

MAY 2023 | CLIMATE CHANGE

BUSINESS BULLETIN

Killing carbon the BrewDog way

James Watt outlines why business should be a force for good.

Page 10

Changing the investment climate on Union Street

It might be lacking shops, but it is certainly not lacking people power.

Page 22

Meet the winners of the 2023 Northern Star Business Awards

Find out who were the winners at the North-east's biggest business celebration.

Page 34

Exclusive:

**Aberdeen set to
welcome Sunday
Times best-seller**



**Aberdeen &
Grampian
Chamber of
Commerce**



Staysure PGA Seniors Championship

Trump International Golf Links, Scotland
August 24 - 27, 2023

EXCLUSIVE LEGENDS TOUR HOSPITALITY VIP CLUBHOUSE TICKETS:

- Exclusive access to Trump International clubhouse
- All-day food, alcoholic & non-alcoholic beverages
- Limited edition tournament gift
- Tournament day admission
- Priority parking

Day Ticket: £250 *per person**

Corporate Table: £2,250 *table of ten**

*Day tickets available Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday.
Subject to availability. Terms & Conditions apply.

BOOK NOW - LIMITED AVAILABILITY
Contact: Lynn Hedley
+44 (0)1358 743300
lhedley@trumpgolfscotland.com

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

The Hub
Exploration Drive
Aberdeen Energy Park
Bridge of Don
Aberdeen
AB23 8GX

T 01224 343900
E info@agcc.co.uk
www.agcc.co.uk

Affiliated Chambers
Moray

Bulletin Team



Editor

Ryan Crighton
T 01224 343926
E bulletin@agcc.co.uk



Advertising

Pauline Western
T 01224 343919
E pauline.western@agcc.co.uk



Design & production

Andrew Taylor
T 01224 343934
E production@agcc.co.uk



Editorial

Cody Mowbray
T 01224 343936
E cody.mowbray@agcc.co.uk

**Not a member yet?
Come join our network!**



Contents

MAY 2023

Focus on **Climate Change**



10

Killing carbon the BrewDog way



32

How failure can make you succeed



34

Meet the 2023 NSBA winners

Regulars

PAGE |

HOT TOPIC

Your thoughts on the burning issues of the day

14

POLICY UPDATE

Ryan Crighton, AGCC

22

TRAINING CALENDAR

Upcoming courses

42

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

Lorraine Neish, AGCC

55

ON THE MOVE

Who is going places in the region?

58

The wind of change blows straight into the face of time

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce currently has around 1,200 member organisations. About 30% of these are engaged in the energy sector and I am yet to meet a single one that is in denial about the direction of travel on climate change.

The Scottish Government draft energy strategy says "...unlimited extraction of fossil fuels is not consistent with efforts to decarbonise". 100% correct of course but a puzzling turn of phrase when we are simply hearing not a single voice asking for unlimited extraction.

The debate is hugely polarised with much of the commentary characterising it as a battle of good versus evil. It is not.

Transition is, by definition, a change of state over time. We cannot simply go from where we are today to a fossil fuel free society.

However, the case that does need to be more clearly made is that, as we move to a position where more of our energy needs can be provided from renewable sources, we aim to provide sufficient domestically produced oil and gas to avoid the need to import.

We are already producing significantly less oil and gas here than in the past but consumption remains high. This has left us ever more reliant on energy imports from other parts of the world. We have gone from being a net exporter of energy just 20 years ago to importing 38% of the energy we used in 2022.

The UK Climate Change Committee accepts that oil and gas will be a part of our energy mix beyond 2050 and opinion polls regularly show that 85-90% of people in Scotland believe that the fossil fuels we still need in the UK should be produced domestically.

We have a clear choice. To produce as much of our required supply as possible here, with full control over the regulatory environment in which it is extracted, protecting and creating high value jobs. Or to import an increasing amount of our energy, with the heavier carbon toll and supply risks that shipping it from other parts of the world carries. The latter option makes little economic sense, and even less environmental sense.

Meantime, it continues to be required for people to travel, heat and power their homes, keep the lights of the nation on. And also for the manufacture of many everyday goods including mobile phones, artificial limbs, life jackets, paints, adhesive, credit cards, clothing, perfume, cosmetics, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, shampoo, glasses, contact lenses and much more.

Making the actions of passionate but ill-informed protestors gluing themselves to motorways and throwing tins of paint at energy company offices all the more ironic! Are they really prepared to give up all of these luxuries in the pursuit of a goal that everyone shares and is working towards?

And let's not forget that this is an economic and social as well as an environmental issue.

Currently in the North-east of Scotland alone, 45,000 people are directly employed in the offshore energy sector. One of the scenarios of mistiming the transition is that this figure could fall by an eye-watering 17,000 by 2030. And that doesn't include the resultant loss of induced employment. That is the price to this region of getting it wrong.

Nicola Sturgeon was recently quoted as saying "I grew up in the 1980s during de-industrialisation – when a Tory government failed to plan for it, and left communities and individuals on the scrap heap. The legacy of that is still with us. We mustn't repeat those mistakes".

She was right but the actions of policymakers must match the rhetoric if history is not to repeat itself.

The promised green energy jobs are not yet available at scale so a premature end to oil and gas operations will mean we lose both the investment, supply chain and skills needed to ensure we retain the very companies that have the expertise and capital to make this a reality.

In a letter to the Chamber, our new First Minister Humza Yousaf talked of a "vision for a just transition in the North-east which will see the region embedded as a global renewable superpower"

However, that's a status that needs to be earned, not just assumed.

Mr Yousaf encouragingly went on to say "I have repeatedly acknowledged that the just transition process is one that will only be effective if achieved via genuine and open dialogue with

stakeholders and workers in the energy industry; we know and learn from experience the damage that can be done to communities if we don't take the people with us. In any government I head, we will never leave people and communities behind. We will invest in people to make sure that they are able to play their full part in the net zero economy. As part of that I would ensure that existing funding is targeted at skills - enabling people to top up their skills so they can access the tens of thousands of good quality jobs that will be available, and to support young people coming into the labour market to work in new low carbon energy industries. I am also conscious of the need to maintain energy security throughout the process of transition and balancing the journey to net zero with our interim oil and gas needs - we do not want to be importing oil and gas from elsewhere with a greater carbon footprint".

At a recent conference, the North Sea Transition Authority told us that more than £200billion could be spent on North Sea oil and gas, offshore wind, carbon-capture and storage and hydrogen projects before the end of the decade. And this region is uniquely placed to deliver many of these.

To this end, the Chamber welcomed a number of the UK government's proposals published on Energy Security/Green Day.

On carbon capture, port infrastructure and green hydrogen production the North-east can lead the way, with our globally recognised energy expertise.

The announcement of the launch of the Track-2 cluster process for CCUS is a positive step forward

towards the Acorn project at St Fergus becoming a reality but this must be delivered at pace.

Support for the first phase of Kintore Hydrogen through the Net Zero Hydrogen Fund - one of the largest projects of its kind in Europe - is very encouraging in terms of placing our region at the centre of some exciting developments in emerging technology and unlocking investment in skills and supply chain.

While the Energy Security Plan restated the UK's commitment to maximising production of UK oil and gas, the overly severe application of the Energy Profits Levy continues to shake investor confidence in the North Sea at this critical juncture. We will continue to engage with the UK Government on a price floor to rebalance this ill-conceived super tax which does little to incentivise energy transition.

If the actions of our governments fails to match their words and they get this wrong, they risk the double whammy of failing to achieve their climate targets while allowing the prize of becoming a global green energy hub slip away from Aberdeen, Scotland and the UK. Not a legacy they want, surely?



Russell Borthwick
Chief Executive

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.



**Aberdeen International
Airport**

Baker Hughes



centrica



First Bus



**ITHACA
ENERGY**



**NEPTUNE
ENERGY**



openreach

P&J LIVE

PETERSON



premiercoaches
... getting you there

**RGU ROBERT GORDON
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN**



SNF



subsea 7

**STEWART
Milne
GROUP**



wood. ZIX
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS



Offshore Europe

SPE Offshore Europe
CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

5-8 SEPTEMBER 2023
P&J LIVE, ABERDEEN

ACCELERATING THE TRANSITION TO A BETTER ENERGY FUTURE

- **Gain industry exposure**
Showcase your new technologies and services to the entire offshore energy value chain to meet evolving energy needs
- **Make connections that matter**
Effectively develop your sales pipeline and meet with leading buyers and suppliers from across the offshore energy supply chain.
- **Keep your business competitive and progressive**
Share ideas, expand your influence and gain the knowledge and skills through our live and online content



**BOOK
A STAND**

offshore-europe.co.uk/agcc



Organised by



50TH
ANNIVERSARY

Welcome to the Chamber



Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa

The Old Course Hotel, Golf Resort & Spa overlooks the infamous 17th Road Hole of the Old Course and is only a short stroll from the heart of the town of St Andrews. Only one hour's drive from Edinburgh and one and a half hours from Glasgow, the resort makes an excellent base for touring the Kingdom of Fife, Perthshire and the Highlands.

T 01334 260300
W www.oldcoursehotel.co.uk
E reservations@oldcoursehotel.co.uk
C Alan Whitelock, Senior Sales – Corporate



Skipton Building Society

Skipton Building Society are experts in financial planning. The company helps its members with savings, investments and mortgages.

