

SEPTEMBER 2022 | FOOD & DRINK

BUSINESS BULLETIN

Fit fine food fit for a Queen

From its unassuming base in Inverurie, Donald Russell is supplying some of the world's finest restaurants.

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Chapelton finds feet as new foodie haven

New town is becoming the go-to destination for local foodies.

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How surveys can help you retain staff

It's more important than ever to understand the needs and wants of your workforce.

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Exclusive:

Netting a net zero future for Peterhead



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Plenty on the menu in North-east Scotland

WE OFTEN say that this is a region which punches above its weight and there is much evidence to support this claim. But perhaps none more so than the statistic that with less than 10% of Scotland's population, the North-east accounts for over 20% of Scotland's food and drink produce with products from this wee corner of the world being enjoyed in more than 100 countries around the globe.

This is the home of Aberdeen Angus, Europe's biggest seafood catches are landed at Peterhead and Fraserburgh, Ellon is home to the iconic craft beer brand BrewDog and some of the world's greatest whiskies come from this part of Scotland. Our menu of household brands includes Mackie's of Scotland, Walkers Shortbread, Deans of Huntly, Duncan Taylor Scotch Whisky, Burn O'Bennie Distillery, Fierce Beer, Donald Russell and Macduff Shellfish to name just a few.

Many of our fantastic and growing array of high quality hotels, bars, cafes and restaurants like the Fife Arms, Chester Hotel, McGinty's Group venues, Books & Beans, Siberia and 10 Dollar Shake are putting local produce at the heart of their menus.

The list goes on and you'll see on the opposite page a shout out to Chamber members from this incredible sector. Please choose to visit and do business with them, keeping it local and supporting the growth ambitions highlighted below.

(And did you know Aberdeenshire is the only place in the world where you can still pick fresh cherries in September and has the latest growing season in Europe for blueberries?)

But we are not resting on our laurels. Food, drink, agri and seafood is identified as one of the key growth sectors in the regional economic strategy. Currently there are 22,000 people employed in the industry and the ambition is to grow North-east Scotland's turnover by 5% per annum, increase productivity by 25% by 2025 and double output and exports by 2030. Tasty stats.

There are many strands to this but one of the highlights is SeedPod, a £21million investment in creating a centre of excellence for manufacturing and production that will help to deliver these ambitions.

Led by Opportunity North East with funding from the Aberdeen City Region Deal, this transformational project will put the region's businesses at the forefront of innovation, productivity and sustainability, increasing high-value exports and creating new jobs. It will play a key role in green economic recovery, helping businesses and the sector deliver low-carbon production and contribute to net zero goals.

Many people assume that the North East Green Freeport bid is all about the energy sector. Not at all. As one of the UK's premium food and drink producing areas, the creation of a regional customs hub as part of this will enable an increase in export activity for products such as scotch whisky, craft beer, seafood, meat produce and ice-cream, building direct links to key markets.

And the Chamber's International Trade team is on hand to provide practical help and the necessary documentation to support companies looking to start on their export journey or expand into new markets.

Closely linked to all of this is one of the region's other four growth sectors, tourism.

The region's hotels have been hit hard by the 2015 oil and gas downturn followed by the pandemic and need to provide a USP to attract a new breed of leisure visitor with a higher net spend while offering the level of service expected by business travellers as our economy recovers.

To do this - in one of the tightest labour markets we have known - they need to attract and retain more skilled and motivated people. But a career in hospitality here is often regarded as stopgap and dead end. This perception needs to change so it is viewed as it is in Europe, as a long-term, inspirational profession.

There are hotel schools and universities that offer courses, but no hotel sector backed focused business school currently exists in the UK. A gap in the market.

The Chamber is supporting an ambitious bid to the Just Transition Fund to look at the feasibility of creating a centre for excellence in this region. This would rival The Statler Hotel at the Ivy League Cornell University and the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne, regularly recognised as the best hotel management school in the world, with the highest graduate employment rates in the industry.

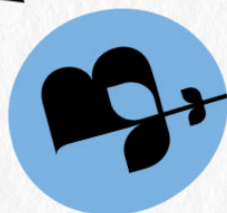
As you've read, Aberdeenshire is already firmly on the map for its food and drink produce. Let's add to this by being famous for producing the world's top hotel talent too.



Russell Borthwick
Chief Executive

FOOD & DRINKS

**Aberdeen &
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 Seafood Ecosse Ltd
 Station Hotel
 Books and Beans
 Mosque Kitchen Aberdeen Ltd
 10 Dollar Shake Ltd
 Cafe83

Our premier partners

As well as helping our member businesses to be better through a range of activities, the Chamber is committed to investing a significant amount of energy in moving forward the economic growth agenda and lobbying for change on key issues to create the conditions for success. Our regional renaissance.

Without the support of our Premier Partners, we would not be able to undertake much of the good work that we do. Their engagement is hugely valued and appreciated.



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A huge success for the NHV Group Family Day

NHV Group in Aberdeen recently hosted their much-revered “NHV Family Day”.

NHVs base includes office and engineering facilities as well as the aircraft hangar where they displayed the magnificent Airbus H175 Helicopter. Guests were able to speak to the pilots about their experiences flying across the North Sea to the various offshore platforms that the group do on a daily basis. Also present were the engineers who ensure the aircraft are safely maintained along with the office team responsible for the smooth running of day-to-day operations.

Charni Greenacre, the Base Manager for the Aberdeen operations at NHV Group, said: “It was a great opportunity to show our guests the NHV operations at this informal occasion. We are passionate about promoting the different roles within NHV, so it was the perfect time for guests to chat to the pilots and engineers and gain some insight into our industry. We enjoyed the chance to show off the aircraft that carry passengers offshore and all the various behind the scene facilities that ensure the smooth running of our operations.”

Mark Beveridge, Operations Director at Aberdeen International Airport added: “We are delighted we could help facilitate the NHV Family Day at our airport and airfield. Being able to experience the operations of an international airport is a privilege and this was a much-missed event on the NHV calendar, so it was great to see it back!”

Converged backs Dons

SCOTTISH IT, cyber security and internet service provider Converged Communication Solutions has extended its collaboration with Aberdeen Football Club for the fourth year running.

The Club’s “By Official Appointment” scheme aims to bring together local businesses and loyal AFC fans to generate more business, boost the local economy and help supporters secure the best possible deals.

Converged Communication Solutions is one of more than 90 local businesses taking advantage of the membership opportunity with the club, in which companies keen to support their local team pay an annual subscription fee to secure a club licence entitling them to “By Official Appointment” status, together with a series of valuable features and benefits.

Saving time, money and CO₂

THE first ever UK application of a specialist rig anchor release technology which saves time, CO₂ emissions and costs has been confirmed by Aberdeen based Delmar Systems.

The company’s RAR Plus device was installed and activated on Diamond Offshore Drilling’s Ocean Endeavour rig, to help move the rig between the Pan West and Tybalt well locations at Shell’s Penguins Field, around 290 nautical miles North-east of Aberdeen.

The news coincides with Delmar Systems’ move to new, larger offices at Altens Industrial Estate in Aberdeen, to accommodate future growth and expansion.

Described by Delmar Systems as “next generation mooring release technology,” RAR Plus can disconnect a rig in one hour by acoustically releasing all mooring lines, saving hours of critical path operational time, compared to traditional methods. This allows the rig to move in shorter weather windows and maximises available weather windows to continue operating. Delmar’s unique RAR Plus device also incorporates a mechanical back up release option, providing 100% redundancy.

Duncan Watson, UK General Manager, Delmar Systems, said: “The RAR Plus device in Delmar’s Releasable Mooring System has proven successful over 500 times across the globe, saving our customers operational time, money and CO₂ emissions. With increased drilling and plug and abandonment activity, we believe Delmar is ideally positioned to support many of our North Sea customers to reduce operational expenditure.”

Developing transitional technology

THE Net Zero Technology Centre has confirmed the Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult and the National Robotarium as consortium partners for the delivery of the Offshore Low Touch Energy Robotics and Autonomous Systems (OLTER) project which is part of the Net Zero Technology Transition Programme (NZTTP).

The OLTER project has been allocated £4.5million from the £16.5million Scottish Government Energy Transition Fund awarded to the Net Zero Technology Centre to accelerate a range of energy transition projects that will help deliver Scotland’s net zero economy. The project, set to be delivered over 36 months, will be match-funded to £9.6million by industry. It will position Scotland as an international leader in the development, testing and delivery of robotics and autonomous systems (RAS) technologies to support the energy transition.

RAS technologies are rapidly accelerating, becoming smarter and more versatile. The successful development and deployment of cutting edge and disruptive RAS technologies has the potential to enhance offshore operations through real-time, data-driven decision making.

The OLTER project funding will provide the test bed and environment necessary to develop RAS concepts and products.

Fit fine food fit for a Queen

IF YOU happen to be in Hong Kong and dining at the five-star InterContinental Grand Stanford Hotel, or perhaps the nearby two Michelin Star Tin Lung Heen restaurant in Kowloon, the chances are the beef, pork or lamb you are eating has come from Inverurie.

Such is the reputation of online butcher Donald Russell that whatever top restaurants you visit, throughout the UK, or internationally, they might be supplied by the firm.

As well as Michelin Star restaurants like Edinburgh's Restaurant Martin Wishart and

London's Goring, Donald Russell supplies high quality chains such as Prime Steak & Grill and organisations like Chelsea Football Club and Saga cruise liners.

For almost 40 years it has also held a Royal Warrant and as well as weekly orders to Buckingham Palace it regularly supplies other royal residences including Balmoral Castle.

The company's trade and export business, however, represents only a third of its turnover with delivering direct to customers who order online or by phone making up the rest.

If you are after some award-winning steaks, for which it is best known, or maybe a ready-made chicken curry pie followed by some top-class ice cream, they can deliver that to your door.

Its 220 staff include a team of craft butchers whose long-standing expertise enables them to ensure that every cut is professionally frozen at the very peak of maturation when they judge it to have the best rich flavour and tenderness.

That means when it is defrosted in a household kitchen or served in a Michelin Star restaurant, the quality is the same as the moment it left the butcher's knife.

Donald Russell has diversified and grown considerably since it was established by William Donald and John Stone as a meat export business in 1974. Although there are those who tell staff they knew "Donald" the man whose name the company bears never actually existed.

In the mid-1990s the BSE crisis forced change and Donald Russell started its mail order trade selling direct to customers through the broadsheets, eventually becoming the multi-channel business it is today.



After a decade at supermarket Morrisons as Meat and Poultry Director, Ken Clow joined Donald Russell a year ago as Commercial Director and in March took over as Chief Executive.

He said that the cornerstones on which the trade and export business have been built are relationships, quality and heritage and he believes they remain key to its future success.

He feels that the government could do much to help businesses which, like Donald Russell, are struggling to achieve profitability as they try to recover from the challenges of recent years - and the challenges are considerable.

"For businesses which try to export it has become a lot more complex," said Ken, "particularly when they want to export fresh meat, as the process now eats into quite a lot of product shelf life.

"The physical transportation of goods has become a challenge. As an example, we supply Switzerland, which is a non-EU country, but to get to Switzerland, you must travel through the EU. Many logistics companies are saying the paperwork is too cumbersome and the process is too difficult so find another route.

"There's a challenge if we buy something from Northern Ireland and the quality is not up to scratch. We can't simply return it to Northern Ireland because, once again, it requires a lot of effort from both us and the producer. Another challenge is the labour market. It's a lot harder now than it ever has been. Part of that will be Brexit but part will be that people have reappraised their lifestyles and careers coming out of CV19 and we definitely see the impact of that.

"Fuel and energy are two things which are causing us sleepless nights. We rely on external couriers to make about



For almost 40 years Donald Russell has held a Royal Warrant and sent weekly orders to Buckingham Palace.

400,000 deliveries a year on our behalf and a significant part of the business is in London or the South-east of England so that cost just keeps increasing month on month.

"That has proved to be a real challenge but there's also the secondary impact on our packaging. Prices have doubled over the last 18 months because it is derived from oil if it is plastic or polystyrene based."

He said he believed there were ways in which the government could significantly ease the pressure on companies such as Donald Russell.

"If they could remove barriers around overseas workers coming into the food supply chain that that would be incredibly helpful.

"Also, some of the measures proposed to try and manage inflation and inflationary times are going to be less helpful to businesses like us. For example, cutting corporation tax isn't going to help us.

"As we seek to rebuild post-CV19 and become profitable, things like access to labour and helping manage rising energy and fuel costs will be far more important than cutting corporation tax. That's something I feel quite strongly about because it doesn't help those companies that are on the breadline, or at breakeven."

Although times are tough, Ken is convinced that his company's quality and heritage combined with local produce are the key to future prosperity.



"We deliver a bespoke service for our customers and, for example, we have chains which take the best sausages for their hotels because they want to provide the finest breakfast to create the best memory as the customer leaves that day.

"We never compromise on quality and if a customer asks us for something that we don't have the skill in, then more often than not we don't supply.

"We are ingrained in the North-east community, we are proudly Aberdonian and we have the heritage and a workforce we're really proud of. We need to find ways to become more efficient whether that's consolidated deliveries or trying to buy more products from local suppliers.

"One example is that we are now buying our ice cream from Mackie's of Scotland at Rothienorman rather than from England."

Donald Russell's expertise in delivering frozen goods straight to their customers' doors is a key factor in the recent agreement with Mackie's and the first order of 300 tubs sold out in just three days to be followed by a second order of 300 cases.

"I think we have possibly forgotten about being a proudly Scottish company and we are in the process of reminding ourselves that sourcing locally is more important than ever before.

"As a Scottish butchery business, we really want to come out all guns blazing and centred around the fantastic produce we have in the area and not just beef and lamb but seafood, berries and root crops."

He said that for many people Donald Russell is famous for its top-quality steak but they were now working to raise the profile of the host of other products it sells.

"We are continuously expanding our range and products like our sausage rolls or beef wellingtons are made here in Inverurie. All our ready meals are of top quality, our chefs have come up with the recipes and they use the very best of ingredients. I think that's something that we need to try to make our customers more aware of.

"They know they can come to us for a great steak dinner, but we can be a one-stop shop for a whole range of fine foods.

"We attracted new customers during lockdown and we've managed to retain some of them. We have some really exciting plans ahead to attract more customers to the business and fuel that growth and the turnaround we're currently in."

Ken Clow,
Chief Executive,
Donald Russell





The Robert Gordon's Experience

Community is a special part of the experience at Robert Gordon's College - it isn't just your child, it is the whole family that joins our Community. At the core of every age and stage of our school, is the strong focus on pupil wellbeing. We believe that pupils will achieve academically if they are in a caring and supportive environment.



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HOT TOPIC

Which three guests would be at your dream dinner party?



