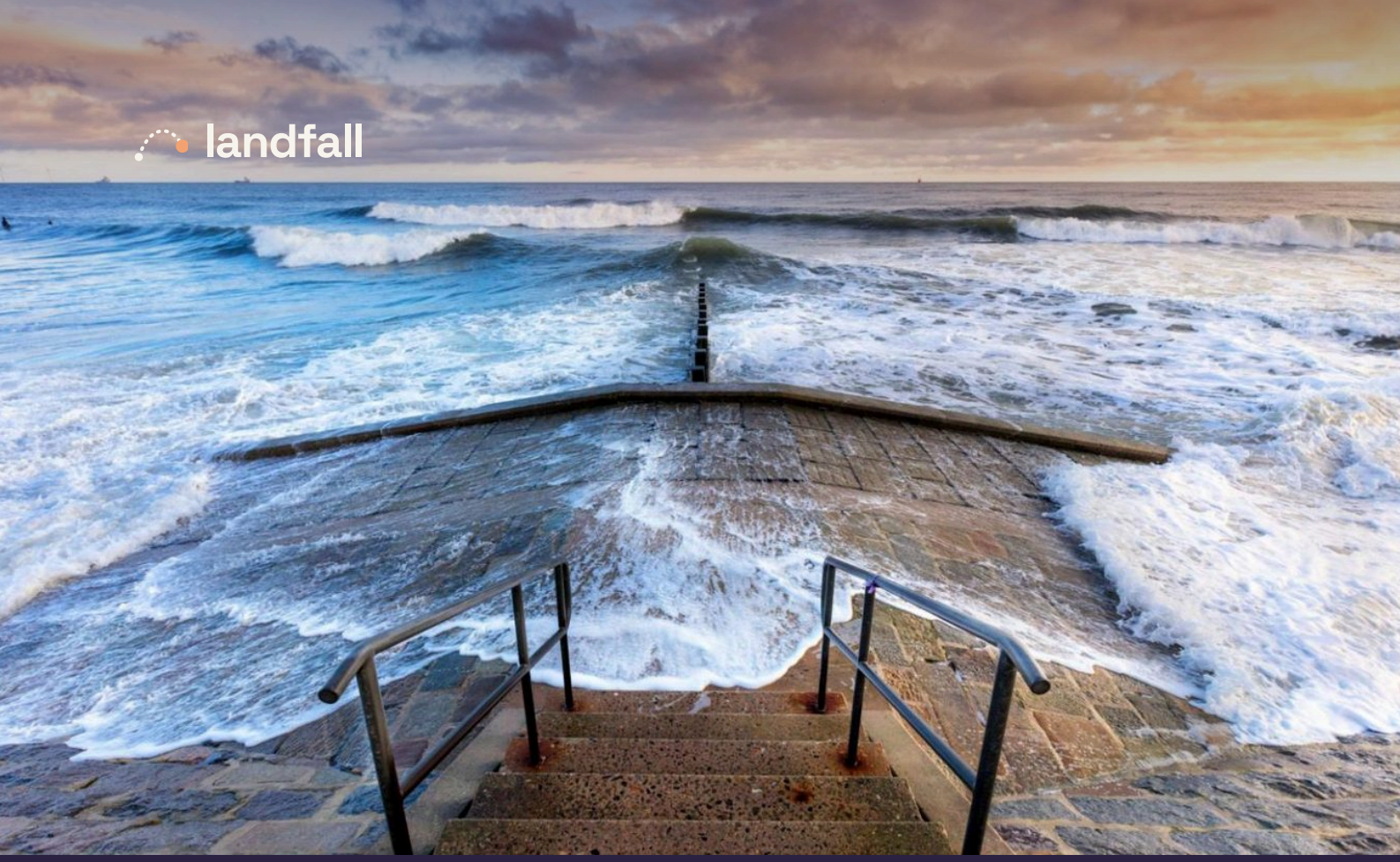


landfall

LANDFALL SCOTLAND · AREA GUIDE

Living in Aberdeen

Granite city by the sea, with a long American connection through energy.

AVERAGE HOME PRICE

£134,000

City of Aberdeen, Aug 2026, down 5.2% in a year

RENTS

Well below Edinburgh

Landlords have been cutting asking rents

DIRECT US FLIGHTS

No

Connect via London or a European hub

TO EDINBURGH BY TRAIN

About 2½ hours

Around 30 trains a day

Cover photo: martin bennie / Unsplash

Aberdeen is Scotland’s third city and the base of the UK’s North Sea oil and gas industry, now shifting toward offshore wind and other energy work. Many American families have lived here on energy-company postings since the 1970s, so the city is used to newcomers from the US.