T 01224 647532
W www.skipton.co.uk
E Lee.thomson@skipton.co.uk
C Lee Thomson, Brand Leader



PBP Services (Scotland) Ltd

PBP Services (Scotland) Ltd was established in 1968 and provides high quality surface preparation and finishing services, specialising in all types of protective coating applications such as paints and linings specified for the marine, industrial and commercial markets along with a range of fully tailored services in the oil and gas sector, both onshore and offshore.

T 01346 514056
W www.pbpservices.co.uk
E info@pbpservices.co.uk
C Peter Bruce



Plug In Adventures

Chris and Julie Ramsey, founders of Plug In Adventures, are passionate advocates of electric vehicles and sustainable transportation. Their EV consultancy promotes the use of EVs and their environmental benefits. The couple has set a Guinness World Record for the greatest distance on an electric bicycle and has embarked on several expeditions in the past, showcasing the capabilities of EVs.

T 07842 756262
W www.pluginadventure.com
E info@pluginadventure.com
C Chris Ramsey, Director



Rysco Corrosion

Rysco Corrosion is a leading provider of corrosion monitoring services and solutions. With years of experience in the industry, Rysco Corrosion has developed a reputation for delivering high-quality services and products that help clients prevent, manage, and mitigate the impact of corrosion on their assets.

T 01224 454060
W www.ryscocorrosion.com
E dean.smith@ryscocorrosion.com
C Dean Smith, Operations Manager



Hydro Group

With 40 years of commercial experience, Hydro Group is seen as a global leader in subsea connectivity engineering and innovation, supplying bespoke cables and connectors worldwide. Hydro Group design, manufacture and test complete subsea electrical and optical interconnect packages for the oil and gas, marine renewable energy and defence industries.

T 01224 825050
W www.hydrogroup-uk.com
E sales@hydrogroup-uk.com
C Sarah Garden, HR Manager



FD People

FD People are specialists in HR & Employment Law and Health & Safety solutions. Part of the wider French Duncan accountancy firm, FD People have been lucky enough to engage with clients from a diverse range of sectors. Through its quality approach and personable service, the team can assist organisations at various stages of their development journey and deliver tailored solutions to meet their needs.

T 01224 068818
W www.fdpeople.co.uk
E g.whyte@fdpeople.co.uk
C Gill Whyte



Cadherent Ltd

Cadherent deliver first class engineering design, survey and visualisation services to a number of sectors. Headquartered in Aberdeen, Cadherent are a multidisciplinary engineering design and draughting consultancy supported by excellent in-house project management, survey and visualisation departments.

T 01224 914850
W www.cadherent.com
E info@cadherent.com
C David Thomson, Managing Director



MacBeans (Aberdeen) Ltd

Aberdeen's oldest independent coffee roaster and tea specialist. MacBeans stock over 30 single origin and blended coffee's, freshly roasted every day in its onsite roastery, alongside over 60 loose leaf teas from around the world.

T 01224 624757
W www.macbeans.com
E shop@macbeans.com
C Brian Milne, Managing Director



Shackleton Technologies (Holdings) Ltd

Shackleton is a strategic IT consultancy and support company with a passion to help businesses achieve their strategic goals through technology. Shackleton gain an in-depth understanding of client pain points, strengths, and goals to help them achieve their targets through planning, budgeting, and building a solid IT Infrastructure.

T 01382 250900
W www.shacktech.co.uk
E enquiries@shacktech.co.uk
C Karen Naysmith



House of Glenroy Limited

Export of own brand of single malt and blended malt Scotch Whisky, and on site selling in the UK.

T 07881 025102
W www.glenroy.co.uk
E abawi@glenroy.co.uk
C Amir Bawi, CEO



North East Roof & Exterior Cleaning

N.E.R.E.C Ltd is a multi service maintenance business specialising in exterior cleaning across various sectors.

T 07824 443958
W www.northeastroofcleaning.com
E northeastroofcleaning@outlook.com
C Andrew Bruce, Director



Sodexo Energy and Resources

Sodexo Energy & Resources has been delivering catering and facility management services to oil and gas clients in the North Sea for 50 years. Its teams operate on over 45 on- and offshore sites in the UK and UKCS, providing jobs for more than 700 employees.

T 01224 324388
W www.sodexo.com
E ed.morrow@sodexo.com
C Ed Morrow



Resident X

Resident X is a high energy social food hall with four independent street food vendors, an experience - focused mixology bar and sports bar, featuring various light features.

T 01224 637845
E info@resident-x.com
C Joe Martin, General Manager



AKR Fitness

Exercise can be dull, daunting and lonely. At AKR, our welcoming vibe and supportive coaching makes fitness fun and achievable so that "non-gym people" can get in shape, stay on track and live a happier life.

T 01224 597039
W www.AKRFitness.com
E reception@AKRFitness.com
C Mike MacDonald, Founding Director

DON'T
JUST
JOIN,
JOIN IN

Killing carbon the BrewDog way

The climate crisis is a hot topic in mainstream media all around the world.

Scarcely a day seems to pass without pictures of floods or droughts somewhere on the planet.

A number of these tragedies may be down to nature, such as through variations in the solar cycle.

But, since the 1800s, human activity has been the main driver of climate change - primarily due to using fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse-gas emissions which act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth - trapping the sun's heat and raising temperatures.

To keep global warming to no more than 1.5°C - as called for in the Paris Agreement - emissions need to be reduced by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050.

Companies in all sectors are all becoming more aware of the negative impact of their activities, and are taking steps to minimise them.

Many of the largest businesses and financial institutions have already voluntarily announced bold new plans aimed at mitigating global warming.

Tens of thousands of firms around the planet have pledged to meet net zero carbon targets by 2050.

And this won't come cheap.

A recent study found that capital spending to reach net zero emissions would need to increase

from £4.6trillion annually today to £7.4trillion a year over the next three decades.

Among North-east firms leading the way in reducing carbon emissions is brewery and bar group, BrewDog.

The venture - one of the biggest business success stories in the area in recent years - started out in a small way in a Fraserburgh garage in 2007.

BrewDog has expanded massively in the last 15 years to become a multinational operation valued not far off £2billion.

The firm now employs more than 2,600 people worldwide, including more than 250 at its Ellon headquarters.

Its operations around the planet include four breweries, as well as 100-plus bars and venues and five hotels.

And the business is eyeing even more significant expansion in the future, as it wants to become one of the world's five most valuable beer brands in the next few years.

James Watt, Co-founder and Chief Executive of BrewDog, told the Chamber: "We've always recognised that business should be a force for good and, as a company, we are fully focused on leaving the world in a better place than we found it.

"That's why, in 2020, we established a new Tomorrow Charter for our future, with a commitment


to making great beer, and ensuring we have a planet to drink it on.

"Our priority - and it should be the priority for every organisation - is to reduce emissions in our own operations and supply chain.

"We are striving to cut our carbon and have already made significant investments to do just that, with BrewDog being officially certified by Positive Planet as a carbon-negative company.

"But we are aiming higher, with a goal of achieving net zero production emissions from our Ellon facility by the end of 2023."

Mr Watt said it is vital to calculate BrewDog's emissions



DRINK PUNK.
KILL CARBON.



as accurately and realistically as possible to work out the most important actions and changes.

He went on: "To do so, we work closely with Professor Mike Berners-Lee and his expert team at Small World Consulting."

The CEO said important actions being taken by BrewDog include investing in equipment that massively reduces emissions and improves efficiency - generating gas from waste, using only renewable electricity, moving away from bottles to cans and reducing water consumption.

"Last year, we installed an anaerobic digester at our Ellon HQ, which is turning waste water into green gas to be reused in our brewery.

"This bioenergy plant will significantly reduce our carbon footprint, as well as drastically minimise our water usage.

"We are also working on introducing electric trucks to our fleet wherever possible, and working with our distribution partners to use our green biomethane to power these vehicles too.

"For all the carbon we have yet to remove from our operations and value chain, we invest in high-quality, nature-based initiatives, offsetting our emissions in the process.

"For now, we are working exclusively with carefully-selected carbon-removal partners. Our goal is to achieve carbon removal as much as possible through our own endeavours by growing our own forest on 9,308 acres of land in the Scottish Highlands called the Lost Forest - one of the largest reforestation and peatland restoration projects the UK has ever seen.

“

Our priority - and it should be the priority for every organisation - is to reduce emissions in our own operations and supply chain.

"More than one million native broadleaf trees will be planted in total.

"Once complete, it will create a rich bio-diverse woodland ecosystem capable of removing a significant amount of carbon from the atmosphere over the next 100 years."

BrewDog has also been tracking production efficiencies at its HQ and ensuring these are a business priority.

Mr Watt said: "In the past five years, we are pleased to have cut water consumption by 55%, reduced our electricity use by 43% and decreased natural gas use by 46%.

"Our planned investments to reduce carbon emissions and make other sustainability improvements total £50million. Our investment in the Lost Forest is already more than £10million and our anaerobic digester facility cost £12million."

So, what are the future plans for BrewDog in the area of carbon neutral?