"My first guest would be Tony Robbins, the American business strategist and coaching guru who I did my life coaching qualifications through. He is an idol of mine in the coaching world and his ethos towards life is aligned to everything I believe in. He's very much about healthy body, healthy mind and he's an inspiration to me as a business coach. My second guest would be Richard Branson who, as a businessman, is inspirational. However, I really like what he stands for as a person. Although he's obviously been unbelievably successful in the business world, he's never lost his identity and still seems to appreciate all the simple things in life. He doesn't appear at all arrogant which is why I like him, and it would be great to find out if that really is the case. My final guest would be Bruce Springsteen. I just think he's a really interesting guy. He was determined that he was going to be a rock star and nothing else and that level of motivation and determination to follow your dreams I find really inspiring...but I also love his music, so hopefully he would be able to play a couple of tunes as well."

Ben Riddell, *Owner, The Life Coach*



"My late father - he died 32 years ago and was a Corporal in the Gordon Highlanders, 51st division. He was captured at St Valery and marched off to Poland for four and a half years in a prisoner of war camp. There are so many questions I wished I'd asked. Then Eric Morecambe, someone just naturally funny who would be a hoot to have with us. Lastly Reo Stakis, the hotel king made good in the 60s to 90s. I met him in 1999 in the passing in Dundee. I would love to have a discussion with a real hotelier who knew what customers wanted and could no doubt tell tales of the hotel world of his time. I think that combination of reminiscing, humour and professional guidance would make for an excellent evening."

Robert Smith, *Solicitor and Managing Director, Brudolff Hotels Group*



"As I am dealing with sportsman daily who buy our technically advanced underwear I would want to have a sporting great at my dinner table and that would be Alex Ferguson. His knowledge of football and his leadership qualities mean that even at 82 he is in demand around the world. My second guest, who is even older, would be Gene Hackman. His career has spanned six decades and he is a superbly versatile actor. He is able to adapt to any role, even Lex Luther in Superman, but I think my favourite is when he played FBI Agent Rupert Anderson in Mississippi Burning. I love that film. My final guest would be Jennifer Aniston who would obviously add a little glamour, but she has class and charisma and always seems to conduct herself in a very dignified way, no matter what is being written or said about her."

Michael Robertson, *Owner, AG Sports*



Stephen Murphy and Jon Matthews

North East Green Freeport could deliver first Scottish sustainable aviation fuel production facility

A GREEN Freeport in the North-east of Scotland could play a significant role in decarbonising the aviation industry by delivering a sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) plant that would create up to 920 jobs and £133million in GVA per year.

The creation of a SAF facility at St Fergus is a key part of the North East Scotland Green Freeport bid which has a wider focus on investing in sustainable fuels to support the UK's Decarbonising Transport strategy.

Derived from sustainable feedstocks such as household and post recycling municipal waste, agricultural and forestry residues, SAF generates carbon savings of upwards of 70% compared to fossil jet fuel.

A report commissioned by industry body, Sustainable Aviation, concluded a UK SAF industry could deliver £2.9billion annually to the UK economy, create 20,200 clean growth jobs in SAF production and export services, with UK production saving 3.6million tonnes of CO₂ annually by 2038.

Driving a domestic SAF sector with the North East Scotland Green Freeport would put the UK at the forefront of world leading aviation climate solutions. It would create thousands of clean growth jobs and provide a significant UK export opportunity as aviation decarbonises globally.

Jon Matthews, Group Head of Capital and Planning at Aberdeen International Airport, said: "The SAF production facility at St Fergus is a key part of the region's bid for green freeport status. It was identified based on the availability of feedstock required to produce SAF and the enabling carbon capture usage and storage (CCUS) infrastructure.

"Securing green freeport status would not only unlock the potential of this SAF plant it would help retain and create jobs at St Fergus which is actively seeking a just transition of workers to clean growth jobs."

Steve Murphy, Chief Commercial Officer at Storegga, the lead developer for the Acorn carbon capture and storage

and hydrogen infrastructure projects proposed for St Fergus, said: "Becoming a Green Freeport is an important element of the collective Scottish and UK effort to reach net zero, connecting Acorn's CO₂ capture and permanent geological storage to emitters in central Scotland, English Freeports such as Thames and Solent, as well as international customers. As each day passes, the climate crisis worsens. It is vital we push hard to get important carbon reduction developments like Acorn online as swiftly as possible.

"The North East Scotland Green Freeport will accelerate and amplify the Scottish Cluster, including CO₂ import facilities at Peterhead Port and Europe's first at-scale direct air capture plant which can support a new sustainable aviation fuel sector and help abate CO₂ emissions from the transport sector."

A North East Scotland Green Freeport is key to unlocking the SAF potential in the region.

It comes as more than 100 senior business leaders and cross section of politicians recently signed a statement in support of the North East Scotland Green Freeport bid which will create 32,000 high-quality jobs and boost GVA by £8.5billion over the next decade.

The use of SAF does not require new technology for aircraft or the need for airports such as Aberdeen, to invest in new facilities. Almost 500,000 flights around the world have already flown on SAF.

Around 73% of aviation emissions come from medium and long-haul flights which will still need liquid fuel in 2050, meaning SAF is a key, long-term solution to the UK aviation industry's jet zero commitment.

Further information about how to back the North East Scotland Green Freeport bid can be found at www.northeastscotlandgreenfreeport.com.

Broodies expertise recognised

BRODIES LLP, has been recognised for its expertise in advising clients on high value personal and family matters, in the annual Chambers UK High Net Worth Guide.

The firm has maintained its band 1 rankings for private wealth law services in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh, and has held its band 4 UK ranking for family/matrimonial law – one of only two law firms in Scotland to be included in the list.

The Chambers UK High Net Worth Guide – which bases its rankings on detailed research into firms and lawyers and feedback from clients and legal peers – also ranks Broodies band 1 for its expertise in private wealth law as a national leader outside London and recognises seven of its personal and family lawyers in the individual rankings.

Neptune aims for zero

NEPTUNE Energy has joined the Aiming for Zero Methane Emissions Initiative, a project to cut emissions of the harmful greenhouse gas to near zero by 2030. Neptune's support for the initiative complements its own target for zero methane emissions by the end of the decade.

Developed by the Oil and Gas Climate Initiative, it aims for methane emissions to be "treated as seriously as the oil and gas industry already treats safety: aiming for zero and striving to do what it takes to get there."

Signatories to the initiative aim to reach near zero methane emissions from their operated assets by the end of this decade, avoid methane venting and flaring and report methane emissions annually and transparently. They are encouraged to introduce new technologies for methane monitoring, measurement and mitigation and to support implementation of regulations to tackle methane emissions.

ESS supports Chaplaincy

ESS Energy, part of Compass Group UK & Ireland, is formalising its longstanding relationship with the UK Oil & Gas Chaplaincy by naming the organisation as a strategic charity partner. The company will support project activity for the charity, as well as undertaking a range of fundraising across its estate.

The UK Oil & Gas Chaplaincy offers pastoral care and financial support to those who work or have worked in the industry and their dependants. The Chaplaincy was founded in the late 1980s and the current chaplain, the Reverend Gordon Craig, continues to ensure the organisation remains an integral part of the UK oil and gas industry. The charity cares for everyone, regardless of faith, or none, and beneficiaries are supported in their workplaces and homes.

The Big Give Appeal kicks off for 2022

ABERDEEN Cyrenians is appealing for pledgers as the first round of this year's Big Give Christmas match funding appeal kicks off.

Last year's match giving campaigns raised more than £35,000 and the money raised was used to support the work of the Direct Access Service, the first port of call for anyone experiencing crisis.

The Big Give Pledge Drive runs until September 2 offering interested companies the opportunity to make twice the impact with their donation pledge. The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2022 will then later launch for donations on #GivingTuesday November 29 and run for one week closing on December 7.

Chris Bennett-Taylor, Chief Executive of Aberdeen Cyrenians, said: "Anyone and everyone can be affected by crisis and overwhelming challenges. More and more people are seeking us out for support, and many of them for the first time.

"We are here to help people move forward and thrive which includes dignified access to food, personal care, benefits and housing. Pledges and donations are critical to enabling us to continue with this support and have the added benefit of being increased further thanks to this fantastic match funding campaign.

"Simply put, our work could not continue without this support."

VSA staff graduate Modern Apprenticeship Scheme

VSA celebrates the achievements of its staff who have recently graduated with their Health and Social care qualifications through their Modern Apprenticeship Scheme.

The charity which is a fully accredited SVQ Qualification Centre delivers a successful Modern Apprenticeship Scheme that provides a range of qualifications in Health and Social Care, including HNC in Social Services, SVQs in Social Services, and PDA Promoting Excellence in Dementia Skilled Practice.

The SVQ centre at VSA allows the charity to deliver a programme of continuous professional development and provide colleagues with an opportunity to gain practical experience while gaining qualifications.

Carol Nicholson, HR Director at VSA, said: "Our Modern Apprenticeship Scheme is truly a great way to learn while you are in full or part-time employment. We currently have some fantastic vacancies across all our services and are looking for caring and compassionate individuals to join our team. If you are looking for a new career opportunity, our recruitment team would love to speak to you about what roles we have available and how the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme can help you develop your career."

VSA

the best of lives



Can you make a difference this Christmas?

You can help bring a smile this Christmas and help change a life by supporting VSA's Christmas Appeal.

Christmas should be a time of joy and happiness, but for many families and people in their later years in life, it can be a time of stress, sorrow, and increased loneliness and isolation.

Thousands of more families will find themselves living in poverty struggling to heat their homes, feed their children, buy presents, or provide warm clothing for the winter.



£500

will help provide a fuel grant to a family to heat their home



£250

will help provide Christmas activities at one of our elderly care homes



£50

will fill a Christmas Stocking for one of our service users



Or visit our page to find out more about our Amazon Christmas Wishlist

To play your part and support our Christmas Appeal, simply scan the QR code or email fundraising@vsa.org.uk

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Ripples Custom Designs
& Prints*

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Ola established Ripples Custom Designs & Prints in 2010 when she was working alone from her home. In 2017 she moved to an office at Centurion Court in Aberdeen due to business taking off where the Ripples Team also increased in size. Last year in May 2021 Ripples made the big move to our

gorgeous studio in Kintore where we are currently a strong team of six.

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

At Ripples we specialise in all things print and embroidery. We design, print and embroider a comprehensive range of garments as well as customising and branding promotional and corporate gifts.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We work with start-ups and SME's to help them increase their brand awareness and increase their brand visibility. Lots of people come to us with no idea where to start – that's where our advice is key. We find the perfect garments to reflect the wants and needs of your brand whether it be hard wearing workwear for car garages, activewear for a sports facility or corporate wear for an office. You name it and we can brand it.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY AT THE MOMENT?

Public contracts are our biggest opportunity currently. Since Covid a lot of businesses are looking for new suppliers and are trying to support local due to the negative effects of the pandemic. I think its great that large companies are looking to put money back into the local economy. Public contracts are also a great opportunity for Ripples to grow our business and get our name out there.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

Customer satisfaction. At Ripples we pride ourselves in our customer service. I love the long lasting relationships with our clients. Its not just about the start and finish of the job its about continuing to keep in touch afterwards and watching their businesses grow.



Ronnie Grant,
*International Sales Manager,
Apex Tubulars*

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Apex Tubulars were originally formed in 1984. A management buy-out of the company, led by Jim Geddie, was done in 2001. Four members of our team have a collective 84 years of continuous working with Apex Tubulars.

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

Apex Tubulars supply downhole casing and tubing (OCTG) to the offshore and onshore oil and gas markets, globally. We also supply OCTG for gas storage and geothermal wells, globally. We have supplied OCTG to places such as Papa New Guinea, Australia, South Africa and South America.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

Apex Tubulars supply OCTG to the major, medium and small operators. We specialise in supplying OCTG from stock, for near term requirements.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

Our biggest challenge at the moment is sourcing enough stock to meet demand.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

Our biggest opportunity at this time is demand driven. We use our global

network to source OCTG from around the world.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

At Apex Tubulars, we pride ourselves in providing our clients with quick responses and a high quality attentive service. We will answer any request, 24/7. Apex are proud of the longstanding commitment to achieving the highest level of customer satisfaction. We are passionate in our promise to our clients that they will receive the best service and quality products, on time, every time.

WHAT HAS BEEN MOST VALUABLE TO YOU AS MEMBERS OF ABERDEEN + GRAMPIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

The opportunity to help advertise and promote our company and the opportunity to get our company name out there in the wider market.

MEMBERS



Chris Tosh,
Director,
Blackford Group

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

We offer insurance solutions and like to think of ourselves as an insurance partner; recognising every client has unique business risk and personal insurance concerns. We take the time to find the right protection for you and will make sense of insurance in a way which means something to you.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We work across all sectors, but particularly natural resources (renewables and energy sectors), construction, tech, professional services and private clients.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

A key challenge for our business is dealing with the issues that CV19 has brought/is bringing to the Scottish economy against the background of our desire to be a fast growth company.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

Growing and developing our team of insurance specialists to offer more clients insurance solutions that really fit their needs - securing your Plan B!

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

Our team and the care and dedication they deliver to our clients across all sectors. In Aberdeen the team is six strong, located in the thriving ABZ Business Park with a collective well in excess of 150 years combined experience and that includes embracing "next generation" staff, one of which is a law graduate who joined us in March.

WHAT HAS BEEN MOST VALUABLE TO YOU AS MEMBERS OF ABERDEEN + GRAMPIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

Raising awareness of Blackford and what we can do to help and support fellow members.



Stuart Munro,
Director,
i-Protech Technology /
i-Protech Renewables

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

We provide electrical, security, fire and renewables services, with a particular focus on sustainability and net zero solutions, which includes EV charge point installations and solar and battery storage for domestic and commercial properties. We have

dedicated team members focusing on each area of our business, including a security team who install and maintain intruder, CCTV and door access systems. We also supply and maintain fire extinguishers as well as carry out fire warden training.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We work with a range of business to facilitate them in reducing their emissions with the likes of changing lighting to LED, installation of EV charge points, and installation of solar and battery storage. We also offer a one-stop shop for electrical, security, fire and data cabling services.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

The biggest challenges at present are supply issues. It's proving to be very hard to get materials, in particular key components. It's also challenging to find key skilled employees, there seems to be a severe shortage at the moment. I believe things may get worse before they get better, and this will no doubt

drive costs up, something nobody wishes to hear given the cost of living in general is skyrocketing.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

We strive to assist all businesses and individuals to meet their net zero targets and look forward to supporting as many as we can throughout the North-east of Scotland.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

We are proud of our team and look to see them grow with the company; they are our best asset.