Homes are built from the local grey granite, which sparkles in the sun. Housing is far cheaper than in Edinburgh, there is a long city beach, and Royal Deeside and the Cairngorms are on the doorstep.

GOOD FOR

- Energy and engineering jobs
- Buyers who want space for less
- Families wanting an international school
- Coast and countryside on the doorstep

PROPERTY

Buying and renting

Aberdeen is the one big Scottish city where prices have been falling. The average home in the City of Aberdeen sold for about £134,000 in August 2026, down 5.2% on a year earlier and well under the Scottish average of £198,000. Prices track the energy industry, so buyers have more room to negotiate here than anywhere else in urban Scotland.

The same goes for renting. Letting agents reported in 2026 that some Aberdeen landlords were reducing asking rents to find tenants, while homes in Aberdeenshire continued to let well.

If you are on a corporate posting, check what your employer’s relocation package covers before you sign anything. Many families rent for the length of the assignment rather than buy.

BEFORE YOU COMMIT

- Compare city and Aberdeenshire council tax: they are different councils.
- Older granite homes can be cold: check the energy rating in the Home Report.
- Falling prices are good for buyers, but think about resale if you may leave in a few years.

FAMILY & SCHOOLS

Schools and family life

The International School of Aberdeen began in 1972 as the American School in Aberdeen. Today it teaches pupils aged 3 to 18 and offers the IB, Cambridge IGCSE and an American curriculum, on a campus in Cults on the west side of the city.

Aberdeen also has independent schools such as Robert Gordon’s College and Albyn School, which follow the Scottish curriculum, and state schools allocated by catchment. Popular state catchments on the west side, including Cults and Westhill, shape where many families buy.

BEFORE YOU COMMIT

- Ask the International School about waiting lists and fees early, especially for August starts.
- Westhill and the Deeside villages are in Aberdeenshire, not the city: apply to the right council.



A street of granite tenements in Aberdeen. Photo: Laurentiu Morariu / Unsplash

SOCIAL LIFE

Culture, coast and countryside

The city beach runs for miles, and the old fishing village of Footdee sits at its southern end. Aberdeen Art Gallery and the Spectra light festival in February brighten the winter.

Head west and you are quickly into Royal Deeside, castles and the Cairngorms National Park, with hillwalking, skiing and some of Scotland’s best whisky country in Speyside within reach for weekends.

TRAVEL

Getting around and getting home

There are no direct flights from Aberdeen to the US. Most people fly from Aberdeen Airport to London or a European hub and connect, or take the train to Edinburgh for a direct flight.

Trains to Edinburgh take about two and a half hours, with around 30 a day. A car is more useful here than in Edinburgh or Glasgow, especially if you live outside the city.

COMMUNITY

Finding your people

The Association of American Women of Aberdeen is one of the longest-running American clubs in Scotland, with groups for hiking, crafts, trips and more. The energy companies themselves have large international workforces, and the International School community is a ready-made network for families.

Outside expat circles, local sports clubs, hillwalking groups and church and community halls are where friendships form.

WHERE TO LOOK

A starting shortlist

West End

Rubislaw and Queen's Cross: large granite houses and flats, close to the center and popular with professionals.

Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber

Leafy Deeside suburbs on the west side, near the International School.

Westhill

A modern town just outside the city in Aberdeenshire, home to many energy companies.

Banchory & Stonehaven

Small towns in Aberdeenshire: Deeside countryside or a harbor on the coast, both commutable.

READ NEXT

Landfall guides for this move

How does buying a home in Scotland work?
yourlandfall.com/guides/buying-a-home-in-scotland

How does renting work in the UK?
yourlandfall.com/guides/renting-in-the-uk

How do schools work in Scotland?
yourlandfall.com/guides/scottish-schools

Which UK visa routes are open to Americans?
yourlandfall.com/guides/uk-visa-routes-for-americans

See every step for your move. Answer five questions and get a free plan in the right order: yourlandfall.com/plan

Sources. Figures checked in November 2026. The Scottish average home price was £198,000 in August 2026. Prices and rents change, so check current listings before you decide.

- UK House Price Index Scotland: August 2026 (GOV.UK): https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-house-price-index-for-august-2026/uk-house-price-index-scotland-august-2026
- Registers of Scotland: UK House Price Index figures for Scotland 2026: https://www.ros.gov.uk/about/news/2025/uk-house-price-index-figures-for-may-2025
- Northwood: Citylets Q1 2026 report (Aberdeen comment): https://www.northwooduk.com/?p=38085
- International School Aberdeen: our history: https://isa.aberdeen.sch.uk/pages/welcome-to-isa/our-history
- Trainline: Aberdeen to Edinburgh train times: https://www.thetrainline.com/train-times/aberdeen-to-edinburgh

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