The CEO commented: "We plan to make our Ellon brewery completely carbon neutral and zero waste, and are also planning to install a recovery system which will capture the CO₂ produced during fermentation. We will then use it to carbonate our beers.

"More broadly, we are working to embed sustainability into every facet of our business, and ensure every team member strives to reduce emissions.

"From prioritising vegan and vegetarian dishes in our bars, to heightened standards for our supply chain, everything we do has Earth's interests at heart."

**BREWDOG FOREST.
COMING SOON.**



Aurora Energy Services launches with two acquisitions and £100m vision

The launch of a new Aberdeen-headquartered service provider to the international energy sector has kickstarted with the acquisition of two long-established North-east businesses.

Aurora Energy Services has acquired R&M Engineering, following on from its first acquisition in December 2022 of rope access and training specialist Inverness Access Training Services (IATS).

All jobs at IATS and R&M Engineering have been secured and in the next 12 months, Aurora expects to increase its current headcount of around 80 to 200 as it rolls out a programme of strategic acquisitions and invests more capital in organic growth.

Aurora's business plan is to create a £100million turnover international energy services provider over the next five years by continuing to provide services to oil and gas, and in parallel driving forward with the energy transition by targeting the wind, solar, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, pumped hydro and waste to energy sectors.



Colin Campbell and Stefan Jindra

Hutton sustainability recognised in first King's Award for Enterprise

The James Hutton Institute has become one of the first recipients of the new King's Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development.

The award recognises the institute's world-leading research on sustainability across land, food and natural resources and how it's addressing its own sustainability as a major scientific research establishment.

The Hutton, which employs more than 500 scientists across sites in Dundee, Aberdeen and its three research farms, plays a pivotal role in delivering interdisciplinary science across agriculture, food security, ecosystems and resilient communities.



Douglas Craig

Aberdeen group marks 25th anniversary with £1million investment in new global HQ

Craig International is marking its 25th anniversary by moving to new global headquarters in Aberdeen which are double the size of its previous premises.

The global procurement specialist to the energy industry has invested £1million in acquiring and refurbishing 10,000sqft of modern, energy-efficient offices at Craig House on Tern Place in the city's Bridge of Don area. Craig International has also taken a new warehouse at Potterton, on the outskirts of Aberdeen, which is powered by solar panels, in keeping with the company's commitment to reducing its environmental footprint.

Since being formed in 1998, Craig International has evolved from sourcing and supplying essential consumables for rigs in the North Sea to providing third-party procurement of a diverse range of equipment, products and services to energy companies in 55 countries across five continents.

Maggie's Aberdeen celebrates 10th anniversary with fundraising ball

Cancer charity Maggie's Aberdeen is preparing to mark a decade of support with a fundraising ball.

The event, which will be held at the Chester Hotel on Saturday, September 9, will celebrate 10 years since the centre, based in the grounds of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, opened.

And it comes after a successful Valentine's Ball in February which raised an astonishing £142,000 for the charity – with hopes high that the anniversary event will be another fun-filled and successful event.

BBC Scotland Journalist Fiona Stalker has been announced as compere for the evening.



Angus MacDonald

Dons player works with Clan

Aberdeen Football Club player Angus MacDonald has partnered with Clan Cancer Support to raise awareness about bowel cancer and the importance of seeking medical advice if things don't seem right.

Angus shared his own cancer journey and highlighted the services available from Clan Cancer Support at a public event at Clan House on April 20, organised by the charity as part of Bowel Cancer Awareness Month.

According to Cancer Research UK, in the UK the rate of bowel cancer in the under-50s has increased by around 50% since the mid-1990s. It's estimated that one in 15 men and one in 18 women will be diagnosed with bowel cancer during their lifetime.

The Dons defender aims to further support the charity throughout his time in Aberdeen while continuing his work with The Angus MacDonald Foundation (AMF), the charity he founded in 2020 to raise awareness and highlight the importance of early diagnosis, especially to people under the age of 30.

He said: "I never thought as a 26-year-old professional footballer I would have been diagnosed with bowel cancer. It was a bombshell. That just goes to show that it can happen to anyone. It can affect people of all ages.

"Support from charities like Clan play such a significant role. They show that you're not alone through a journey or treatment."

Record year for Aberdeen Science Centre

Aberdeen Science Centre has hosted more than 60 business events over the past year, bringing more than 2,800 delegates to the venue in its best year yet for corporate trade.

Several organisations have held multiple events at the venue, with OPITO choosing the centre as its venue of choice for 17 bookings over the 12-month period.

Aberdeen Science Centre recently underwent a multi-million-pound transformation. It now offers a range of spaces and is equipped with high-tech AV so that it can deliver in person and hybrid events.

Erin Flett, Head of Business Development at Aberdeen Science Centre, said: "The number of corporate events which have been held at Aberdeen Science Centre between April 2022 and March 2023 is testament to the high-quality offering that we have."

Oil group marks 20 years of Forties

Apache has marked two decades of ownership of the giant Forties field in the North Sea.

The US-based operator hit the 20-year anniversary over the weekend of April 2-3 from the date it bought the field from BP.

The company said: "Over the last two decades, we have actively invested in Forties, extending the life of the field. Thank you to our North Sea team for 20 years of hard work and success."

It has been more than 50 years since oil was first struck on Forties, which is one of – if not the – most important fields in the North Sea.

BP sold the "jewel in its crown" to the firm in 2003, when Apache had no track record in the UK North Sea. But the transfer gave Forties a new lease of life.

MentorMatch service

Royal Bank of Scotland has partnered with online mentoring platform Digital Boost Upskilling to launch a new, free to use mentor-matchmaking service designed for the needs of the next generation of Scottish women in business.

Known as MentorMatch, the new service is being developed in response to research which revealed that more than half of female business owners in Scotland feel that a lack of opportunities to be mentored has prevented them from progressing in their career, holding back the Scottish and UK economy.

HOT TOPIC

What is your business doing to reduce its carbon footprint?



As a modern IT and software developer, reducing our carbon footprint is a major priority to us as a business, to our staff and to our clients. We have invested in our headquarters, adopted a hybrid working model, encouraged green transportation, reduced international travel, sourced sustainably, reduced waste, and will soon buy carbon offsets. Working with Zero Waste Scotland, our Aberdeen building has undergone a back-to-brick renovation and is now hugely more efficient thanks to new insulation, LED lighting, and air-source heating. We also installed EV charging facilities, which is a great way to encourage our team to drive electric vehicles and helps to make our HQ an attractive place to visit. Many of our major suppliers have been selected based on their own commitment to sustainability. We do a lot of work with Amazon Web Services for this very reason. We have reduced the amount of waste in our business by selling on old and used hardware where possible and installing recycling facilities throughout our offices. Beyond all of this, we will soon purchase carbon offsets to cover carbon utilisation, and this will help us to reduce our overall footprint. We have taken big steps, and I am committed to ensuring we go even further.

Barry Booth, *Founder and CEO, Intellicore*



ESS is part of Compass Group UK & Ireland which, in 2021, announced a commitment to achieve climate net zero by 2030. Food is a major contributor of carbon emissions and, as the UK's largest food service and facilities management provider, we have an important role to play. We've banned the use of air-freighted fruit and vegetables and our chefs are working to increase the volume of plants in meals, alongside reducing meat to lower the carbon footprint of menus. We work with fantastic Scottish suppliers who share our values for minimising our climate impact. We've taken this a step further by investing in a partnership with the Artisan Grower, a veganic farm in the heart of rural Aberdeenshire. The farmers use sustainable techniques to grow vegetables and salad items exclusively for us, so we don't need to transport these products from elsewhere. We deliver a range of facilities management services for clients and have introduced Toucan chemical-free cleaning which kills more than 99.99% of bacteria and microorganisms. Within the wider ESS business, this has removed 1.5million litres of chemicals and 50 tonnes of packaging waste annually, as well as decreasing emissions from deliveries. This is just a snapshot of the initiatives in place.

Ronnie Kelman, *Managing Director, ESS Energy, Government & Infrastructure*



With logistics representing around 12% of global carbon emissions, we at Kuehne+Nagel know how vital it is that we tackle decarbonisation head-on. Over 98% of our carbon footprint comes from the sea, road, rail, air and warehousing services we provide. Back in 2020, we were one of the first in our sector to set a validated science-based target to reduce our carbon footprint by 33% by 2030, and since then we've been encouraging our customers and suppliers to join us on this journey. We're investing in the latest technologies like lower-carbon fuels for shipping and aviation, trialling zero-emission trucks in our networks, designing low carbon warehouses and partnering with our customers to optimise their supply chains and design out carbon. To help our customers make more informed decisions, we've developed tools like SeaExplorer, which provides visibility on carrier sailings and routings that can be selected based on carbon impact and coupled these with simple solutions such as printing the emissions from each job shipped on all of our sales invoices. From our board to our supply-chain experts, through to our network of local environmental champions making a difference on the ground, we're rewarding and recognising sustainability excellence across our business.