WHAT HAS BEEN MOST VALUABLE TO YOU AS MEMBERS OF ABERDEEN + GRAMPIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

Getting the opportunity to promote our business to other members and being able to attend events and training with other like-minded people.

Granite City Good Food

ABERDEEN City has become the latest place to win a Sustainable Food Places award.

The award recognises Granite City Good Food's work to promote healthy, sustainable and local food and to tackle some of today's greatest social challenges, from food poverty and diet-related ill-health to using food as part of responses to the climate and nature emergency.

Granite City Good Food has been a key voice in creating systems change to ensure food can be good for people, planet and economy. Amongst the key projects in the city, the partnership supported Aberdeen City Council in confirming its commitment to the Glasgow Declaration for Food and Climate, hosted the first ever Community Garden Festival and has also coordinated key campaigns around increasing business use of sustainable fish and public consumption of healthy diets, as well as currently running a "Food for the Planet" campaign.

Hosted by CFINE, the organisation has supported a range of activities around creating a sustainable food system including emergency food support and community food pantries, community growing development, and cash-first approaches through the SAFE Team. CFINE was also the charity partner at the recent Taste of Grampian event, the region's largest food festival.

Expansion for graphics firm

ABERDEEN-based CGI visualisation studio, Jamie Cameron 3D Graphics, is celebrating its fourth anniversary with plans to expand into Norway.

The company works primarily within the energy, renewables and innovation sectors and designs high-realism digital experiences to help inform, communicate and sell.

With sales of £150,000 last year and plans to open an office in Oslo this year, the recent hire of lead animator and project manager Graeme Horne, plus a team of two further technical specialists, reflects managing director Jamie Cameron's plan to invest in long-term strategy and new service offerings.

"We work with some great clients and during the past year our biggest challenge has simply been meeting demand," he said. "With the recent strengthening of our team and improvement of our management processes, we now have the capacity to plan our Oslo expansion and invest in developing new solutions.

"Aside from our core of 3D imagery and animation, we've seen a push from clients more interactivity, via the web, apps, and gamification. In response, we are currently developing some exciting prototypes that will offer even more immersive experiences."

With clients across Australia, Germany and the US, as well as the UK and Norway, the company has grown largely on word of mouth and personal recommendation.

Major boost for Camphill

CAMPHILL School Aberdeen, a charity which provides day and residential support to children and young people with learning disabilities and complex additional support needs, is a step closer towards its £10million capital appeal after receiving a £100,000 injection from the Wolfson Foundation.

The grant is to go towards the charity's new residential house with independent living wing. The home will enable the charity to open its doors to more vulnerable young people in the community in urgent need of support. The Wolfson Foundation is an independent charity committed to research and education – with a focus on science, health, heritage, humanities and the arts.



Fred Anderson and Rob Swanson

Building a great reputation

FRED Anderson and Rob Swanson, project managers for Cala Homes' Mains of Grandhome development in Bridge of Don and Oldfold Village in Milltimber, have been recognised as two of the country's best after winning industry awards for their dedication to quality housebuilding.

Fred and Rob were named as winners in the National Home Building Council Pride in the Job Quality Awards 2022 for their commitment to delivering high-quality new homes, joining 12 site managers from across the Cala Homes business to receive the accolade.

More than 8,000 site managers across the UK were assessed this year, with only 443 winners selected, putting those awarded in the industry's top five per cent who demonstrate the passion, commitment and leadership to raising standards in the sector.

Fred and Rob will now go through to the next stage of the competition, the Seal of Excellence, which will be announced this autumn.



Businesses in Scotland are leaving themselves open to cyber-attacks

Andrew Forsyth,
Managing Partner,
RSM, Aberdeen office
andrew.forsyth@rsmuk.com



According to RSM UK's 'The Real Economy' report, over a quarter (27%) of middle market businesses have experienced a cyber-attack in the past year, up from one in five (20%) last year. Positively, businesses are taking significant action to protect themselves from the threat with half of our respondents increasing their investment in cyber security but many (72%) still feel like an attack over the next year is likely.

Our latest Cyber Security report looks at ransomware as a particularly concerning threat. Ransomware attacks, where hackers either steal or encrypt data, rendering it inaccessible, then hold a business to ransom for it, have escalated 100% since the pandemic, according to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). They are expected to rise further in future, partly due to changing external events such as increases in inflation, volatile financial markets and the current Russia-Ukraine situation.

Leading researchers for the cyber economy, Cybersecurity Ventures, predict that by 2031 ransomware will cost victims \$265bn a year, with an attack expected to take place every 2 seconds, up from every 11 seconds in 2021.

There is also evidence that criminals like to return to the scene of the crime,

re-visiting easy targets where they have carried out a successful attack, knowing defences are weak. The research found 17% of businesses have been targeted with ransomware more than once, compared to only 11% last year. The figures may suggest a level of complacency has set in among businesses, leaving them vulnerable to future attacks. Alternatively, those who have invested in cyber security tools, specialist resources and cyber insurance may wrongly think they no longer need to consider the ongoing cyber threats and are now adequately protected from all types of attacks.

Andrew Forsyth, Managing Partner of the Aberdeen Office at RSM UK said: 'Cybercrime is now so prevalent that Ransomware is even available to buy as a service, more commonly known as RaaS (ransomware as a service). Criminal syndicates offer Ransomware to would-be attackers, meaning quite often these criminals require very little technical knowledge to carry out an attack. This has increased the number of attacks that are possible exponentially and the current political instability means that the threat of an attack, particularly on financial organisations or national infrastructure, is increased, as state sponsored groups carry out APTs (advanced persistent threats).'

He added: 'With cyber criminals now operating on an industrial scale, it is sadly no longer possible to completely

eliminate the possibility of an attack, but by remaining aware of the fast-evolving cyber threat landscape and vigilant to potential threats, businesses can reduce the risk considerably.'

Read the full report on Cyber Security at <https://www.rsmuk.com/real-economy/cybersecurity>

10 tips to prevent a cyber-attack:

1. Educate the senior executives in the business so they have a clear understanding of cyber risks
2. Keep all operating systems and software up to date to ensure the latest security patches are installed
3. Ensure systems are set up to automatically apply security updates
4. Back up all data, and ensure the backups are routinely tested for recoverability
5. Encrypt any data deemed as confidential, personal or commercially sensitive
6. Educate your staff about how to spot and report any possible threats or attacks
7. Use strong, complex passwords and multi-factor authentication
8. Ensure any online customer transactions are secure
9. Risk assess the need for specialist third party support or cyber insurance
10. Drive a strong security and awareness culture.

Too expensive to be sustainable

THE number of UK consumers who have adopted a more sustainable lifestyle has risen in the past year, but cost is proving to be a barrier for those wanting to make more sustainable and ethical purchasing decisions, according to new research from Deloitte.

According to Deloitte's Sustainable Consumer 2022 report, responses from more than 2,000 UK adults found that UK consumers have significantly increased their focus on making conscious sustainable purchasing decisions in the last year. 59% of consumers are now buying only what they need, up from 39% in 2021. In addition, 30% of respondents said they had opted for low emission or shared modes of transport (up from 19%) and 39% said they had reduced meat consumption (up from 30%).

The research also found that consumers are most likely to make sustainable or ethical choices in categories they deem essential and buy most frequently, such as groceries. Sustainable choices include buying more seasonal produce (54%), buying locally produced goods (48%) and reducing food waste (39%).

Despite the increase in demand for sustainable purchasing, cost is proving to be a major consideration for consumers. The majority of consumers (52%) said it is too expensive to do so while 57% said they would do so if it was more affordable to choose green alternatives.

The cost of living is also proving to be a factor, with 28% of consumers not adopting a more sustainable lifestyle in the last 12 months because of current economic uncertainty, including the impact of rising prices.

Direct air capture technology wins funding

ALMOST £3million in funding has been awarded to CO₂CirculAir B.V by the Net Zero Innovation Portfolio from BEIS for its direct air capture technology, SMART-DAC.

The technology is supported by five UK consortium partners, including the Net Zero Technology Centre, Process Design Centre, Herriot Watt University, Optimus Plus, and B9 Energy Storage, helping accelerate the UK's carbon capture utilisation and storage experience.

The novel SMART-DAC technology uses membrane gas absorption and membrane electrolysis regeneration to capture and separate CO₂ from the air, creating a continuous absorption cycle.

Using wind circulation to push air through the system and being powered using green energy, SMART-DAC is a cost-effective, zero emissions solution providing continuous CO₂ capture. The CO₂ captured can be reused as a carbon source for sustainable chemicals and synthetic fuels to replace fossil fuels and create a short carbon cycle or stored to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere permanently.

First contract for Well-Safe Defender

WELL decommissioning specialist Well-Safe Solutions has signed an agreement to plug and abandon 14 wells on the UK Continental Shelf.

The deal is the first scope agreed for the Well-Safe Defender semi-submersible rig, which Well-Safe Solutions purchased in June 2022.

The project, for an undisclosed value, will mean the Well-Safe Defender mobilising in March 2023 for approximately 250 days of work.



Mike Eriksen

Healthcare firm grows out of CV19

A CORPORATE healthcare firm launched during the pandemic is gearing up for additional multi-million-pound growth as the business evolves and expands beyond CV19.

Agilis Health, which has multiple facilities in Aberdeen and Teesside, has completed its second year of business with a seven-figure turnover and is on target for 50% growth in the coming 12 months.

With ambitious plans for years four and five, the business is set to double in size as it eyes acquisitions in the private healthcare, business service, and laboratory markets.

Launched in 2020 initially focussing on CV19 PCR, antigen analysis, and the associated complexities of international travel, Agilis completed its first acquisition earlier this year taking over RelyOn Nutec's occupational health divisions in Aberdeen and Teesside in a six-figure deal. It now delivers a fully managed service on an international basis covering all aspects of occupational health, corporate health and wellbeing, as well as continuing to support CV19 requirements nationally and internationally.

Mike Eriksen, Agilis Health Chief Executive, said: "We are on target to achieve our planned profile switch to 80% business to business customers which is a move away from the retail, transactional focus during CV19, replacing this with long term commercial contract revenues. With a strong pipeline in the coming months and plans to complete more acquisitions, we are looking at internationalisation of our managed corporate health service across Mexico, Brazil and the Middle East to support our client requirements."

The TEDx meaning of “movement”

TEDxAberdeen has unveiled the roster of speakers ready to take centre stage at its second event on Saturday, November 12.

Covering a diverse range of topics including social acceptance and inclusion, racism, keeping language alive, resistance to change, re-thinking values and societal conditioning, the speakers will share their interpretation of the TEDxAberdeen theme of “movement” at the one-day event.

Potential speakers were invited to submit their ideas to bring the theme of movement to life in a talk of no more than 18 minutes. Applications were received from across Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and even America on a wide range of topics.

The speakers are: Dr Aileen Alexander - The Benefits of Movement; Eric Doyle - Passion will get you moving, passion with strategy and community will get you further...”; Katie Forbes - Autism is a difference, not a disorder; Fraser Hay - From Human Being to Human Becoming; Lauren Hay - Speak Properly: Is Doric Dying?; Lyly Lepinay - Beyond the Chinese Takeaway; Zoe Morrison - Why we say people don't like change; Del Redvers - How your hypocrisy can help to save humanity; Sarah Rochester - We don't need a reason; Alex Whyte - The Career Mother Gear; and Martin Robertson - How to live a full life with dementia.

Program Curator, Derrick Thomson, said: “We have a diverse and eclectic group of speakers who will now embark on an 18-week coaching process to craft their ideas ready for the event in November.

“This is the exciting part; taking the speaker's raw concept and working them to create an idea worth spreading. I am really looking forward to supporting the speakers as they prepare for their moment in the red dot - we're co-creating an engaging and inspiring event for our community.”

Aubin's Middle East solution

ABERDEEN-headquartered Aubin Group, a developer and supplier of chemical solutions to the energy industry, has secured a two-year contract worth \$5million to manufacture and supply fluid loss additives to a major drilling company in the Middle East.

Developed in-house by Aubin's research and development team in Aberdeen, and manufactured in-country in Abu Dhabi, CFL-575 is a high temperature fluid loss additive that can be used in onshore and offshore well and is compatible with a wide range of cement types and additives.

Over the past five years this product has rapidly been adopted across the region, with sales volume now exceeding 170,000kg per year, which is 14 times higher than in 2017.



Andrew Tweedie and John Irvine

Profits rise at Bancon

BANCON Group has reported a 24% increase in turnover, on comparable pre-pandemic years, and 55% on the previous CV19-impacted year, in its accounts for the year ending March 31, 2022.

The Aberdeenshire-based housebuilding and construction group reached a turnover of £114million, up £40million on 2021, with operating profits increasing from £1.4million to £4.9million compared to the previous year.

Pre-tax profits rose from £0.2million to £2.7million, substantially ahead of the previous year due to a full year's trading with strong performances in the homes and timberframe businesses.

Bancon Homes delivered a significant uplift in profit, driven by a record year for sales of private homes across its key markets in Aberdeen City and Shire and the Central Belt. This positive momentum has been carried into the new financial year with 60% of its target sales for 2022/23 already secured.

Two new developments in the “much improved” Aberdeenshire market were launched and the acquisition of further sites in the central belt are expected to complete in the coming months continuing Bancon Homes' geographical diversification strategy.

Bancon Group Chief Executive, John Irvine, said: “The underlying strength of the group, together with our clear strategy, has resulted in considerably increased profits, despite the well-documented headwinds being experienced by the industry.

“We have entered the current financial year with strong forward orders across all our businesses and continue to focus on our longer-term growth by significantly investing in the attraction, retention and development of people and increasing the production capacity of Deeside Timberframe.

“With these strong foundations and proactive measures, we've taken to address the challenges of supply chain disruption, recruitment and rising costs, I am optimistic that we will produce another strong performance in the current year. Bancon Group, headquartered in Banchory, Aberdeenshire operates in North-east and Central Scotland and employs more than 250 people.”

Business lessons I've learned



Lee Kemp,

Operations Director, Celera Support Services Limited

What does your company do that others don't?

Our differentiating factor is our first-hand awareness of the fundamental impact the offshore environment has upon the smooth running of an asset and the success of any projects it is working on. Our team will integrate with each project and work with that unit/vessel across all regions. In other words, from Qatar to Cameroon to the Gulf of Mexico, we have one team supporting the client and set up the most effective operation for the next project. We take away the noise from the project, allowing them to focus on their core work. It may sound almost too obvious, but we stand out from the crowd by providing genuinely tasty, nutritious food and a clean, comfortable living environment offshore. We simply don't compromise on the quality of produce, and we undertake full audits of all our suppliers, as well as spot checks to ensure they comply with both regulatory and Celera standards.

What are the most pressing challenges that your industry sector faces today, and why?