Simon Ross, *National Pricing Manager, Kuehne+Nagel*



As a business, we have carbon reduction targets for all operations across the world. Our aim is to be a net zero carbon business and have best-in-class offices for all regions by 2030 – relocating from carbon-heavy, poorly-insulated offices to new more energy-efficient buildings is key to achieving this. The size of the office is also important. We continually look at new working practices across our global network and are able to reduce our office size, contributing further to reducing energy demand and our carbon footprint. In Aberdeen, we secured a new 1,500 sqft suite on level two in TMSq, Marischal Square. The move not only allows the team to work in state-of-the-art office space, but it also means we're closer to better public transport links, reducing our reliance on travelling by car. The building's strong environmental credentials were a key factor in CBRE selecting it. It has a BREEAM excellent rating and EPC A rating – ranking it the best of any office building in Aberdeen with sustainability features and technology embedded throughout. As well as using the services of our in-house project and cost-management teams, we committed to appointing local contractors and suppliers to minimise the impact on the environment. Together with accessibility to local service providers, cafes and wellness facilities, it underpins our commitment to our environmental and social strategy and improves the workplace experience for our people.

Roddy Morrison, *Director*, CBRE's Aberdeen office



Sustainability is at the heart of everything we do at Recycle Scotland. As part of Space Solutions (Scotland), our approach to sustainability and carbon reduction is built on three pillars – what we do in our organisation, how we work with our clients, and how we communicate both internally and externally. Within our business, we have an environmental and sustainability group who benchmark our carbon emissions and develop a carbon-management plan to help drive forward initiatives and continuously reduce our environmental impact. We have committed to reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and we are currently working towards achieving this by following five key principles – a sustainable estate, a sustainable travel policy, promotion of a sustainable service delivery, a sustainable and knowledgeable workforce and, lastly, communication of our work. As well as reducing our own carbon emissions wherever possible, we advise our clients of the best approach to sourcing or recycling their workplace furniture, which enables them to also reduce their own carbon footprint. We are a circular-economy business – remanufacturing, reprocessing, reusing, and repairing to create new products from old and to keep workplace furniture in the economy for as long as possible. We reuse and recycle 97.4% of all the furniture and component parts we collect, with an aim to seeing the value in everything and wasting nothing.

Lewis Myler, *Sales and Project Support*, Recycle Scotland



As a research institute, we're in a unique position when it comes to our carbon footprint. Our activities span across two campuses and three research farms, with livestock, glass houses, crop trials and laboratories alongside traditional offices. It's a complex operation. Our goal is to work towards net zero by 2035 for scope one and two emissions, and 2040 for scope three. Since 2019, we've already reduced our emissions by 15% through more efficient buildings, replacing lighting, changing our ultra-low temperature freezer settings, and using wind, solar and biomass heating, as well as re-forestry and restoring peatland at our Glensaugh research farm. Our climate-positive farming initiative at Glensaugh will showcase HydroGlen – a farming community entirely run on renewables, largely through green hydrogen. In Aberdeen, we're considering options for heating, including using heat recovery from wastewater. We also recently signed up to the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework, ensuring our lab spaces have the lowest carbon footprints, reducing use of plastics, water, energy and other resources. It's not just about our buildings. A lot of our research is also about mitigating and adapting to climate change, such as developing drought-resilient crops, protecting biodiversity and how land use affects soil carbon stocks. Through our Just Transition Hub project in Aberdeen, we'll be helping build capacity and share expertise in all these areas.

Stefan Jindra, *Sustainability Co-ordinator*, The James Hutton Institute

UEFA to give out extra European Cup Winners' Cup medals

As part of the Gothenburg 40th Anniversary celebrations planned for May, Aberdeen FC and AFC Heritage Trust have revealed that UEFA has supplied additional European Cup Winners' Cup medals for those who did not receive one.

On that historic evening in May 11, 1983, only the starting 11 players and five substitutes received winners' medals.

However, following efforts by Chris Gavin on behalf of the AFC Heritage Trust, along with UEFA delegate and former Dons Chief Executive Duncan Fraser, UEFA has agreed to provide six additional medals.

They go to Manager Sir Alex Ferguson, Assistant Manager Archie Knox and midfielder Dougie Bell who missed out on a place in the squad due to injury.

In addition, a medal will be presented to the Donald Family in recognition of then Director Ian Donald, and his father and late Chairman Dick Donald. The same accolade will also be granted posthumously to former Vice-Chairman Chris Anderson.

And a medal will also be presented to the family of Teddy Scott. The legendary figure, who was an Aberdeen player, trainer, coach and eventually kit manager retired in August 2003 after serving the club for almost 50 years. Teddy played a huge part behind the scenes during the Dons success in the 1980s.

Dandara retains five-star customer satisfaction

Respected independent developer Dandara has achieved five-star status in the latest Home Builders Federation (HBF) annual New Homes Survey. This marks the third consecutive year the company has achieved this, after entering for the first time in 2020.

This news comes following a period of growth for the company, which now has notable developments and a proven track record in Scotland, the Central, Eastern and Southern areas of England, Jersey, the Isle of Man and most recently South Wales.

Trevor Dempsey, CEO of Dandara, comments: "To retain our five-star rating for the third year in a row is testament to the customer experience, build product and quality, which has been part of Dandara's DNA for three decades.

"Following controlled expansion over the last couple of years, it is fantastic that our customers have once again recognised the company in this way as they ultimately sit at the heart of everything we do. We are proud to be building fibre homes across the UK and are determined to maintain the first-rate quality that Dandara is known for as we continue to grow."



David Nimmons and Robbie Moulton

Retail first for Fresh Mex

All Asda stores across Scotland are now stocking three products from new Scottish supplier FreshMex, in what is the award-winning restaurant's first retail venture and listing.

Born from an Aberdeenshire farmers' market food stall in 2015, FreshMex has two restaurant sites in Aberdeen and Edinburgh, and a huge market share in the Deliveroo delivery sector of each city - having won Scotland's most ordered dish, the FreshMex Burrito - for four years running.

The family business was founded by Robbie Moulton in 2015 when he was only 22.

His passion for vibrant and fast Mexican-American cuisine following a road trip across the US, led to Robbie establishing FreshMex which he runs with his older brother Chris.

"With a core emphasis on fresh, natural ingredients and no freezers or microwaves used in the production of our diet-friendly menu, we have officially become Scotland's favourite burrito of choice, serving over 150,000 annually," explains Robbie Moulton

Robbie continued: "We are thrilled to secure our first retail listings with Asda. Our products really encapsulate our fresh and natural ethos, the two 30g sachet rubs and our 195g jar of salsa use the exact flavour profiles of the ingredients used throughout FreshMex recipes, with the majority of our restaurant dishes containing these specific seasonings.

"Our 55-strong team put their passion and love of fresh food into preparing our award-winning street food menu daily, resulting in the best tasting products for our diners - and now Asda customers across Scotland!"



TGT

We're out of time. **Not options.**

TGT is a different kind of company. Our unique technology and fresher thinking take us beyond the traditional restrictions of the wellbore, seeing more, seeing further. We create powerful diagnostics that help you to keep wells safe, clean and productive.

Our diagnostics help operators and regulators achieve their NetZero targets by revealing inefficiencies in energy-intensive operations and locating sources of greenhouse gas. Equipped with the right information, our customers can take evasive action to improve energy efficiency, decarbonise operations and reduce environmental impact.



#DecarboniseWithDiagnostics

tgtdiagnostics.com/decarbonise/

MEET THE



Alison Paton,
Managing Director,
Align People HR

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Align People Human Resources was formed in April 2019 by myself, Alison Paton. We are just about to celebrate our fourth birthday!

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

We provide outsourced HR and recruitment support on a flexible basis. For us, it's HR with a difference - typically HR companies focus on employment compliance, however we go beyond that. Our purpose is to support growing SMEs build great places to work where their people and business can flourish. We also recently launched our leadership programme which supports individuals transitioning into people management roles by developing lifelong leadership skills.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We work with a variety of small and mid-size enterprise businesses across all sectors, with a particular emphasis on those who are newly established and are growing. We understand the challenges that SMEs face, especially the challenges around attracting and retaining loyal, talented employees.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING YOUR BUSINESS AT THE MOMENT?

Helping our clients find the right people for their business can be quite a challenge. As mentioned previously, recruitment is particularly difficult at present; the main reasons being Brexit which has resulted in a shortfall of 330,000 workers in the UK, as well as a knock-on effect of the pandemic.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

There are so many ambitious businesses out there at the moment, who care about their employees and want to take their people with them on that journey as the business evolves. That's exactly where we can add value and make the most of these opportunities. We can advise our clients on the best ways to involve everyone in driving the business forward, to create a collaborative and inspirational working environment.



Glen Cairns,
Managing Director,
Glen Cairns Video Productions

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Glen Cairns Video Productions started in August 2018. I then went on to work for Aberdeen Football Club as the Club's videographer from February 2020 to September 2022, where I then went self-employed with my business. It's been a great ride so far!

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

The great thing about this job is that my office could be on a golf course during sun rise, behind the goals in a football stadium or at the top of a wedding isle. The opportunities are endless with what people are wanting to be captured, and that's why my clients are so varied.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

Customer satisfaction. I am dealing with people that are passionate about their business (like myself) and events, and when I get a positive response from a client after seeing how their event was shown through the promotional video - the buzz they get from seeing their event shown in a positive way - gives me a buzz from seeing their reaction. Their vision is my passion.