The challenge remains for us all to ensure both the physical and mental wellbeing of our workforce, particularly for those whose time with their families can be limited due to overseas work. In common with any sector where travel and close workforce contact are fundamental, the ongoing restrictions imposed due to the global pandemic continue to pose a number of evolving challenges. The very fact that the offshore energy industry itself is global, means we're not only complying with UK restrictions, but need to be very aware and highly compliant with a whole range of regional variations.

What is the hardest lesson you have learned in your career to date?

How to manage people. It's the hardest, and the most important lesson to learn. We all have a duty of care towards our employees and colleagues, and good management relies on experience. There are so many different characters, with so much going on in their own lives,

Quick fire round

What was your first job?

YTS Apprentice Plant Mechanic

When would you like to retire?

When I can afford to

What did you have for breakfast?

Greek yogurt, blueberries & honey

Who, or what, inspires you?

Family & friends, to be a better husband, father & friend

What's the last book you read / film you saw?

Cola Boy – Ryan Battles

who may interpret your actions as a manager in a way you had never expected. My earliest career lesson centred around that circumstance, and it was open communication which resolved the situation. It was my first management role, and I was surprised that I'd been so easily misinterpreted. It was a lesson I've never forgotten.

What is the most valuable piece of business advice you have ever received?

Easily answered – and applies to business and personal life alike. My Grandad was fond of telling me "it's nae a dress rehearsal" and the older I get, the more I see the truth in that. We need to grab business opportunities, make the occasional leap of faith and generally give it our all. As I've grown businesses, both commercially and geographically, I've often sought the advice of friends who have experience in certain fields and are now "veterans" in their chosen sector. We've developed our careers together, gone through similar highs and lows, and I often find that friends will give you the most non-biased and very honest advice.



Elaine Sutherland and Dan Thompson

Osprey Housing offers more tenant choice with digital lettings service

OSPREY Housing is now offering potential and existing tenants a digital lettings service which allows applicants to register their interest in specific properties online.

The system — delivered through the These Homes partnership — will change how Osprey allocates properties. Until now, the social landlord did not hold a distinct waiting list, but the These Homes process allows applicants to select Osprey and specific vacancies for which they would like to be considered.

Osprey Director of Housing, Dan Thompson, said: “Using These Homes gives tenants significantly more choice over where they choose to live, not only in terms of the type of property but also in terms of being able to choose specific locations across local authority areas. Changing how we allocate our homes also forms part of a wider strategic direction for Osprey and this is a positive step towards delivering accessible housing options as well as a key part of our digital strategy.”

Osprey will allocate 50% of all new-build properties — including those coming online this summer at Inchmarlo and Lossiemouth — using the These Homes choice-based approach. Osprey is committed to creating balanced and sustainable communities and choice-based lettings will support this goal.

Siberia Bar & Hotel to host 2022 Oktoberfest

SIBERIA Bar & Hotel announced its plans to celebrate the German beer festival Oktoberfest. The event, which takes place on the weekend beginning Friday, September 16, will see Siberia up with Aberdeen beer company Fierce and German ABK Beer.

Siberia Director, Stuart McPhee, says: “Following on from a successful bank holiday weekend, we are moving onto the next phase of our events calendar with Oktoberfest, a key event in the hospitality industry across the world. We’re looking forward to partnering with our friends at Fierce Beer and ABK on a massive celebration in our beer garden.”

Waste management leader reaches south with key acquisition

DENHOLM Environmental Limited (a Denholm Energy subsidiary) has acquired Carlisle-based specialist industrial services experts, Andidrain Ltd. The move is seen as key to further increasing the company’s foothold in traditional markets and growing its UK presence to reach from the Scottish Highlands to the English Midlands.

Andidrain Ltd was formed by Andrew Little in 1990 and has an enviable reputation for reliable, ethical and high-quality service provision. Andrew will remain with the company for at least the next two years to ensure a smooth transition for both staff and customers.

All 52 Andidrain Ltd personnel will transfer to Denholm Environmental in due course taking the company-wide permanent headcount to 200 across its Aberdeenshire headquarters in Inverurie and operational sites in Carlisle, Grangemouth and Invergordon.

The acquisition – the third in three years for Denholm Environmental – will also increase tanker capacity by one third and will add some 30 plus vehicles, including High Volume Combination (HVC) rigid tankers and vacuum tankers, to existing capabilities.

Brian Ritchie, Managing Director of Denholm Environmental commented: “I look forward to working with Andrew and the rest of the team over the coming months and years to grow the business into a truly UK-wide offering. All successful acquisitions are based on communal values and the exceptional ethical and professional values of Andidrain perfectly align with our own.”

One man’s rubbish is another’s treasure

THE Reuse Shop has opened at Aberdeen City Council’s Hazlehead Household Waste Recycling Centre selling good quality, used household items and furniture donated by residents.

The shop was established with the support of funding from the Scottish Government’s Recycling Improvement Fund which aims to improve recycling infrastructure across Scotland. It will be open from 10am to 4pm Thursday to Monday and will contribute to the goals of the council and SUEZ, which operates the site to reduce waste and support a circular economy.

As well as selling good quality, pre-loved items, much of the shop’s interior and its exterior “living wall” have been made with re-used items, such as reclaimed shelves and pallets. If successful, it is hoped additional shops may be opened at other sites in the city to build a network of re-use opportunities across Aberdeen.

Neptune's gold environmental status

NEPTUNE Energy has been awarded gold medal status from the environment, social and governance ratings organisation, EcoVadis. The score places Neptune in the top 5% of all 95,000 global companies assessed by the organisation.

EcoVadis assesses companies' policies, actions and performance disclosures in the areas of environment, labour and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement.

Aberdeen office take-up outstrips Edinburgh and Glasgow

OFFICE take-up in the first half of the year (2022) across the three largest Scottish cities saw Aberdeen outstrip activity in Edinburgh and Glasgow, according to the latest research from Savills.

The Granite City – where office leasing has historically been closely linked to the oil and gas industry – saw 256,426 sq ft of take-up in H1 2022. Activity has been boosted by deals including: Shell taking c.100,000 sq ft at The Silver Fin Building; OGA (North Sea Transition Authority) taking 18,000 sq ft at 1 Marischal Square; and Orega committing to 15,000 sq ft at The Capitol. By comparison, Glasgow take-up reached 208,023 sq ft in H1 2022 while Edinburgh's ongoing lack of prime space in the City Centre saw only 146,377 sq ft of office lettings.

Dan Smith, Office Agency Director and Head of Savills Aberdeen office, comments: "It is clear that our North Sea oil and gas industry is a key component in the UK's transition to more sustainable energy solutions, allowing a reliance on domestic production rather than importing energy from elsewhere, where regulation is ambiguous and there are associated carbon costs. As such, occupiers in the oil and gas sector are increasingly inquisitive in their property requirements in and around the city, and this demand alongside the increasing activity from renewables, decommissioning and other sectors, sees the best office space beginning to fill up. With demand expected to continue on an upward trajectory, 2022 looks likely to see the strongest office letting activity in Aberdeen in eight years."

Looking forward, Dan adds: "Looking ahead to the second half of 2022, the outlook is promising for Aberdeen. Existing demand in the market is expected to absorb a large proportion of the remaining Grade A quality office space and trigger conversations towards the end of the year around refurbishment / repositioning of Grade B space. Diminishing supply and the lack of noteworthy development pipeline in Aberdeen will continue to buoy the market for best in class space. With activity crystallising prime rents in Aberdeen at £30 per sq ft, the city presents an ever more compelling story for investors looking for cash on cash returns, and we are talking to an increasing number of investors who recognise the value available in Aberdeen relative to other UK markets."



Willie Lippe and Ross McWilliam

A new name in architecture and planning

TWO Aberdeenshire firms have joined forces to create a new name in architecture and planning excellence.

Award-winning architectural practice and planning consultancy Lippe Architects + Planners has been bought by fellow Inverurie-based business RJM Architectural Design.

All staff will transfer to the newly created McWilliam Lippe Architects, which will employ a multidisciplinary team of 12 people including an in-house planning consultant and a conservation-accredited specialist. It is anticipated that the staff numbers will increase in coming months as the new company seeks to capitalise on additional opportunities in both traditional and emerging markets.

RJM Architectural Design has experienced rapid growth in recent years and is particularly well established in the self-build sector. By adding capacity thanks to the acquisition of Lippe Architects + Planners, it is anticipated that the delivery of a comprehensive and diverse range of services will act as a vital springboard towards further growth.

Australian contract for Peterson

KIMBERLEY Marine Support Base Pty Ltd (KMSB) has appointed Peterson Energy Logistics as the port operator and TAMS Group as the design and construct contractor of the Kimberley Marine Offloading Facility in Broome, Western Australia.

KMSB's development of the \$160million multi-user port facility will comprise a floating wharf, connected by a linkspan ramp to a fixed bi-directional causeway, along with associated onshore terminal facilities. The facility will be located to the south of the existing Port of Broome wharf and will provide complementary facilities for maritime trade and tourism.



Stephen Henry

The Dons appoint net zero partner

FOLLOWING a clear commitment to tackle climate change, Aberdeen Football Club has appointed Positive Planet as its first net zero advisory partner.

The Club has set a target of reducing emissions by 50% by 2030 and recently added its signature to the UN Sports for Climate Change framework, underlining its intent to become carbon neutral.

Positive Planet, a consultancy which helps organisations achieve their sustainability goals, will work with the Club over three seasons to develop a strategy to ensure it can live up to this commitment.

This sustainability strategy will be informed by the Club's current carbon footprint. Positive Planet will provide an independent measurement of the Club's current emissions and then, working closely with all parts of the Club, from stadium and football operations, commercial and corporate hospitality through to fan engagement and travel, develop a plan to reduce its impact on the environment. The plan will comprise short, medium and longer-term goals which will be validated by the Science Based Target Institute.

Positive Planet has agreed to offset the associated costs in exchange for becoming an official Club Partner with a programme of commensurate benefits.

Founder of Positive Planet, Stephen Henry, said: "As a passionate football supporter, I am very aware of the influential role football clubs can play in the communities they serve. I have worked closely with clubs from Premier League teams to grass roots football clubs – successfully helping them to get leaner, cleaner and greener.

"We started Positive Planet with the aim of building the UK's largest community of responsible businesses and organisations taking actions to reduce their emissions. We partner with organisations who can have a broader impact than simply reducing their own emissions and we are delighted to add Aberdeen FC to this community."

Supporting GlaxoSmithKline

GLOBAL professional services business, Turner & Townsend, has been selected to support GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) with its capital portfolio management in Montrose.

As part of Turner & Townsend's growing capability across its real estate team in Scotland, the appointment includes complete portfolio management of GSK's key manufacturing facilities in Montrose. The global property consultancy will provide concept/feasibility project management, as well as project controls (cost and planning) for the portfolio.

As a global supplier to GSK, Turner & Townsend is already providing a full range of services including project and programme management, cost management and projects controls services both globally and UK-wide.

Adding to this existing partnership, Turner & Townsend will be increasing its coverage even further to support GSK's ongoing capital investment in the Montrose site to secure its longevity and support continuous improvement of its production line and office facilities.

JFD's successful submarine rescue trials

JFD, the underwater capability provider, supported three trial international submarine rescue operations in the first quarter of 2022.

JFD facilitated one exercise in Australia and two in the UK against the backdrop of the ongoing CV19 pandemic.

In the event of a Distressed Submarine (DISSUB), any delays to a rescue operation can have catastrophic consequences, so it is vital that regular submarine rescue system and submarine rescue vehicle exercises take place. This enables equipment to be proven and personnel familiarised, giving the best possible chance of an efficient rescue operation should a real-life incident occur.

In February, UK trials took place for the recently manufactured 3rd Generation DSRV (Deep Search and Rescue Vehicle), the third built by JFD within the last 12 months. This included the Factory Acceptance Tests, a local Dock Dip at the King George V Dock in Glasgow, and Harbour Acceptance Trials at JFD's site in Fort William. An operations team, as well as the support shore and afloat team ensured the safety of these trials.

In March, a team of JFD's experienced submarine rescue operators undertook a seaborne operational training exercise in Australia on board mothership MV Stoker. The exercise included a fully timed mobilisation of the rescue assets, ROV system, LR5 SRV certification dive and hyperbaric training with Royal Australian Navy Medics. The mobilisation was achieved in 57 hours which, compared with the standard 72 hours, is a significant achievement and testament to the experience and dedication of the JFD team.

At the end of March, JFD deployed the full NATO Submarine Rescue System to SD Northern River, for exercises off the West Coast of Scotland.



Sutherlands of Portsoy wins Great Taste 2022 Award

PORTSOY based traditional smoked fish producer, Sutherlands of Portsoy has been named among the top food and drink producers globally this year, picking up a highly prized 3-star Great Taste award for its Cold Smoked Steelhead Trout.

More than 14,000 products were put through the competition's rigorous blind judging process; and Sutherlands of Portsoy was dubbed a "beautiful, vibrant colour and cut. Firm yet melt in the mouth creamy. A gentle sophisticated smoke and the peatiness from the whisky are perfectly balanced with the trout. The trout is lifted, not overpowered – a joy to taste" at the world's most coveted food and drink awards.

Recognised as a stamp of excellence and actively sought out by food lovers and retailers alike, Great Taste, organised by the Guild of Fine Food, values taste above all else. All products in the line-up for judging are blind-tasted: every product is removed from its packaging so it cannot be identified, before entering a robust, layered judging process.

John Farley, Managing Director from Sutherlands of Portsoy comments: "We are delighted to have won a Great Taste award for our Cold Smoked Steelhead Trout. I have dreamt of this moment and am so proud to be adding the iconic black and gold Great Taste logo to our Cold Smoked Steelhead Trout Range.

"Being recognised with a Great Taste 3-star means so much to independent producers such as myself, as it makes all the hard work and determination worth it! Great Taste is the most recognised accolade for taste and quality in the food and drink world, so it really is a big win!"

Boost for threatened salmon stocks

RIVER Dee Managers and conservation groups have welcomed funding for a major project to boost threatened salmon stocks in the short-term and provide long-term protection for the species.

The Glen Clunie River & Floodplain Restoration Project is also expected to reduce the impact of flooding in a part of the system which saw devastation to homes and businesses during Storm Frank.

Through its Nature Restoration Fund, the Scottish Government's agency NatureScot has approved funding of £209,000 towards the project in the major Clunie tributary, above Braemar.

The project, being led by the Dee District Salmon Fishery Board in partnership with local Land Managers, will involve re-engineering of river flows using wind-blown trees anchored to the riverbed, mirroring natural processes in healthy habitats. These structures are proven to have an immediate benefit, helping to produce ideal conditions for salmon to lay their eggs, providing shelter from predators, and a source of food for the young fish by boosting invertebrate numbers.