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

As a newbie, the exposure! I have been told by many people from different circles the positive impact you can gain to your business by joining the Chamber, and it has a lot of great companies I want to surround myself with.

MEMBERS



Andrew Bruce,
Owner,
North East Roof Cleaning

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

The business was first established back in 2020 by me and my brother.

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

Our company has a large list of services we offer, making us a great fit for routine or one-off maintenance.

We offer exterior cleaning services for commercial, industrial and domestic properties from the ground up including drone surveys, surface sealing, building restorations and soft washing.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We aim to help anyone that is in the property business as well as various other sectors who are looking for any specialist cleaning maintenance. We offer a free survey to see how we can help you improve or maintain a property.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

The biggest challenge for us right now is getting certain materials after Brexit and CV19 pandemic.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

Our biggest opportunity would be taking on a school or work experience student through DYW. This is great

for us as we can see how the different generation can make an impact on our business by having an open opinion on the way we do things. Since taking on our work experience person, it has shown how well we work together and has raised multiple questions on how we can improve the services we provide.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE AND PROUD OF?

We are passionate about delivering our services and seeing the impact it has on their business and property, large or small. We are proud to have grown significantly within the past couple of years and have taken on various staff to cross train them in multiple fields of work so they can grow not only in the workplace but within themselves.



Drew Carmichael,
Director,
Recycle Scotland

WHEN WAS YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHED?

Recycle Scotland was formed in 2010 as part of Space Solutions (Scotland) Ltd, working in partnership with other divisions in the company to deliver workplace solutions across the UK.

WHAT DOES YOUR BUSINESS DO?

We operate a business model where we take redundant workplace furniture from one business and match it with companies looking to source a sustainable furniture solution. With circular economy principles at the heart of our business, we source and sell quality used (and often re-engineered) furniture, providing an environmentally friendly and fully traceable recycling solution for the removal of all surplus office furniture. Fundamentally, we help businesses drive greater levels of direct reuse of office furniture and other assets.

WHAT SORT OF COMPANIES DO YOU DO BUSINESS WITH?

We partner and work with a wide variety of companies and sectors. These range from public sector bodies such as local authorities, schools, and universities, to SME's, large corporates, and charitable organisations. Our ability to create strong relationships and provide cost-effective solutions means that the nature of our client base is extremely varied.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE AT THE MOMENT?

At Recycle Scotland, we pride ourselves on our agility, customer experience, and service delivery to overcome whatever challenges there might be in the economy and/or marketplace. It is important for us that clients engage with us at the start of their office refurbishment journey and not as a last-minute solution. This remains our key challenge – engaging with clients at the beginning of their change process so that we can influence and add as much value as possible.

AND THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY?

We feel that there is an opportunity to make a real difference within our industry. There are many businesses that lean on industry experts, such as our team, to help them find circular, sustainable, and cost-effective solutions in relation to their excess or redundant furniture. Our customer-focused and solutions-based service means that we are at the forefront to support the inevitable change from a linear to a circular economy within this space – which is an opportunity that excites me.



Aberdeenshire firm donates more than 30 computers

ACE Winches is playing its part in setting the next generation up for success after donating dozens of computers to a North-east secondary school.

The Aberdeenshire company, a global leader in lifting, pulling and deploying solutions across multiple sectors, has handed over 33 computers to senior pupils at Turriff Academy to furnish a classroom in the school's technologies department.

The donation to Chairman Alfie Cheyne's old school comes after the company invested in new IT equipment – leaving a number of surplus machines which bosses wanted to go to good use.

ACE Winches Chief Compliance Officer Valerie Cheyne said: "Rather than send the computers to landfill, we wanted to give something back to the community. The machines are all in perfect working order with plenty of life left in them, and it makes sense for the youngsters at the academy to get the use of them."

Thirteen projects enjoy INTOG success

Crown Estate Scotland has announced the results of the world's first leasing round designed to enable offshore wind energy to directly supply offshore oil and gas platforms.

13 projects, from businesses including BP, Harbour Energy and TotalEnergies, were successful.

There were 19 applications for the INTOG (innovation and targeted oil and gas) leasing.

The aim was to attract investment in innovative offshore wind projects in Scottish waters, as well as help decarbonise North Sea operations.

Developers could apply for seabed rights to develop offshore wind projects that either reduce emissions from the North Sea oil and gas sector - by supplying renewable electricity directly to oil and gas infrastructure (TOG), or consist of small-scale innovative projects of 100MW or less (IN).

Scottish design agency of the year takes on Tartan for V&A Dundee

Scottish Design Agency of The Year – Form Digital – won a competitive pitch to create the visual campaign identity for Tartan, the first major exhibition of its kind curated by Scotland's Design Museum, V&A Dundee.

Marking V&A Dundee's 5th anniversary, this evocative new exhibition offers a radical new look at an instantly recognisable textile and pattern, the first exhibition in Scotland in 30 years to focus solely on tartan.

Form Digital, a modern creative agency specialising in visual identity and design with offices in both Aberdeen and Glasgow, has racked up an impressive 28 awards since 2014 and work with clients including Glenmorangie, Glenrothes Whisky, Atholl Estates, TAQA and Finn Thomson Whisky to name a few.

The prestigious exhibition campaign will be designed and developed by Form Digital in partnership with Flux Video and motion designer Tiernan Crilley, encompassing a brand identity across display, sound, motion, merchandise and more.

Tartan runs from April 1, 2023 to January 14, 2024 and will bring together a dazzling selection of more than 300 objects from over 80 lenders worldwide, illustrating tartan's universal and enduring appeal through iconic and everyday examples of fashion, architecture, graphic and product design, photography, furniture, glass and ceramics, film, performance and art.

Cameron Fraser, Managing Director at Form Digital said: "It's a huge honour for Form Digital to be entrusted with such an illustrious project celebrating one of the world's greatest exports. Our talented team of creatives is busy crafting an exciting and dynamic design campaign for our nation to be proud of and we can't wait to deliver this exhibition with V&A Dundee."

Energy hub gets funding

ETZ Ltd has secured £1.25million from BP and £2million support from Scottish Enterprise to begin construction of Scotland's first Energy Incubator and Scale Up Hub (EISH).

The remainder of the funds for the project will be supported through the Scottish Government's Energy Transition Fund.

The hub will be the focal point of the Innovation Campus, one of five specialist campuses being developed across the Energy Transition Zone which will become the largest dedicated energy transition complex in Scotland.

The hub will be located at Hareness Road in Aberdeen's Altens Industrial Estate.

Subject to planning permission, work is expected to begin on the facility this summer with opening planned for summer 2024.



Circularity Gap Report:

The first report of its kind for Scotland and a huge step forward in our circular ambitions.



If we're serious about reaching net zero, as a nation, we must look at how we consume and radically change our habits. The first step to achieving this is to measure our circularity over time and establish a benchmark – which is why Zero Waste Scotland recently commissioned Scotland's first Circularity Gap Report.

By analysing how materials flow through our economy, we can understand the volume of resources that are being 'cycled' back into use. That's what's known as Scotland's Circularity Metric.

Zero Waste Scotland commissioned Amsterdam-based pioneers, Circle Economy, to develop the Circularity Gap Report that highlights the urgent need to transition to a more circular economy. It found that Scotland is currently **only 1.3% circular**. While that doesn't mean that 98.7% of the materials flowing through the country's economy are wasted, it does highlight the need for urgent and radical system and behavioral changes across the board. Crucially, it also showcases the huge scale of opportunity that we have in Scotland to embed circularity.

The Circularity Gap Report outlines ideas and interventions that could help achieve Scotland's net zero ambitions and **reduce its carbon footprint of consumption by over 40%** while making significantly deeper contributions to its emissions

targets associated with production and manufacturing activity.

It highlights **seven scenarios** that could increase the country's circularity and, in turn, regenerate vital ecosystems as well as building on Scotland's climate leadership.

1. These are: Building a circular built environment – Optimising housing stock expansion, increasing building occupancy, and creating a resource-efficient building stock.
2. Nurturing a circular food system – Endorsing a balanced diet and adopting sustainable food production.
3. Championing circular manufacturing – Implementing resource efficient manufacturing and employing R strategies (remanufacturing, refurbishment, repair, and reuse) for machinery, equipment, and vehicles.
4. Rethinking mobility – Embracing a car-free lifestyle, flexible work, and creating a resource efficient electric vehicle fleet.
5. Welcome a circular lifestyle – By embracing a 'material sufficiency' lifestyle such as reducing textile consumption and cutting back on long distance travel.
6. Tackle Scotland's import footprint – Shifting away from high-impact imports.

7. Advancing circular decommissioning – By reusing valuable materials decommissioned from energy infrastructure in hydro and other sectors. We recognise the expanded Port of Aberdeen (South), as a new multi-use harbour, as having potential to contribute to decommissioning activities in the offshore wind sector, providing capacity and expertise in and around the local supply chain.

Beyond the benefits to the environment, the report suggests that **59,000 green jobs** could be created and that, by shifting the tax burden from labour to resource use and pollution, the scenarios modelled could potentially **generate £35billion** for Scotland's economy.