The project also involves the planting of more native trees by the riverside, providing vital shade in the longer term against rising water temperatures which are already threatening the future of the Dee's iconic salmon stocks.

The addition of large numbers of big tree-root structures will dampen the river's destructive energy during major flooding events. This will not prevent the kind of devastation seen during Storm Frank in 2015, but it will help reduce the impact of future flooding by dissipating some of the water's force.

Verlume's plans lead to new premises

VERLUME, a specialist in intelligent energy management and energy storage, has moved to a larger operations facility as it prepares to fulfil ambitious growth plans.

Located in the former Weatherford building within the Raiths Industrial Estate in Dyce the 20,000 square foot facility has a generous workshop floor, craneage, office space and laboratory areas.

The Dyce facility, which is six times the size of Verlume's previous operational base, will accommodate manufacturing operations for the company's range of intelligent energy management and storage technologies, including project assemblies for the award-winning flagship Halo modular battery energy storage system. On-site laboratories will be used for industry-leading product and Software development. Verlume's main office will remain at Davidson House in Aberdeen Innovation Park.

Exclusive:

Netting a net zero future

FOR more than four centuries Peterhead harbour has been vital to the North-east and Scottish economies.

Now, however, it is on the brink of becoming game changing as it bids, along with the Port of Aberdeen, Aberdeen International Airport and the city and shire councils, to become the North East Scotland Green Freeport.

"I have heard other groups describe this as a once in a generation opportunity," said Stephen Paterson, Chief Financial Officer of Peterhead Port Authority, "but that undervalues it. Opportunities like this are less frequent than that.

"There is an enormous potential prize for the North-east and it's coming just at the perfect time for us. We have built our economy in the North-east on oil and gas and we've been a huge cash cow for the Scottish and the UK Exchequer on that basis. But everyone can see that it has a finite life, and we don't want to end up being a deprived area where jobs are

starting to leak away. Rather, what we're trying to do now is provide a just transition and to replace these quality jobs on a like-for-like basis and grow.

"The expectation is that there will be upward of 30,000 new jobs in North-east Scotland which is game-changing, and for Peterhead, if we get a reasonable percentage of those, it is very significant.

"We want the 'energy capital of Europe' to become the 'net zero capital of Europe,'" said Chief Executive, Simon Brebner.

"That is our aspiration - to lead the rest of the world down that route and do it in such a way that the transition is an inclusive transition - it will hopefully

deliver a just transition in which everyone can be included."

Peterhead is used to adapting. Construction of its first harbour began in 1593 when the island of Keith Inch in Peterhead Bay, was a rendezvous for Dutch fisherman catching cod and ling.

Shipbuilding began in the bay in the early 17th century and from the end of the 18th century for 100 years its vessels were involved in Arctic whaling.

"At the end of the 1800s the government had a plan to provide a network of places for sailing vessels to run to in times of storms to protect them," said Stephen. "They started building the breakwaters about 1886 but for various reasons didn't complete until 1956 and by that time it was a bit of a white elephant because sail had given way to power and the whole concept of a harbour of refuge had come and gone.

"But it did create a big bay with shelter and deep water which came to its own when the oil industry started off."

“

We want the 'energy capital of Europe' to become the 'net zero capital of Europe



Since 2006 there has been one organisation – Peterhead Port Authority, responsible for managing and developing the harbour.

Last year a staggering £195million worth of fish and shellfish was landed at Peterhead, the UK's biggest fishing port by far and one of the biggest in Europe.

That was down on its record year of 2019 when it reached almost £210million, a target they hope to surpass in the very near future.

"We are looking forward optimistically to growth in the fishing sector over the next couple of years," said Stephen. "The stock seems to be very healthy so there's every prospect of a bit more quota being released next year, particularly for our key species of cod and haddock, and we've seen substantial growth in the shellfish sector this year with boats putting much more effort into the quality of their landings.

"They have invested heavily on new ways to handle prawns and land them as top quality seafood which primarily gets exported to Europe, but it's still a significant part of the value which that sector can deliver to the North-east.

"We have had 400 successful years as a fishing town and there is no reason we can't still be a fishing town in 400 years provided the stocks are managed sustainably and the harbour develops to meet the needs of that sector."

To that end there was recently a significant investment in the harbour.

"The project started in 2016 but the decision was taken back in 2014 and was quite a visionary step forward," said Simon.

"At a time of uncertainty the Board still invested £52million in the dredging and deepening of the inner

harbour, upgrading the quays and building a new state of the art fish market which opened in 2018. It was a bold step but it's paying off.

"The biggest vessels can now land anytime they want and return to fishing without having to wait six or eight hours for the tide. It's a seamless transition to land and return to the fishing grounds again. With the new fish market, we've have all the accreditations around compliance, hygiene and traceability, the quality which all the major retailers require when they are selling their seafood products."

In the 1970s both Peterhead and Aberdeen, who are working closely together in the Green Freeport bid, were perfectly located and grasped the opportunity of the emerging oil and gas industry.

"We both developed very early on in that sector and built up a successful



and diversified supply chain,” said Stephen. “A lot of expertise over those last 50 to 60 years has been concentrated in the North-east of Scotland and the area has forged a reputation for working in a very harsh environment, for developing new techniques and the equipment and products which we hone in the North Sea and then export around the world in particularly the subsea sector.

“We have a track record of innovation and export and we can do the same with the energy transition, particularly carbon capture. We can be one of the global leaders in that area. Many other parts of the country and internationally will have bits of that jigsaw puzzle but Peterhead can really have all of it. We have the carbon capture, the direct air capture and the carbon capture power station. We can achieve a critical mass of linked projects including the Energy Transition Zone and the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub. All these

projects come together to form a centre of excellence where we can innovate and then export that expertise just as the rest of the world is waking up to the energy transition requirements. It’s hugely exciting for the North-east.”

At a recent campaign breakfast in the Palace of Westminster, Riversimple, inventors of the pioneering Rasa hydrogen vehicle, revealed it is active talks about locating a 150,000 sq ft manufacturing plant in Aberdeen - if the region secures green freeport status.

“If it happens, then here comes a wonderful, innovative product

generating upwards of 800 jobs of off quality,” said Simon.

“We’re talking about potentially hundreds of millions of additional investment from some projects if we get the Green Freeport compared to what would happen otherwise. We’ve had several international investors approached us on the back of the bid looking at projects we could never have dreamed of or even guessed about before – but their interest is exclusively for a freeport site. Their plans rely on customs simplification, for example, and the removal of many planning restrictions and the speeding up of planning processes.

“This has been a fantastic project and we don’t intend to lose the momentum from all the good work we have done so far and the collaboration we have achieved.”



Healthoutfit to support TotalEnergies staff

HEALTHOUTFIT has been awarded a three-year partnership with TotalEnergies E&P UK (TEPUK) to provide its entire workforce with a programme to improve mental wellbeing, physical wellbeing and healthy eating.

The partnership includes the development of a bespoke webpage and mobile application containing the programme material and resources. The Healthoutfit team will deliver the programme in-person at all offshore and onshore sites in group presentations, workshops, one-to-one consultations as well as virtual sessions.

Mhairi Finnie, HSE director for TEPUK, said: "Looking at employee feedback and occupational health data, we worked with Healthoutfit to create themes covering a variety of relevant topics. This programme is aimed at building on the positive aspects of recent societal changes brought about by the pandemic and gives everyone working across all our sites the opportunity to become fitter and healthier, both in mind and body. There is no doubt that fit and healthy people make for happier and more productive workplaces – so everyone benefits when we focus on health and wellbeing."

FirstGroup is top performing operator

FIRSTGROUP plc has been included in the latest FTSE4Good Index, ranking as the top performing bus and rail operator in the travel and tourism sector.

Launched in 2001, the FTSE4Good Index Series is designed to measure the performance of companies demonstrating strong environmental, social and governance practices. These indices are subsequently used by a wide variety of asset managers, investors and other market participants when creating or assessing sustainable investment products.

FirstGroup, which has been included in the FTSE4Good Index for the last 19 years, ranked as the top performing European company in the travel and tourism sector, achieving a score of 4.1/5, improving on last year's score of 3.7/5.

The score improvement was mainly driven by the group's improving approaches to climate risk and diversity and inclusion. This includes voluntarily aligning with Task Force on Climate related Financial Disclosures reporting, which helps to set out the possible impact of climate change risks and opportunities on the business in the future. There has also been an expansion of the Group's "Step Up" and "Reach Up" programmes which support the career progression of women and employees from minority ethnic backgrounds in the business.



Simon Bayley, Alex Graham and Greg Houston

Infinity signs partnership deal

ACCOUNTANCY firm Infinity Partnership has announced a new venture to help clients reduce operational costs.

The award-winning Aberdeen firm has teamed up with Great Annual Savings Group (GAS).

In a challenging economic climate, GAS has proven to be a valued partner to help companies to reduce costs on utilities such as water, gas and electricity. In addition, it has supported efficiencies in EV charging, merchant and payment services, insurance, telecoms, office equipment and much more.

Simon Cowie, Managing Partner at Infinity Partnership, said: "We support our clients from an accountancy and tax point of view. However, in recent times we have secured a number of partnerships that have helped our clients reduce their costs or improved processes during what has been an extremely challenging period for all business.

"Our clients will be offered the opportunity to gain support from Great Annual Savings. We are using GAS expertise and working with them to help reduce our overheads."

Seven green awards for Aberdeen

ENVIRONMENTAL charity, Keep Scotland Beautiful, has presented seven Green Flag Awards to Aberdeen in recognition of its quality open spaces.

The international scheme recognises outdoor recreational areas which enable exercise, encourage biodiversity, improve mental wellbeing and provide a safe space for play.

Flags this year went to Hazlehead Park, Seaton Park, Victoria Park, Johnston Gardens, Slopefield Allotments and Garthdee Field Allotments.

Duthie Park was also a recipient, marking its 10th Green Flag anniversary.

Deloitte helps build hope and happiness

ABERDEEN Cyrenians, a local charity which cares for and supports vulnerable people in the North-east, has been successful in its bid to become a charity partner for professional services firm, Deloitte.

Having been selected by Deloitte's staff based out of the firm's Aberdeen office, the new partnership will benefit local people across the region as part of Deloitte's Five Million Futures responsible business programme. The programme aims to help five million people get to where they want to be through access to education and employment.

Chris Bennett-Taylor, CEO of Aberdeen Cyrenians, said: "The initiative will make support available to our organisation in a number of ways but will ultimately help us build hope, health and happiness with the vulnerable people we work with. It is lovely to be working with an organisation that is serious about social impact and making a difference in the local community."



ROVOP pledges support for Friends of ANCHOR

ROVOP has pledged to champion Friends of ANCHOR in a year-long fundraising drive.

The team has committed to participate in events throughout the year to help the charity to ensure North-east Scotland's cancer and haematology patients receive the best possible care, treatment and support.

All funds raised will go towards the ANCHORED Together appeal – an initiative to raise £2million for The ANCHOR Centre, a new purpose-built facility at ARI for oncology and haematology day and outpatients. The ANCHOR Centre will be the first of its kind in Scotland, serving a population of more than half a million people. Due to open in 2023, it will be used by an estimated 250 patients every day – around 65,000 people a year.

Shellie Stewart from ROVOP said: "This year is a milestone anniversary for the charity, as they celebrate 25 years of serving the needs of cancer and haematology patients throughout the North-east.

"Friends of ANCHOR has reached the halfway mark in their fundraising for The ANCHOR Centre. We're committed to joining the effort to achieve the target and help the charity to provide much-needed care in the region."

UK in prime position to win CCS work

SUPPLY chain companies in the UK offshore oil and gas sector are in prime position to win work in carbon capture and storage (CCS) if urgent action is taken by governments and industry, a new report has found.

CCS has been recognised as a critical technology to help energy intensive sectors, like cement and power generation, meet their net zero goals. The Government's Net Zero Strategy says the UK will need to capture 50m tonnes a year by 2035.

The report, commissioned by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and produced by industry body OEUK through the North Sea Transition Deal, finds that offshore oil and gas supply chain companies already have some capabilities in areas including plant design and engineering, plant fabrication and construction.

It identifies 13 actions for government and industry, including the need for support from government through early-stage funding and additional licensing rounds. It finds:

- The UK has most of the components necessary for a successful CCS sector; a big potential market for exports of technology and expertise; large industrial clusters; extensive gas transport infrastructure; and a good scientific understanding of the geological requirements needed for long-term CO₂ storage
- CCS could be worth £20billion to the offshore oil and gas supply chain in the next 10 years and £100billion by 2050
- The UK has an estimated total storage capacity of 78 gigatons, one of the largest in Europe and enough to hold two centuries' worth of the UK's current emissions
- Government should speed up Track 2 clusters and introduce additional licencing rounds for storage sites
- The supply chain, although suitably experienced, is fragile and the UK is at risk of losing it to more attractive opportunities elsewhere in the world if it does not secure a first-mover advantage

Securing this work in the UK will particularly benefit communities in Aberdeen, Inverness, Liverpool, North Wales, East Anglia, Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and Teesside, where the existing offshore energy industry is well-placed to expand into new sectors, including CCS.

OEUK Supply Chain and Operations director, Katy Heidenreich, said: "Carbon capture and storage is going to be a key tool in our fight against climate change. It offers a huge opportunity for the UK offshore energy supply chain to help energy intensive industries cut emissions.

"If we get this right, it could unlock £100billion of work for UK manufacturing employers by 2050. This will support UK jobs, cut emissions, boost the economy and develop skills which can be exported globally

"Lots of progress has been made, but without urgent action the UK will miss out on the opportunity to secure a leadership position in this exciting new sector "Our report sets out how we will continue to work with government to seize a first mover advantage, benefitting the economy, jobs and local communities while achieving our net zero goals."

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce 2022 training calendar

Skills for Business	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Assertiveness at Work Learn to communicate your point of view without causing conflict				
Communication and Interpersonal Skills Develop effective communication techniques			8	
Customer Service Excellence Discover the techniques to excel at customer service	26			
Dealing with Difficult Situations Understand the variety of personalities and determine how to alter your approach			14	
Emotional Intelligence Develop situational awareness and manage emotion in self and others		4		
Improve your Professional Confidence Promote a positive and confident self-image in a professional manner	13			
Negotiating and Influencing Skills Learn tactics and skills of persuasion that lead to success	15			
Personal Effectiveness Improve your self-management by changing the way you work				
Presentation Skills Deliver a dynamic and motivational presentation confidently	8			
Project Management - The Fundamentals Understand the principles of project management and the complexities of scale			24	
Report Writing Learn to produce clear, concise and effective reports			30	
Taking Notes and Minutes (half day) Record meetings effectively and accurately with high quality minutes			23	
Time Management Identify time wasting activities and manage your day more effectively				
Train the Trainer Feel confident whilst developing and presenting different types of training				

Management and Leadership	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Advanced Management Skills Grow as a manager and improve the performance of your team		17		
Building Effective Teams Understand what makes a great team and learn how to build one				
Essential Management Skills Become equipped with the knowledge and skills required of a manager	20		1	
Essential Supervisory Skills Bridge the gap between doing and supervising			5	6
HR for Non-HR Managers Understand responsibilities and techniques in relation to HR requirements		11		
Motivation and Delegation Create a motivational environment and use effective delegation			9	
Reviews and Appraisals Assess performance constructively and increase reviewee's motivation		13		
Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Management Identify and engage with stakeholders to build effective and lasting relationships			29	
Supervisors Next Steps Improve techniques and add new areas of awareness and understanding			10	

Business Development	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Business Development Accelerator Develop a powerful strategy to drive sales			4	
Sales and Account Management Develop a structured approach to selling			21	
Social Media - Developing Your Recruitment Profile See the importance of a personal and corporate brand using social media	12			

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Contact us: **01224 343902** or training@agcc.co.uk

Finance	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Budgeting and Planning - An Introduction Learn how to establish and maintain budgets		7		
Finance - The Basics Develop a broad understanding of business finance	2		22	
Finance for Non-finance Managers Gain an understanding of many aspects of finance and how it impacts business	29			8

International Business and Exporting	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
A Beginners Practical Guide to Exporting Gain a high level overview of the exporting process				
Understanding Export and Export Documentation Demystify what is involved to save time and money	14			
Customs Procedures and Documentation Learn how to navigate the various customs systems, procedures and documentation		5		
Import Procedures, Inward and Outward Processing Avoid pitfalls when importing, understanding methods of claiming relief		20		
Incoterms 2020 Benefits of International Commercial Terms for buyers and sellers			29	
Methods of Payment and Letters of Credit Ensure your Letter of Credit is not rejected and compare payment methods			16	
Preference Rules of Origin Understand the importance and rules of Preference Rules of Origin				1
Understanding Commodity Codes Guidance through the international coding process and the paperwork involved			30	

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Course	*Members	Savings	Non-members
Half day	£245 +VAT	£125	£370 +VAT
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Two day standard	£560 +VAT	£280	£840 +VAT

“We have been regular participants in various Chamber of Commerce training courses for developing the skills of our employees (at all levels). We would have no hesitation in recommending them to others looking for staff development training programmes”.

Aberdeen Football Club and AFC Community Trust



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Counting the cost of calorie labelling

IN 2005 the Scottish Parliament voted overwhelmingly to ban smoking in all enclosed public places the following year. The First Minister at the time, Jack McConnell, described the legislative move as “one of the most important decisions that has been made since devolution”. As a public health policy it was pioneering. Dozens of other countries have now followed where Scotland led.

There might be some halcyon nostalgia, but probably no deep longing, for a return to smoky pubs and clubs. I am of a generation where the choice of smoking or non-smoking was the primary greeting in a restaurant, but by the time I could (legally) go out for my first pint, smoking indoors in public had been stubbed out for good.

When the Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Bill cleared its final Holyrood hurdle seventeen years ago, the Scottish Licensed Trade Association accused the Labour-led administration of ‘dictatorial’ behaviour and pledged to fight on for the rights of all smokers to light up as and when. Their campaign spluttered, neither to be heard nor seen from again.

A national evaluation of the policy found a 17% fall in hospital admissions after just one year, reduced rates of child asthma, 40% less exposure among kids to second hand smoke, a near complete eradication of second-hand smoke inhalation in bars and little evidence people were choosing, instead, to stay in and smoke at home. On the downside, pubs saw a 10% drop in customers almost immediately, a drop in sales and little success in attracting new clients into a smoke-free environment to compensate their losses.

But a decision was taken nonetheless and it was one which came with robust public backing. 75% of people supported the smoking ban before it was law, favourability increased as soon as it came into effect and the numbers who would reverse it now are negligible. No policy is without its flaws, but the ban on smoking in public places is as close to a policy success as any government could wish for.

A regular refrain from Chambers of Commerce is that our elected representatives should view and take decisions through a business lens. But we should recognise on occasion that their glasses have to be three-dimensional. Business interests must find balance with health, with justice, social issues and the environment.

Finding that balance is no mean feat and certainly, when it came to acting proportionately to protect public health and the interests of business

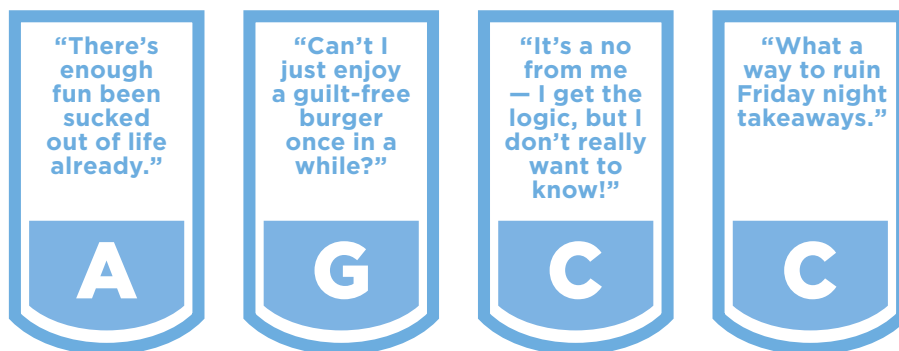
over these past three years, decisions taken by our governments left much to be desired.

A Holyrood consultation on mandatory calorie labelling on menus in the ‘out of home food sector’ has just concluded. In non-civil-speak, this relates to food served in pubs, cafes, restaurants and takeaways carrying clearly and prominently the calorific content of each dish they serve.

On a personal note, I thought “yikes — what a way to ruin the treat of going out for dinner”.

Before we took the temperature of the Chamber





membership, I threw the question out to the rest of the team at AGCC HQ. The majority took a similar view to my own:

"There's enough fun been sucked out of life already."

"Can't I just enjoy a guilt-free burger once in a while?"

"It's a no from me — I get the logic, but I don't really want to know!"

"What a way to ruin Friday night takeaways."

And, with at least some sense of irony, "I've had too many calories shoved down my throat already!"

Our members' concerns were more business focused, and it was these that we incorporated into our formal consultation response. At

a crucial time of recovery for the hospitality sector, this is yet one more burden, more costs, more staff hours and, for those whose bread and butter business-model isn't bulgar wheat salads or spinach smoothies, potentially a loss of customers. For those reasons we remain to be convinced on the merits of this legislation.

That said, obesity and poor diet continue to be among the biggest and most complex public health challenges faced by the Western world. Scotland is not immune, indeed we don't weigh-in particularly well compared to our peer nations.

We may not like the short term costs or pain of change for our business. Personally we might recoil against fun-sapping measures which shine an uncomfortable spotlight on our eating habits. But might this policy, if written into the statute books eventually, be like the smoking ban — one on which we we barely look back?



On a personal note, I thought "yikes — what a way to ruin the treat of going out for dinner".



Fergus Mutch,
Policy Adviser,
Aberdeen & Grampian
Chamber of Commerce





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P&J LIVE



Chapelton development finds feet as new foodie haven

CHAPELTON may be a new town, but it is fast becoming the go-to destination for the North-east's local 'foodie' community. As the town continues to grow and flourish, so does its reputation for supporting local growers and artisan producers of fine foods and goods.

Whether it's to enjoy a coffee and a fine piece at Slate & Grain Brasserie and Bar, or Brae Cafe, or to spend some pennies on local artisan produce and goods at the Farmers' Market or at The Boxes retail units, Chapelton has something for all.

In just seven years, Chapelton has grown into a vibrant, sustainable town with a strong sense of community. The first house was built and occupied in 2015, and the population has since risen to more than 650 residents.

The Duchess of Fife, Director of Elsie Development Company, said: "It was always our intention to build and develop a sustainable and environmentally-conscious town and community at Chapelton, and we believe we are well on our way to achieving that.

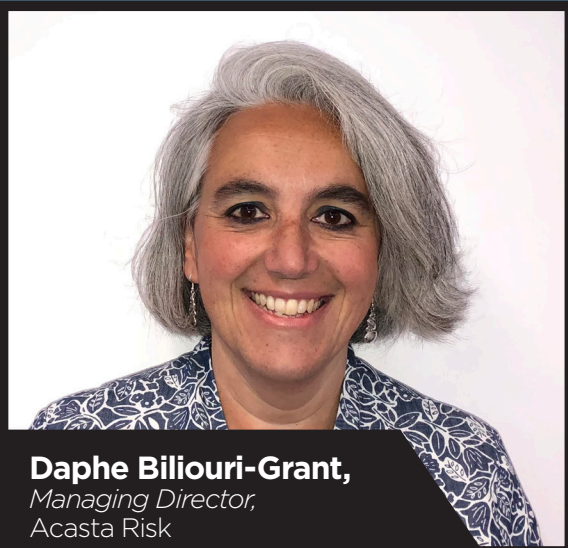
"We have been very particular about the type of businesses that we have invited into the town - our aim is to offer a range of products that makes people want to come to Chapelton to support a local community and to know that they are contributing to a healthier, more sustainable food system.

"Just last month, more than 3,600 people visited our second Farmers' Market of the year. The huge success of the market shows that people want 'real food' that has been locally grown and produced. They want food that not only tastes good but is also good for the environment."

As important as the businesses are to Chapelton, it's the people that make them. Increasingly, the growing business community is attracting exciting and innovative enterprises such as husband and wife team Michael and Natalia McLeod. The couple decided to expand their Aberdeen catering business into a shop and are now the proud owners of Wander and Graze - The Deli, which was one of the first businesses to open at The Boxes retail development, a series of 10 shipping containers located in Burgess Park.

Since opening, The Boxes have proved to be exceptionally popular due to their low cost and ability to sell directly to customers and are now occupied by a wide range of businesses including Replenish and Fit's The Scoop.

Meanwhile, brother and sister team Jodie and Dale Barbour, of locally renowned Breer Pie Co. fame, are the town's latest arrivals, having just taken over the management of Brae, a café located in the heart of the town on Hume Square. It was the huge success of the Breer Pie Co., which they started during the lockdown, that led them to Brae. Their amazing pies - which are made with premium local produce - will be a part of their new venture.



Daphe Biliouri-Grant,
*Managing Director,
Acasta Risk*

Area of expertise?

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) advisory, ESG strategy integration and implementation, ESG training sessions for Board/Senior Executive level and mid-management level, ESG materiality assessments, ESG reporting frameworks, ESG monitoring and evaluation

What should people know?

Companies - regardless of their size or the sector they are operating in - should recognise that 'business as usual' is no longer an option. There is an increasing expectation from both internal (staff, suppliers, subcontractors) and external (investors, shareholders, regulators, clients) stakeholders that every company should increase its positive environmental and social impact and be able to measure and report this impact.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

One of the most common mistakes that companies make is trying to report on their environmental and social impact without having put the relevant strategies in place. It is not possible to measure how your company operates if the right systems are not in place. It is imperative that as a company you need to identify your priorities in regard to your ESG considerations before you can start applying the relevant reporting mechanisms.

What's your top tip?

If you haven't addressed ESG concerns so far, it is important that you start your ESG journey from the beginning. There are no shortcuts in setting up a robust ESG strategy and realising it throughout your operations. There is a route to follow to ensure the successful implementation of your ESG considerations. In addition, don't feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the ESG agenda. ESG as a concept covers several issues under its three pillars and there is no expectation that you can cover every single issue. Take the time to identify the ones that matter to you and concentrate your efforts to address them effectively.



Adam Fairley,
*Development and General Manager,
Specsavers Aberdeen*

Area of expertise?

My job is to look after the day-to-day detail of our operations whilst keeping an eye on where we are going and how to best get there.

What should people know?

Specsavers in Aberdeen is committed to the Young Person's Guarantee, a Scottish Government initiative for 16 to 24 year-olds, and we are proud to be one of the few to provide the Optical Practice Support Apprenticeship. We work closely with local schools to help inspire pupils to consider a career with Specsavers.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

Ignoring local talent. Our partnership with Westhill and Lochside Academies always reminds us of the curiosity and talent many local school leavers have. We've had the privilege to watch lots of young employees flourish with the company and there's so many directions you can take your career in, with support and training from Specsavers.

What's your top tip?

Get in touch with your local 'Developing the Young Workforce' (DYW) representative. They are a fantastic source of support, helping young people to choose the right career path for them and offering advice on how to get there.



Anna Borthwick,
*Executive lead,
Brain Health Scotland*

Area of expertise?

Our mission is to inspire and empower you to protect your brain health and reduce your risk of diseases that lead to dementia. Hosted by Alzheimer Scotland, we provide all you need to protect your brain and to join the effort to understand more about this amazing part of who you are.

What should people know?

We now understand a great deal more about what impacts our brain. For example, that the diseases that lead to dementia start in midlife. These diseases have many causes, some of which we cannot change, such as our genetics, but many of which we can, such as our lifestyle or routine.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

Many people assume that dementia is an inevitable consequence of ageing or family history. In fact, research shows 40% of dementias could be prevented by modifying known risk factors. These include sleep, social isolation, stress and air pollution, as well as other factors.

What's your top tip?

It's never too early or too late to think about your brain health. Take our quick online quiz for personalised advice on how you can boost your brain health - <https://brainhealthplan.brainhealth.scot/start>. We are working in Grampian to open a dedicated health service where you can come for a personal brain health check-up - for more go to: brainhealth.scot



Ozge Cimen,
*Business Development Manager,
MGC Technical Service Ltd*

Area of expertise?

Mechanical Engineering & 3D Cad Software sales

What should people know?

MGC Technical Service is UK's leading SolidWorks reseller. We also provide variety of software products such as CIMCO and ERP. We provide our 3D design services as subcontractors all over the UK and Ireland to design offices with our team of mechanical engineering experts using SolidWorks Professional. MGC Technical Service also provides training for SolidWorks, CIMCO and ERP. We prepare mechanical engineers to become certified Solidworks design engineers to get CSWA and CSWP certifications.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

Most companies consider 'price' as the only factor affects their 'software purchase' as in an amount need to be reduced. However, in today's market, resellers don't only sell software but also technical support & training with the software package. When purchasing a software package for couple of grands, companies need to realise that it's crucial to get the 3D modelling software from reseller who actually specialise in mechanical engineering as well as in the software they're looking for so that they get the most of it for what they're paying for by getting quality training and technical support with the software package they purchase.

Business lessons I've learned



Stuart McPhee,
Director, Siberia Bar & Hotel

What does your company do that others don't?