With these key findings and interventions, we're reinforcing why it's so crucial that we all coordinate action to accelerate our transition to a circular economy.

We've come so far in the last few years and if any country is armed with the passion and innovation needed to make real change, it's Scotland. Our call to action is louder than ever: let's embrace circularity and close the gap on the sustainable future we all want to see.

For more information search 'Circularity Gap Report' at www.zerowastescotland.org.uk.

Union Street might be lacking shops, but it's certainly not lacking people power

"It's a sh*thole."

And with those three words, a hush descended upon the room. Nearly 200 business people stunned into silence.

The remark was one of many gathered from passers-by for a short film capturing the esteem in which Union Street was held by the people of Aberdeen.

That was in November last year, after an extended oil downturn, followed by the CV19 pandemic, had left the Granite Mile a hollowed-out version of its former self.

It was played at the beginning of an emergency summit organised by Aberdeen Inspired and Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce; a warts and all look at what the street had become.

I was in the room, and it was a sobering watch. Like most of us, I was familiar with the vacant units, but the bit I found hardest was the fact that people had clearly fallen out of love with our city centre.

It was a moment for reflection, thinking of the missed opportunities of years gone by, but also time for a reset.

I was one of the afternoon speakers at the summit and pitched an idea. It was far from perfect, and delivered in a clumsy powerpoint which rambled on (bizarrely, upon reflection) about Lizzo and Liz Truss. It's a long story...

Anyway, the idea was a new approach to reversing decades of decline on Union Street; a coalition that brought everyone together for

a unique, community-led effort to deliver positive change.

Central to that proposal was getting the occasionally sceptical wider population of Aberdeen to back the idea and share their thoughts and hopes, without writing it off before it got started.

Swift work by Aberdeen Inspired and the Chamber, with support pledged from Aberdeen City Council, Opportunity North East and Shell, brought the idea to life - and a few weeks ago, Our Union Street was born.

The partners wanted a unifying and collaborative figure to lead the effort, and approached Bob Keiller,

who agreed to provide his services for free.

He has since set about building an army of volunteers drawn from all corners of Aberdeen to help arrest decades of decline in the city centre.

But first, we wanted to listen. We'd heard what people thought of the street in that video. We now wanted to hear what they wanted the granite mile to become in the years ahead.

It is quite humbling to say that, as I write this, more than 5,000 ideas have been submitted.

And then it dawned on me why people had used such inflammatory language to describe the street. It was because they care.

People care about the state of Union Street; they care that many retail units sit empty and uninviting, they care about graffiti, litter, dirty buildings, weeds growing on balconies and the general upkeep of the street.

They want Union Street to be a safe, busy, energetic, thriving thoroughfare that compares favourably with the best of UK's small cities.

And they want somebody to take responsibility for addressing these challenges and improving the street; a consistent, concerted effort with plans, actions and progress.

To date, there has been no single body that has the remit to take on these challenges and opportunities. That's what the brand-new organisation is for.

“

Union Street can, and will, get better. But it will take a community effort to do it. It feels like we are building one, and everyone who wants to will get the chance to play their part.

We need to be realistic. We can't turn back time and undo any historic actions and decisions - we can only start from now and make changes that improve the future.

It's not a sh*thole. It's a city centre in transition, like many others up and down the country.

If it feels a little more down-trodden than other peer cities, that's because we've had greater challenges to deal with since the oil downturn to 2015.

But it can, and will, get better. But it will take a community effort to do it.

It feels like we are building one, and everyone who wants to will get the chance to play their part.



Ryan Crighton,
Director of Policy
and Marketing,
Aberdeen & Grampian
Chamber of Commerce





The Pole to Pole EV Expedition: A local couple's global mission to showcase electric vehicle potential

The Pole to Pole EV expedition is an extraordinary adventure being undertaken by Aberdeen-based couple Chris and Julie Ramsey. Their mission: to travel 17,000 miles from the 1823 Magnetic North Pole to the South Pole in an electric vehicle (EV) to demonstrate the capabilities of sustainable transportation. As local heroes taking on a world first challenge, Chris and Julie are determined to inspire change in the way people perceive electric vehicles and their role in creating a more sustainable future.

The couple's decision to embark on this adventure is driven by their passion for raising awareness about the capabilities of EV's and the importance of sustainable solutions. As they navigate the harshest terrains across the planet, Chris and Julie are proving that electric vehicles are not just a viable alternative for daily commutes but can also withstand the demands of extreme long-distance journeys. The Pole to Pole EV expedition demonstrates that embracing electric vehicles is not a sacrifice, but rather an essential step towards a more environmentally friendly future.

As of the May Bulletin, the couple has successfully reached Canada after braving the unforgiving Arctic conditions. Despite being a local couple, Chris and Julie's journey has garnered worldwide attention, showcasing the global significance of their mission. The BBC among other numerous publications have all played a part in telling the Pole to Pole story.

Chris Ramsey said: "Our goal is to challenge the common misconceptions surrounding electric vehicles. We want to show that EVs are more than just a solution for short commutes; they are versatile, reliable, and can take us on remarkable journeys, conquering even the most extreme conditions. By pushing the boundaries of what EVs can achieve, we hope to encourage a broader adoption of

electric transportation, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable world."

As the journey continues, Chris and Julie will engage with local and international communities, sharing their experiences and emphasising the potential of electric vehicles. By doing so, they aim to empower people to make a difference and contribute to the global effort to protect our planet. Best of all, you can follow their journey in close to real-time via an interactive map dedicated to showcasing the couple's progress.

The Pole to Pole EV expedition is currently only part funded. As Chris and Julie continue to navigate the world in their electric vehicle, they are seeking sponsorship to complete this remarkable adventure. Local businesses and individuals have a unique opportunity to contribute to a cause that could have a lasting impact on the way we perceive EV's.

By sponsoring the Pole to Pole EV expedition, you will be supporting a mission that seeks to inspire others to make a difference and embrace sustainable alternatives. Every contribution, no matter how small, will bring Chris and Julie closer to completing their extraordinary journey and achieving their goal of promoting electric vehicles as a crucial element of a more sustainable future.

If you would like to support Chris and Julie during the Pole to Pole EV expedition, you can contribute by visiting their dedicated GoFundMe page or following their journey on social media channels. Together, we can demonstrate the capabilities of electric vehicles and take a step toward a more sustainable world. Join Chris and Julie during the Pole to Pole EV expedition and be part of this incredible journey for a better future.

Cleaning vessels and tanks: It's dirty work, but it gives us all a clean conscience

Simon Gibb,
Chief Executive,
Sureclean Ltd



We are Sureclean, and we've been cleaning vessels and tanks for many decades. It's a service that not many people know about, and it's certainly not one that many people want to do. But we are here to tell you that it's a rewarding job that has allowed us to make a positive impact on the environment.

As the go to industrial cleaner company, we have the largest fleet of specialised equipment, and largest pool of tank and vessel cleaners. Our job involves cleaning and maintaining a variety of tanks and vessels, including fuel tanks, oil storage tanks, slop, and water tanks. These tanks and vessels are used to process and store oils and liquids, and over time, they can become contaminated with sediment, sludge, and other materials that can impair their function and pose a risk to health and safety.

Cleaning a tank is a dirty and hazardous job that requires extensive training and experience to ensure that the cleaner and the environment are protected. We use a variety of techniques and equipment to clean these vessels and tanks, including ultra-high-pressure water blasting, high pressure jetting, vacuuming, and chemical cleaning. Safety is our top priority, and we take every precaution to ensure that we don't pose a risk to ourselves or others.

One of the things we love about our work is that we're able to make a positive impact on the environment. By cleaning vessels and tanks, we're able to prevent leaks and spills that could contaminate the planet's ecosystem and water supply. We're also able to ensure that these vessels and tanks are functioning properly, which helps to prevent accidents and ensure that the materials stored in the tanks are being used efficiently.



We are constantly innovating to advance environmental sustainability, reduce waste and protect the planet for future generations.

Another thing we love about our job is the sense of satisfaction that comes from a job well done. There's nothing quite like seeing a tank that was once covered in sludge and grime now sparkling clean and ready to be used again. It's a dirty job, but it's one that has a tangible impact, and that's what makes it so rewarding.

We are constantly innovating to advance environmental sustainability, reduce waste and protect the planet for future generations. It's a complex task, which requires the efforts of individuals, communities, businesses, and governments. You can help us protect and clean the environment and make a positive difference by raising awareness and encouraging more people to act.

If you want to make a positive difference to the environment, and if you're looking for a job that's dirty but rewarding, consider becoming a tank cleaner. It's not a job for everyone, but for those of us who do it, we wouldn't want to do anything else. At the end of the day, we want to share our knowledge and experience with others in the industry so that more people can also take the bold steps needed to really protect the environment.

Business lessons I've learned



Emma Stephen,

Partner - Commercial Property, Stronachs

What does your company do that others don't?

We build long lasting connections with clients. Our solicitors are embedded in their local communities and endeavour to get to know clients, their lives and their businesses. We have a strong emphasis on training our staff and we invest time in constantly developing our lawyers and trainees. This means the advice we can give is bespoke and provides additional value.