We are an independent company. The biggest compliment we can ever get is people mistaking us for a chain. We are one place and one place only, and have been for over 40 years. This makes us more agile, more reactive and more able to take advantage of a different set of opportunities not readily available to larger competitors.

What are the most pressing challenges that your industry sector faces today, and why?

The hospitality sector is staring at a more challenging period ahead than it experienced in the pandemic. A lot of businesses are making a lot of hard choices at the moment, inflation, rising cost pressures from every line on the P&L almost, return of business rates, lack of skilled staff and applicants, lower footfall, projected decrease in discretionary spending from the public. All combining to be the perfect storm of the next half of the 2022-23 financial year.

What is the hardest lesson you have learned in your career to date?

Burning myself out. It's important and this took me a long time to do it, but trust those around you. The more you trust them, the more you train and invest in them the easier the world goes around, and you feel less of a weight on your shoulders.

What is the most valuable piece of business advice you have ever received?

No fear. If you don't ask for something, you don't get. Do not be scared to ask for anything, what's the worst that could happen?

Quick fire round

What was your first job?

Leisure attendant at Balwearie High School

When would you like to retire?

I don't ever envisage fully retiring. I always like to keep busy with something.

What did you have for breakfast?

Coffee, coffee, coffee.

Who, or what, inspires you?

My family, my wife and kids.

What's the last book you read / film you saw?

The new film, Elvis, it was spectacular.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date, and why?

Growing and developing our May Day Celebrations and guiding the business through the pandemic.

If you could make one thing happen tomorrow that would benefit North-east Scotland, what would it be?

Wave a wand and bring the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 to the Granite city.

EUROVISION
SONG CONTEST
UNITED KINGDOM 2023



Arne Gürtner

Rosebank to provide £6.3billion of investment to the UK

ACCORDING to a socioeconomic study by Wood Mackenzie and Voar Energy, Rosebank is estimated to create £8.1billion of direct investment, of which £6.3billion is likely to be invested in UK-based businesses.

The report also estimates that a further £16billion could be generated through indirect and induced economic impacts over the field life resulting in a total gross value add (GVA) of £24.1billion.

Rosebank, which is factored into the UK Government's carbon budget, will have a significant impact on the UK production outlook. In 2021, the UK only produced 57% of the volumes required to meet oil demand and 41% of national gas demand.

From first production in 2026 through to 2030 Rosebank could account for 8% of the UK's oil production. Rosebank, which will be tied to the UK gas infrastructure, is projected to produce an average of 21 MMSCF of natural gas every day, equivalent to the daily average use of Aberdeen city.

Arne Gürtner, SVP Upstream in the UK and Ireland said, "Equinor is committed to net zero by 2050 and is ready to invest to bring energy security while also transitioning to lower-carbon energy sources over the coming years.

"Here in the UK we are building the world's largest wind farm, Dogger Bank, and are planning some of the largest hydrogen and CCS projects in the world.

"That said, for the next few decades oil and gas will continue to play a vital role alongside these low carbon

systems. Therefore, while we still need oil and gas, we aim to develop and operate projects such as Rosebank with the lowest possible carbon footprint while bringing the maximum value to society in the shape of UK investment, local jobs and energy security."

Equinor acquired operatorship of Rosebank in 2019 and has since then been working to optimise and mature a development solution for the field, originally discovered in 2004, together with partners Suncor and Ithaca Energy.

The selected development concept for the Rosebank field includes redeployment and reuse of an existing FPSO, which will avoid 250 thousand tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

Equinor and project partners will invest around £80million up front to ensure it will be possible to power operations with electricity.

As a result, Rosebank could become one of the first oil and gas developments on the UK continental shelf to be powered by electricity, reducing the emissions and contributing to the UK government's decarbonisation target of achieving a net zero basin in the UK by 2050.

Rosebank will also have a major impact on local supply chains, industry and jobs according to the report. At its peak and during the development phase, Rosebank is expected to create 1600 jobs, of which 1200 are expected to be UK-based. Across the lifetime of the field, Rosebank will continue to support significant employment with an average of 450 full time employees.

Success brings a bonus

SHEPHERD and Wedderburn achieved 5% turnover growth to £62.2million in the year to April 30, 2022. Net profits (before partner distributions) grew 3% to £26million.

In recognition of their commitment to the firm and its clients, in addition to the firm's performance-related bonus scheme, staff will receive an exceptional bonus of 5% of annual salary.

2021/22 was the first year of Shepherd and Wedderburn's revised three-year strategic plan which focuses on driving growth primarily on core strength areas. These include real estate, infrastructure, corporate finance and the fast-growing and innovative sectors of technology and clean energy, where client activity has been particularly strong over the last 12 months. Current clean energy mandates include work in relation to English Round 4, ScotWind, INTOG and Celtic Sea.

Notable activity this year included acting for TVSquared in its \$160million sale to US-based Innovid, advising Scottish Sea Farms in its £164million purchase of the UK fish farming interests of Grieg Seafood ASA, and acting for Miller Homes in relation to the Scottish property and planning aspects of its acquisition by Apollo Global Management.

During the past year Shepherd and Wedderburn has invested in its office footprint, ensuring premium, highly connected and easily accessible facilities for clients and staff, while aligning with the firm's ambitions to be net zero for greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

The firm has relocated to a new Aberdeen office with capacity to double the firm's staff in the region and has agreed to relocate its Edinburgh headquarters to M&G's Haymarket Edinburgh development in a major investment which will offer a flexible and dynamic working environment and allow for continued growth.

Aker wins Jackdaw contract

AKER Solutions has been awarded a contract from Shell UK for the delivery of a not permanently attended installation for the Jackdaw gas field.

Located east of Aberdeen in the North Sea, the field at peak production rates, could represent over 6% of projected UK North Sea gas production in the middle of this decade.

The award follows completion of front-end engineering and design work awarded in June 2019. The scope includes engineering, procurement, construction and installation of the complete wellhead platform, consisting of a topside and a steel jacket, as well as related load-out and offshore hook-up and commissioning.

Fabrication of the wellhead platform will take place at Aker Solutions' yard in Verdal, Norway, and at its peak the project will employ over 300 people. The steel substructure including a pre-drilling deck is to be delivered from Aker Solutions' facilities to Shell in 2023, and the topside in 2024.



Donna McWilliams

Award for Electra Learning mentor

AN ABERDEEN businesswoman has won the 2022 TechX "Mentor of the Year" award in recognition of her contribution to the Net Zero Technology Centre's TechX Clean Energy Accelerator.

Donna McWilliams, Managing Director of IT change management and learning specialist, Electra Learning, was presented with the award after being nominated by her mentee company, JET Engineering System Solutions.

Electra, which was established in 1997 has offices in Aberdeen, Calgary and Houston, provides an end-to-end IT change service, from consultancy and training to eLearning development and Learning Management System hosting.

Donna joined the business in 2009, becoming its managing director four years later.

JET Engineering, which provides affordable, industry-leading 5G hardware and software solutions for challenging environments, formed part of the fourth TechX cohort, completing a 15-week intensive training and development programme in June, along with 11 other start-up businesses.

Vicky Naylor, Bids and Research Manager, JET Engineering, said: "Donna made a significant difference to the way in which we operate and was instrumental in helping us develop sustainable and effective working practices throughout the duration of the TechX programme.

"She always made herself available to us and dedicated many hours of her time over and above what was expected of her to help us and make sure we were always supported.

"What she shared with us will stay with the whole team as we scale and grow. We cannot thank her enough for all her help."

Northwood to market Brio

THE team at Northwood Aberdeen has been appointed by Brio Retirement Living to market several of their homes at their new Landale Court development.

The new build, age adapted homes are available to rent, part rent/part buy or to buy.

Northwood is a local family run sales and letting agency business established in 2008 with offices in Rosemount, Aberdeen and Inverurie.

There's a world of opportunity out there

Lorraine Neish,
International Documentation Team Leader,
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce



HERE'S a surprising stat.... currently just 10% of UK businesses are involved in international trade.

Not enough UK businesses are trading overseas, and they are not taking full advantage of lower tariffs available in Free Trade Agreements negotiated by the UK Government.

Our research shows that firms trading overseas are more productive, innovative and resilient – and membership of a Chamber of Commerce like ours can help facilitate smooth trade across borders.

The British Chambers of Commerce is working with the whole of its Global Business Network, both within the UK and in 79 markets across the world, to show how we can help firms trade internationally and make the most of preferential tariffs.

A free trade agreement (FTA) set out the rules between two or more nations to reduce barriers to imports and exports among them.

Under a free trade policy, goods and services can be bought and sold across international borders with little or no government tariffs,

quotas, subsidies, or prohibitions to inhibit their exchange.

They aim to make trading easier between those countries.

Rules of origin are one of the most important trading requirements you need to understand and meet if your business buys or sells goods internationally and to be able to benefit from the FTA.

Origin is the economic nationality of the product. Each product traded internationally needs to have an origin. The rules vary for each commodity code, though in general if 50% of the ex-works price is considered as originating in the UK then the goods would be of UK origin.

For goods wholly originating on the UK this is not an issue but with modern supply chains parts come from all over the world. When we were a member of the EU then parts from EU countries counted towards the origin of the goods and in some agreements they still can if they processed in some way in the UK. This is called cumulation and is included in some format in most trade agreements.

The issue UK businesses are having now is that cumulation can only

apply if the goods are processed and there is a list of minimal processes which do not change the origin of the goods.

For example, if Norwegian salmon is imported into the UK and then repackaged for the consumer market, then repackaging is considered a minimal process which does not confer origin, so the goods remain of Norwegian origin.

If the same Norwegian salmon is imported into the UK and is smoked and then repackaged for the consumer market, then the salmon can be considered of UK origin.

Chambers of Commerce have all the tools necessary to help firms new to exporting and allow them to trade with confidence

We are holding a webinar on Wednesday, October 26, at 2pm – “International Trade Week: making the most of Free Trade Agreements”. Email chambercustoms@agcc.co.uk if you would like to attend.

Our ChamberCustoms service can also provide training, advice and brokerage to help goods clear UK borders with as little fuss as possible.



MEET THE MEMBERS



John Niven,
Director,
Orthogonal Engineering

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Orthogonal Ltd, was established in September 2020, with us moving to our new facility in Aberdeen Innovation Park in February 2022.

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

Additive manufacturing also known as 3D printing but on an industrial level. We specialise in producing engineering grade components in high temperature polymers which have tensile strengths similar to aluminium, but far lighter, can operate in highly corrosive environments (oil, grease, acid) and work in continuous temperatures up to 240°C. We also work with companies to provide carbon fibre composite parts, in either woven sheets (resin infused or pre-preg) or chopped fibres to produce incredibly strong lightweight parts, utilising in house engineered and built moulds.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We do business with a wide range of companies from high technology oil and gas (downhole tools), electronic sensor companies to general manufacturing companies who just need jigs or tooling to quickly replace faulty or broken parts. For any type of business, if you have a 3D part

needed in low volume, we can probably provide it at lower cost compared to conventional manufacturing methods.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

Challenging the mindset that additive manufacturing is only for hobbyist parts or simple prototypes. It is now a mature manufacturing solution that can provide engineering grade components with full traceability and manufacturing process control.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

Collaborating with companies who are embracing industry 4.0, who are re-evaluating their supply chains and looking at local manufacturing, with technologies that will reduce waste in the manufacturing process whilst also ensuring product is recyclable at the end of the product lifecycle and reduce overall part cost.



Alan Findlater,
Business Owner,
Luxe Scot

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Luxe Scot was established in 2019. We delayed operating fully due to the pandemic but became fully operational in early 2022.

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

We provide a luxury travel/hospitality experience, offering bespoke packages to suit specific client requirements. Clients can select from our purpose-built luxury vehicle range, offering a tailored concierge service.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We work with a wide range of businesses and individuals, from private clients and celebrities through to the Scottish tourism sector including, leading hotels, sporting events and energy companies. We also work collaboratively with a range of worldwide transport providers, to exceed our client's expectations.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

Due to current economic uncertainty, we are experiencing the same rising sectors costs as are other companies. We also face vulnerability in the tourism sector but as a company we do not

want our challenges to be our client's. We therefore continually aim to invest and expand on what we deliver.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

We have developed excellent relationships with our business partners, offering the luxury travel/hospitality experience. We are operating in an untapped market sector in which we have full understanding of client needs, whilst keeping abreast of emerging trends.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

We are passionate about exceeding our client's expectations at all times. We are proud of not only our relationship with our business partners but also with our team. We have invested immensely, in time and training to empower our team to deliver the luxury travel/hospitality experience to our clients. We take great pride in ensuring we are all on the journey together.

How surveys can help you retain staff

AS ANY business owner knows, happy employees are key to a successful company.

Not only are they more productive, but they're also less likely to leave for another job.

That's why it's so important to understand the needs and wants of your workforce - and one of the best ways to do that is through staff surveys.

Recruitment issues

Right now, recruiting is harder than ever. The economy is struggling, and talented employees are in high demand.

Through staff surveys, you can get valuable insights into what your employees think about their job, your company, and your products or services.

This can help you make necessary changes to retain your best workers and attract new talent.

How the Research Chamber can help

From gathering feedback to monitoring progress, our surveys can measure employee engagement, improve performance, and help enrich your company culture.

By surveying employees on a regular basis, you can track progress and identify areas where improvements need to be made.

Additionally, employee surveys can help to identify potential new products or services that your business could offer.

Analysis that gets to the root of any problems

It is important to analyse survey results carefully to get the information you need.

This means looking at the responses in detail and considering what they mean in the context of your business.

Only by taking the time to do this will you be able to make use of staff surveys to their full potential.

Our expert research team will digest the results and present them back to your leadership team with key action points for you to take away.

Get in touch

By understanding the needs and wants of your employees, you can tailor your offerings to better meet their needs.

In short, employee surveys provide you with the trackable metrics that you need to grow your business.

Email researchchamber@agcc.co.uk if you would like to discuss a potential project with the Research Chamber.



Samira Heshmatzadeh,
Research Executive,
Research Chamber

START YOUR DAY INFORMED



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MORNING
BULLETIN

Scottish customers could pay less for for electricity in energy price shake-up



Households in Scotland could get cheaper electricity than those in the South as the UK Government launches plans for the 'biggest electricity market reform in a generation'.

Ministers are consulting on a series of proposals to improve energy security and cut costs for consumers in the long term, including a model that would see prices set locally, based on the amount of electricity being generated in that area, rather than nationally.

This would mean mean lower bills for those living near wind farms, which are primarily located in Scotland and Northern England.

Get the essential morning briefing straight to your inbox at 8.30am every weekday.

Featuring:

- Local business news
- National business news
- The latest market and energy price news
- Policy updates from those in the know
- Blogs and opinion
- Plus much more!