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

The legal sector faces many similar challenges to the UK economy including rising costs, pressures on wages and skills shortages. There are added pressures in Aberdeen with the unpredictability of the energy sector. This has an impact in most aspects of our business, however, we look to capitalise on the opportunities that arise with the move to net zero with our experience in renewables, for example.

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

Being a working mother is about a million times harder than expected. Having to make compromises with your career to prioritise your children can be challenging when you are ambitious.

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

I have a few! Be entirely honest (within your professional boundaries!). Treat other people how you'd like to be treated. The only thing that is constant is change and don't worry about things that haven't happened yet.

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

Getting a car parking space when I was a Senior Associate! No, I have a couple, I've enjoyed working closely with a development company from its incorporation for over 12 years and playing a small part in helping the company grow. I also love supporting the trainees and I feel very proud when I see them go on to thrive

Quick fire round

What was your first job?

Paper girl. Then I worked for years at Simpsons in the restaurant and bar.

When would you like to retire?

When I've made enough money to spend most of the year abroad!

What did you have for breakfast?

Fruit and Fibre and a smoothie.

Who, or what, inspires you?

I enjoy Steven Bartlett's podcasts but find most people inspiring if you look hard enough.

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

Atomic Habits by James Clear. The Grinch - movie night for my girls!

either within Stronachs or when they move on to pastures new.

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

I would redevelop the Trinity Centre and surrounding area between Union Bridge, Bridge Street and Guild Street. I would build two high-end residential blocks either side of the railway line with excellent links to the train station and Union Street. It would be modern, safe and clean with brilliant views over the city and transport links. My idea is based on a design I had seen in Sydney, Australia. It would recreate the heart of the city. I'm convinced it is the answer to the Union Street problem - I'd be delighted to work on the compulsory purchase project if anyone wants to give me a call!

Aberdeen's **NEW** Leaflet Delivery Company



Hi my name is Graham and I live and work in Aberdeen. I have just launched a new and unique leaflet delivery company in the AB postcode areas.

Why is it unique?

Because the Postman/Woman delivers the leaflets.

I have 30 years of sales and marketing experience in the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire area and have successfully organised countless marketing campaigns. I love helping people gain new clients. During lockdown I decided I wanted a new challenge. Therefore I decided to start a leafleting business servicing Aberdeen and the surrounding areas.

What can I offer you?

- ✓ Reliable Delivery
- ✓ Quality, low cost print
- ✓ Help with return on investment and ideas
- ✓ Full design service
- ✓ A passion for getting it delivered right and on time

SPECIAL OFFER from 3p per leaflet
Designed, Printed & Delivered by Royal Mail

Leaflet
delivery UK
ABERDEEN

For more details please call me on
07813 252525
E: aberdeen@leafletdeliveryuk.com
www.leafletdeliveryuk.com/aberdeen



Alexander Höglund,
*Senior Environmental Advisor
/ Head of Sustainable Fuels,
GEODIS Freight Forwarding*

Area of expertise?

Transformation towards a low carbon future of the aviation and marine freight industry. This includes subjects such as measuring carbon emission levels, analysing the energy system, exploring alternative fuels, discussing climate impact and the solution we can all employ to move towards a low carbon economy.

What should people know?

Doing something is far better than doing nothing. All companies requiring any transportation can participate in energy transformation by asking their freight forwarder to optimise the fill ratio, use the best and most energy efficient mode of transport, and ensure your supply chain is as efficient as possible. This will not only save you money, but also reduce the environmental impact of transportation. If you want to go further, choose freight forwarders who offer sustainable fuels for your shipments or engage in similar programmes that help transform the industry.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

The concept of starting small and growing gradually is particularly relevant to sustainable transformation in a company. It is important to begin with manageable, achievable goals that can be successfully implemented, and then build on these successes over time. Rushing to implement sweeping changes without proper planning and execution can lead to resistance from stakeholders, confusion, and ultimately failure.

What's your top tip?

There are only two ways to achieve the necessary transformation: burn less fuel and burn clean. Start by trying to reduce unnecessary and inefficient modes of transport, and move to ambitious projects, such as fuel switch, when the time is right.



Jack Walton,
*Chief Operating Officer,
The Habitat People*

Area of expertise?

Nature conservation, natural capital and business sustainability. The Habitat People are a nature conservation company that help clients navigate the ever-growing buzz around climate change and related issues and discover untapped profits. We tailor sustainability strategies for each client to minimise environmental impact, increase efficiency, and strengthen their brand.

What should people know?

The competitive advantage created by a commitment to sustainability is only growing. Companies that prioritise environmental responsibility are more likely to attract customers, employees, and investors. Larger companies will prefer suppliers that are already compliant with upcoming UK legislation. Even bank loans are starting to go preferentially to applicants with a strong strategy in place.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

A half-hearted response to climate change can be counterproductive. Making superficial changes without addressing underlying issues risks greenwashing accusations and negative backlash. Well-informed, long-term commitment to sustainability demonstrates leadership, fosters trust, and contributes to a positive reputation.

What's your top tip?

As part of developing a strategy, offer your employees a 'bounty' to identify cost-effective ways to reduce your company's carbon footprint. Your people are experts in what they do, and they might find solutions nobody else could think of. Plus, this fosters buy-in that will be invaluable for keeping your edge in a low-carbon economy.



Steve Johnson,
Director,
Paratus Commercial Services Limited

Area of expertise?

Paratus (Latin for ready/prepared) provide commercial consultancy, training and support services. From interactive commercial awareness workshops through to bespoke consultancy, training and support for specific roles or projects. Areas of expertise include customer and supplier contracting, supply chain risk management, and processes and procedures tailored to meet business needs.

What should people know?

Every organisation has a chain of customers (demand chain) and a chain of suppliers (supply chain). To be the best supplier you can be to your customers, you need to be the best customer you can be to your suppliers. Choosing who you do business with, how and why is probably one of the biggest decisions you need to get right. The rest is about ensuring delivery and the responsible use of resources (people, systems, finances, materials, etc).

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

One of the biggest mistakes we've seen within all sizes of businesses across a number of sectors, is when well-intended decisions or actions are agreed in a genuine effort to help customers, suppliers or other stakeholders mid project or post contract award that change elements of the scope, but are not followed up contractually, which can result in project overruns, overspend and litigation, or worse still, the safety of people put at risk.

What's your top tip?

Commercial risk is like any other risk. Spending time to consider what 'might' go wrong or change, then taking appropriate steps to remove or mitigate risk, can make a huge impact on the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit.



Lisa Wilson,
Global Mobility Senior Manager,
Vialto Partners

Area of expertise?

We are a leading provider of integrated solutions, supporting global workforce mobility, including immigration, tax, social security, managed services and technology.

What should people know?

The landscape for global mobility is changing - fast! There are increased compliance requirements placed on employers while at the same time employees are demanding flexibility and the choice of which location to work in. Some government authorities are embracing globally mobile workers, whereas others have placed an emphasis on employers to track and report their mobile employees.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

Underestimating the immigration, tax and social security lead times with government authorities. Post brexit, compliance requirements for UK individuals working in Europe still apply. Overseas authorities may conduct site visits to ensure your workers have the correct social security and posted worker directive paperwork.

What's your top tip?

Consult an advisor if you have employees traveling on business trips, if there's a requirement to send an employee overseas for work or if an employee wants to work remotely.



Kenneth Salmon,
General Manager,
ComCab Aberdeen

Area of expertise?

General Manager with over 25 years of management experience across a wide range of markets and services, focused on delivering quality services, delivered by quality teams: I recently joined ComCab in Aberdeen who have delivered taxi and executive transport services throughout the city for over 70 years.

What should people know?

Providing transportation services is a vital part of the local economy and vital for companies and individuals daily needs, from members of the public on a social occasion to critical medical support for organisations and individuals. All customs deserve a first-class service and the security of a licenced trained taxi driver providing the service. The support mechanism that delivers the service and those involved are vital to its success. ComCab offers these services and also offer training services to budding drivers to keep the standard and volume of drivers up to maintain sustainable long-term services.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

Not listening to customers and not acting on feedback, developing a clear line of communication and enabling change.

What's your top tip?

1. Listen to your customers, they will guide you.
2. Develop yourself and the team
3. Grow your network
4. Utilise technology
5. Take a break when you need one and give others the same courtesy.



Georgina Howden,
Wellness and Lifestyle Manager,
Healthoutfit Ltd

Area of expertise?

Everything to improve the physical and mental fitness of your workforce, onshore and offshore.

What should people know?

If employees don't bring their best selves to work every day – feeling physically, mentally, and emotionally prepared to work – nothing else matters. If they're not staying physically active, eating a healthy diet, sleeping well, and managing their stress, they'll lack the focus, energy, and drive to succeed.

What's the biggest mistakes companies make?

Companies need to think about an employee as a whole person, and not just a worker performing tasks. According to global research group, Gallup, the percentage of employees experiencing daily negative emotions (worry, stress, anger, sadness) has steadily risen since 2018. Metrics that monitor physical and mental wellbeing of employees are missing from most company performance dashboards and employee key performance indicators.

What's your top tip?

Be intentional about what the H in HSE means for your employees. Develop a holistic approach to employee health and wellbeing, engaging your service providers to create an end-to-end ecosystem for employees. Identify metrics and monitor performance which allows you to course correct as needed. Experiment and expect to evolve as internal and external environmental factors do too.