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Emma Hodge

ITC announces appointment of new Director

EMMA HODGE, who won the Rising Star category at the Northern Star Business Awards this year, started at ITC seven years ago as an Office Junior and through hard work has earned her way up through the ranks. Emma's most recent role as Procurement Manager saw her responsible for over £1.8million in purchases. While carrying out these duties Emma also completed Level 4 and 5 Diplomas in Procurement and Supply and is now continuing with her Level 6 Professional Diploma. The promotion to Director followed a very busy time for Emma when she celebrated her marriage with her family, friends, and work colleagues last month in Oldmeldrum.

Emma commented: "Over the last seven years at ITC I have gained a deep understanding of the company operations as well as had the opportunity to further my business education. I feel these experiences will allow me to meet the challenges of the new role and assist me in helping to build the company up further."

Tracy Clark, Managing Director, commented: "Myself and Ian are delighted for Emma, she is a very talented, focused, and determined young woman and has the drive to push the company growth. She will bring a fresh perspective and voice to the ITC board. We would like to wish her every success in the new role."

Love Touring Expo to pitch up at Aberdeen's P&J Live

THE NORTH-east's ultimate touring and holiday show, Love Touring Expo, is set to pitch up at Aberdeen's P&J Live from October 28-30, 2022, with next year's models of caravans, motorhomes, holiday homes and campervans, giving Scotland its first chance to see all the latest models in one place and secure one for the new season.

Event Organiser, Jamie Taylor commented: "It's so great to be back, with all the uncertainty of the last couple of years, stock levels returning to normal, and no restrictions I'm super confident this year's show will give our audience everything they expect and a whole lot more."

Massive green jobs recruitment drive by ScottishPower

SCOTTISHPOWER has announced its biggest-ever recruitment drive, with at least 1,000 green jobs up for grabs. This follows a record number of green energy infrastructure projects secured by the company in the first half of 2022.

The new roles will be filled by next summer and are across all areas of ScottishPower's businesses and at all stages - from trainees to time-served trades and supporting roles.

Keith Anderson, Chief Executive of ScottishPower, said: "The future of energy in the UK has become a critical issue. Our climate-change ambitions, the importance of energy sovereignty and the cost-of-living crisis all point to a need for speed in delivering more green, more secure and more affordable energy. These three critical needs are not in conflict with each other and, given our unique position in the UK as the only integrated energy company investing in renewables, electricity grids and helping homes to decarbonise, ScottishPower is an engine for growth across the communities we serve.

"The momentum of the first six months of 2022 and our record of achievement now gives us our biggest-ever investment pipeline of green energy assets to help deliver the Government's energy strategy and net zero for the UK.

"As a direct result, we now need at least 1,000 people to join us in new positions over the next 12 months to design, build and operate this green energy infrastructure and that's why we're issuing our biggest-ever call for green recruits right across the country to fulfil our ambitions."

Mackie's on track with new partnership

CALEDONIAN Sleeper guests will be welcomed by a sweet treat from Mackie's of Scotland following a newly-signed partnership between the two brands.

From this month, the Aberdeenshire firm's 35g chocolate bars will be included as a complimentary welcome gift as part of the Caledonian Sleeper in-room offering for guests booked in Caledonian Double Rooms and also Club Rooms. Mackie's chocolate and crisps range will also feature in the on-board room service and Club Car menus, which showcase the best of Scottish produce to more than 314,000 guests each year.

Mac Mackie, Managing Director at Mackie's of Scotland, said: "The Caledonian Sleeper connects some of the UK's best destinations and we're delighted to be providing a taste of Scotland for passengers to enjoy along the way.

"We're looking forward to seeing our single serve bars 'on tour' across the UK, bringing a little lift in every bite."

EVENTS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS

To see our full programme of events, visit agcc.co.uk/events



October 27, 2022 | 08:30 - 10:00

Member £35.00 | Non-member £50.00

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

Speed networking is a fantastic way to grow your network and bring you new business opportunities.

Once you've grabbed a cuppa, take a seat and wait for the bell to ring for the first round. You'll be given around a minute to introduce yourself and tell the person opposite all about your business. At the halfway point the conversation will switch and you'll be in the listening seat. The bell will ring and then you'll move on to meet somebody new.

Over the hour you'll continue to meet everybody one by one and there'll be the opportunity to continue to network and talk to delegates in more length over lunch, allowing you to connect with up to 50 delegates in a short time.

What support does your business need right now? Are you clear on how to get the most out of the Chamber resources at your fingertips?

Get to know us and your potential new business partners of the future at this interactive discussion in which you tell us what's important to your company – or pitch to other new Chamber members – and we provide a forum for knowledge-sharing, idea-generating and networking while connecting you with the experts across the Chamber team to help you take the next steps.

Free to attend, come ready to join in.

MAXIMIZE — YOUR — MEMBERSHIP

November 18, 2022 | 08:30 - 10:00

Member £0.00 | Non-member £0.00

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

Business Breakfast

UK ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Sponsored by



SOLD OUT

September 27, 2022 | 07:00 - 09:00

Member £36.00 | Non-member £55.00

The Chester Hotel

Inflation is running at its highest rate in 40 years, interest rates are rising at the fastest level since 1995 and the cost of doing business has gone through the roof.

So, what does the next 12 months hold? Are we heading for a recession? And what should the Chancellor do in what will be the most important Autumn Budget in a generation?



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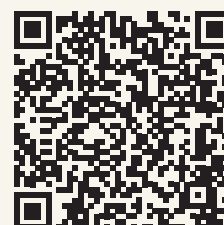
Rarely have our business leaders faced as many challenges as they do today.

Political upheaval, oil price boom and bust, a global pandemic, war in Europe, a labour market crunch, and soaring inflation...the list of challenges goes on.

So how do you lead effectively through so much change?

Join us for this special breakfast with two of the UK's leading change management experts – Chris Matchan and Dr Trevor Morrow – who will share tips on how to lead your workforce through these unprecedented times.

**SCAN HERE
TO BOOK**





Andrew Gunn, Gemma Duguid, Craig Durrand and Andrew Sinclair

ANM Group has announced a number of promotions at its Caithness Livestock Centre which operates out of Quoybrae. The announcement follows a period of significant growth in throughput over the past 18 months. Andrew Gunn (pictured) becomes Centre Manager and Gemma Duguid moves to Assistant Centre Manager. Craig Durrand becomes Office Supervisor and Andrew Sinclair is promoted to Mart Foreman.



Seona Shand

Seona Shand has joined the Scottish Chambers of Commerce as the organisation's International Trade Director, following on from her 12 years with the Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce. Seona will be responsible for building on the international success of SCC and the wider Scottish Chamber Network.



Alastair Moore

AAB Wealth has announced its expansion into Northern Ireland with the appointment of Chartered Financial Planner, Alastair Moore, following the recent merger of AAB Group with FPM. Alastair, originally from County Down, Northern Ireland, previously worked for AAB Wealth for five years in Aberdeen before relocating to Northern Ireland.



Norman Smith and Lee Hepburn

Ann McRobb Associates have secured two new associates. With over 25 years of offshore experience, Norman Smith of Steinish Marine brings a wealth of knowledge and industry expertise in marine supervision and consultancy services to clients in the offshore and renewables sectors. After an extensive offshore drilling career spanning over 20+ years, part of Lee Hepburn's role was to provide the service of competence assessor and internal verifier to his team, which then lead Lee to become involved in the roll out of competency programs and initiatives across offshore operations originally supporting candidates, assessors and internal verifiers.



Claire Yule

Claire Yule has joined Design and Code as their Studio Manager. Claire joins following 15 years of marketing and communications experience for a number of global organisations. Claire will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the studio as well as helping support the development of the business and wider team.



Tony Jones

Tony Jones QC, of Brodies LLP, has been called to the bar in a ceremony conducted at the Middle Temple. Already a Queen's Counsel Solicitor Advocate with rights of audience in Scotland, as a Barrister he will now have sufficient rights to represent clients in all courts in England and Wales.

Looking for export support?





Aberdeen Considine

Aberdeen Considine has announced 11 senior promotions within its expanding legal teams. Nine lawyers, covering a range of legal disciplines including family law, corporate and commercial law, dispute resolution, banking litigation and residential property and conveyancing have been promoted to the position of associate, with a further promotion to senior associate and one to senior solicitor. Elaine Elder (dispute resolution), based in Aberdeen, has been made senior associate, with Tom Main (family law), Danny Anderson (corporate and commercial), Shaju Noor (banking litigation) and Katie Hutchinson (residential property and conveyancing), all also based in Aberdeen, being promoted to associate. Stevie Kelman (residential property and conveyancing) who is based out of the Banchory and Stonehaven offices and Jordan Watt (residential property and conveyancing) in Peterhead and Ellon have also all been made associates.



Peter Smith

Peter Smith has joined Shepherd and Wedderburn as a Commercial Property Partner, heading the firm's real estate team in the Aberdeen office and bringing 19 years' expertise advising clients in the real estate sector. Peter will lead the development of the firm's real estate practice in the North-east of Scotland to further strengthen its presence in the region.



Anna Sellars, Brady Stevens and Luisa Riascos Caibe

Anna Sellars, Brady Stevens and Luisa Riascos Caibe have joined the food & enterprise team at SAC Consulting. Senior Rural Business Consultant Anna works on policy, economic analysis, and rural development. Brady, a Rural Business and Economics Consultant specialises in building natural capital through land use change. Food and Enterprise Consultant Luisa works in LCA modelling and food supply chain resilience.



Emma Gray, Ryan McKay, Laura McDowall, Campbell Clark, Simon Allison and Kirk Dailly

National law firm Blackadders LLP has announced new Board appointments to serve alongside newly elected joint Managing Partners Emma Gray and Ryan McKay. Laura McDowall, (head of the private client group) joins the Board along with Campbell Clark (head of the business services group), who has been reappointed to the Board. Two further partners have been elected to serve on the Board, Simon Allison (head of employment) and Kirk Dailly (head of corporate and commercial). Peter Duff remains as Chairman.



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Dr Linda Wain

London North Eastern Railway (LNER) has appointed Dr Linda Wain as its first female engineering Director. Dr Wain, who has been head of engineering and assurance at LNER for five years, will oversee all aspects of LNER's fleet, future procurement and major engineering projects such as the adoption of digital signalling to ensure customers receive world-class, punctual service.



Andrew Masraf

Andrew Masraf will succeed Richard Foley as Pinsent Masons Senior Partner on October 1. During his 28 years at the firm Andrew has held a number of leadership roles including global head of corporate and, more recently, global head of the firm's transactional services group. As such, he has been instrumental in Pinsent Masons' global expansion over the years.



Ruaridh Hamilton

International energy logistics provider Peterson, part of the Royal Peterson Control Union Group, has announced expansion plans into Australia with the appointment of Ruaridh Hamilton as Australia Country Manager and the opening of a new office in Perth.



Mitch Hepburn

Video production company signal has welcomed Mitch Hepburn to its team as Cameraman and Editor. Mitch has already produced a number of commercials and documentaries for leading brands.



Sven van den Bedem, Nassima Brown, Jason Hendry, Rodney Hutchison and Alfonso Martinez-Felipe

Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group (AREG) has appointed five new board members to strengthen support to members and promote the North-east of Scotland as a world leading destination for the production and use of renewable energy. Sven van den Bedem, Energy Transition Manager, Shell; Jason Hendry, Managing Director for England and Renewables Strategy, Peterson; Rodney Hutchison, Legal Director at MacRoberts LL; and Alfonso Martinez-Felipe, Senior Lecturer, University of Aberdeen. The new appointees join existing Board Directors Jean Morrison (Chair), Gordon McIntosh and Philip Bell. Aberdeen City Council will also be appointing a representative.



TMM Recruitment

Aberdeen recruitment agency TMM Recruitment has grown its team by a third to meet rising demand from clients and jobseekers. A total of nine employees, five hired in the last six months, takes its staff to 32, with new hires specialising in areas including accountancy and finance, supply chain, office support, QHSE, IT and HR recruitment, as well as additions to TMM Recruitment's own administration team. Chief executive Amanda McCulloch said the expansion was part of the company's strategic plan for growth, particularly in the highly technical disciplines of IT and engineering, while allowing TMM Recruitment to meet recruitment demands emerging in the wake of the pandemic.



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Global Underwater Hub

The recently established Global Underwater Hub has appointed its board members. The 10 new members will join Chief Executive Neil Gordon and Chairman Andrew Hodgson. They are: Sue Barr, Chair, Marine Energy Council; Zander Bruce, Subsea Operations Manager, bp North Sea; Bill Cattannach, Head of Supply Chain, North Sea Transition Authority; Sarah Cridland, VP Commercial and Subsea Projects, UK, Med and Caspian - UK Country Manager, TechnipFMC; Neil Douglas, Director, Viper Innovations Ltd; Rear Admiral Paul Halton, Director Submarine Support, Royal Navy; Heather Jones, CEO Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre; Mike Jones, Cchairman, Soil Machine Dynamics Ltd; Tim Sheehan, Head of Business Development, Boskalis Subsea Services; and Benj Sykes, VP UK Offshore, Ørsted.



Bruce Barclay and Stuart Mathewson

Bruce Barclay and Stuart Mathewson joined Patriot International's team in Oldmeldrum. Bruce joins as the new Operations Engineer in charge of rental equipment. Bruce will also be looking to identify new opportunities for growth and he will look to introduce new services to the Oil and Gas and Renewable sectors. Stuart joins as the new Workshop Supervisor, due to continued growth this is a new role for Patriot and they look forward to benefiting from Stuart's knowledge and experience. Stuart's role will be to implement and maintain the highest safety standards, quality of equipment and productivity of the workshop to ensure all their current and future contracts are fulfilled to the highest industry standards.



Lawrence Johnston and David Mackay

A leading energy efficiency charity, Scarf, have formally appointed Lawrence Johnston and David Mackay as joint CEO's, having shared the role on an interim basis since 2020. The co-CEOs will lead the social enterprise's 60-strong team at a pivotal moment in its 37-year history as the country faces unprecedented pressure on energy bills and increased fuel poverty.



Jennifer Cham, Gemma Hills and Emma Sinclair

Addleshaw Goddard has bolstered its corporate and commercial team in Aberdeen with three new senior recruits this summer. Jennifer and Gemma will both be part of the firm's corporate team, with a particular focus on transactions in the energy sector. Jennifer has 15 years' experience with a focus on transactional corporate matters, including M&A, management buyouts and investment deals. Gemma, who joins Addleshaw Goddard from Brodies, has more than 13 years' experience and is involved in all aspects of corporate work including acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures, re-organisations, investments and mergers. Emma joins AG after working in-house in the energy sector for more than a decade, including seven years at Weatherford, one of the world's largest oilfield services companies.

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