Kickstart your journey to Net Zero

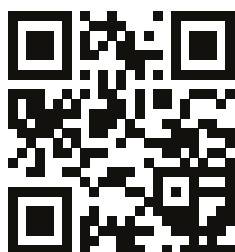
Carbon management is essential for all companies willing to join the effort to stop climate change, but finding the time and resources can prove difficult.

The benefits of carbon management:

- Compliance with Government Bids and evolving Supply Chain Procurement Policies
- Improved competitiveness to win new work
- Cost savings through improved energy and resource efficiency

How we can help:

At Sealand Projects, our sustainability team can provide the support, guidance and mentoring to organisations looking to kickstart their journey to Net Zero. Our state-of-the-art Carbon Management software SeaZero™ measures scope one, two and three emissions accurately.



For more information:

Tel: +44(0)1224 004999

Email: enquiries@sealand-projects.com

Web: sealand-projects.com

BEST-SELLING AUTHOR TO TELL ABERDEEN HOW **FAILURE** CAN MAKE YOU **SUCCEED**

Aberdeen-bound author Elizabeth Day has taken the Sunday Times best-seller crown from Prince Harry ahead of her trip north.

The author and podcaster - who will headline an event with Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce at the Tivoli Theatre this month - has ended Spare's 11-week reign at the top of the charts with her new book, *Friendaholic*.

The new book, which has been described as "bravely revealing",

unpacks the significance and evolution of friendship.

From exploring her own personal friendships and the distinct importance of each of them in her life, to the unique and powerful insights of others across the globe, Elizabeth asks why there isn't yet a language that can express its crucial influence on our world.

On May 11, she will be headlining the third Ultimate Masterclass Festival event in Aberdeen, where she will discuss her personal experiences in what will be a masterclass in personal growth and development.

Who is Elizabeth Day?

Elizabeth has spent the last five years speaking to some of the best-known faces in Britain about what failure has taught them.

Her chart-topping podcast *How To Fail With Elizabeth Day*, which has recently reached 35 million downloads, is a celebration of all of the things that haven't gone right.

It examines how learning from mistakes has helped her guests to succeed better.

Guests have included Bernie Sanders, Steven Bartlett, Rick Astley, Craig

David, Greta Thunberg, Delia Smith, Lady Hale, Ed Miliband, Graham Norton, Daisy Edgar-Jones, Alistair Campbell and Phoebe Waller-Bridge.

What is she going to talk about in Aberdeen?

In this masterclass, Elizabeth will share what she has learned from those 186 (and counting) interviews and distils them into seven principles of failure.

Practical, reassuring and inspirational, these principles offer a guide through life's rough patches.

From failed exams to romantic break-ups, from career setbacks to confidence crises, from navigating anxiety to surviving loss, Elizabeth recognises, and celebrates, the fact that failure connects us all. It is what makes us human.

How do I get tickets?

Tickets are available from our Ultimate Masterclass Festival website: www.umf.events

Limited VIP tickets, which come with an opportunity to meet Elizabeth, are also available.

What is UMF?

The Ultimate Masterclass Festival is about bringing together some of the brightest business minds to Aberdeen and giving them a platform to share the secrets of their success.



SPONSORED BY

CALA



Why? Because we want to inspire new thinking and new ideas to grow our local economy.

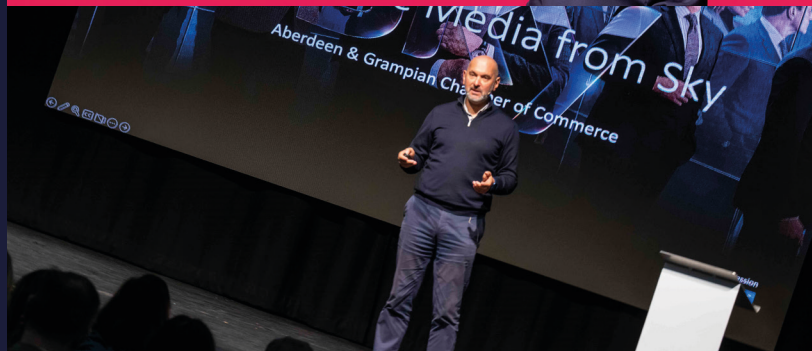
The events programme has been designed and curated by the events and marketing teams at the Chamber of Commerce, and this year we have purposely organised all events in the city centre as part of our commitment to bring fresh life to Union Street and the surrounding areas.



Elizabeth has spent the last five years speaking to some of the best-known faces in Britain about what failure has taught them, and how learning from mistakes has helped her guests to succeed better.



PHOTO GALLERY





Aberdeen &
Grampian
Chamber of
Commerce

In partnership with:

BRODIES^{LLP}



NORTHERN STAR2023 BUSINESS AWARDS

Meet the winners

More than 800 people packed P&J Live on April 28 for the Chamber's annual Northern Star Business Awards, the region's biggest business awards dinner.

The glittering ceremony was unforgettable and celebrated the exceptional accomplishments of organisations across the North-east of Scotland.

Russell Borthwick, Chief Executive of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, said: "Northern Star provides a unique stage to showcase and celebrate the brilliant work being done by businesses of all sizes, from all sectors and across the length and breadth of our fantastic area.

"You, our members are at the heart of the Chamber. Without your support, we could not do the good work that we do. Creating a powerful and cohesive force, enabling us to achieve together what we could not individually."

Let's meet the winners...

Business of the Year Winner

Customer First Winner

Port of Aberdeen

For almost 900 years the Port of Aberdeen has been at the heart of the North-east economy and with the transformational £400million South Harbour expansion now virtually complete it will create prosperity for generations to come.

The Port contributes £1.5billion to Scotland's economy, employs around 100 people, supports 12,000 jobs and has constantly evolved to support new industries since 1136.

The largest berthage in Scotland, world-class infrastructure, its strategic location and expert supply chain make it the port-of-choice for offshore energies, decommissioning, general cargo, cruise and ferry services.

It is one of the major commercial hubs in Northern Europe connecting customers to around 40 international trading routes.

The Port has recently had to overcome a perfect storm of market conditions. There was a global reduction in shipping activity across all key industries caused by CV19, the war in Ukraine, fluctuating oil prices, the huge shift in energy production and consumption, port congestion in China and the US, and a delayed start to the tourist season. This resulted in a 20% reduction in income from energy industry activity, a 23% decrease in vessel tonnage and a 44.5% decrease in vessel arrivals in 2021 from pre-pandemic figures.

However, the Port successfully protected its core business and kept its expansion project on track. It also came very close to achieving its 2021 budget which was based on a far quicker recovery than actually transpired.

Despite the ongoing challenges of CV19 and the exponential rise in the cost of construction materials, the South Harbour development continued at pace. More than £70million of contracts were awarded in 2021 and more than 510,000 workhours were achieved spanning 17 companies.

South Harbour will support an additional 7,000 jobs and add a further £0.9billion GVA to the Scottish economy when it reaches its full potential.

Aberdeen Performing Arts

Aberdeen Performing Arts is a charitable trust at the heart of the North-east's cultural offering. As well as managing His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen Music Hall and The Lemon Tree it runs three festivals a year and a production company and draws one million visitors to its venues annually.

Customer experience is at the heart of everything it does and it strives to be inclusive and accessible to all audiences.

It offers accessible performances across its programmes including captioned performances; British sign language; audio described performances; and relaxed performances. It recently programmed a weekend series of events called Rise Up, showcasing black and people of colour artists from the region.

Aberdeen Performing Arts worked with We Are Here Scotland to put on Rise Up and has re-established itself as a ticketing outlet for other venues in the North-east of Scotland. Last year it curated the Wonderland Festival working with emerging and established artists in the region to create a platform for their work and enabling people to explore the city and see it as never before through art, dance and sound installations in unusual places and spaces.

CV19 forced a shutdown, with 96% of staff furloughed from March 2020 until September 2021, but within a year of reopening it had attracted more than 12,500 new customers and reactivated former audiences. Informed by a national research study it has been able to deliver what its customer base wants, resulting in audience numbers exceeding expectations and beating pre-pandemic targets.

Audiences have been positive and enthusiastic. Prior to attending a show 59% stated they were happy or very happy, rising to 75% after a visit, all due to the efforts that went in to keep people safe.

In 2021 Aberdeen Performing Arts was awarded the Customer Service Excellence Award for the 11th year in a row.

Work finished recently to enhance the customer experience by extending the mezzanine floor of 1906 Café Bar out to the glass frontage of the iconic A-listed venue. It created more space and opens up a perfect view of the recently reopened Union Terrace Gardens.

Sponsored by



Sponsored by



Driving Sustainability Winner

ASCO

Aberdeen-headquartered ASCO is a leading global logistics and materials management services provider, supporting projects in the renewables, new energy, oil and gas and decommissioning sectors.

ASCO's innovative processes and systems put it at the forefront of driving supply chain efficiency, providing transparency for the entire process from vendors to end users. Its fully integrated suite of support includes logistics, transport and freight, supply base management, aviation services, warehousing and storage solutions, materials management, fuel and bulk provision, marine services, training, lifting and assurance, personnel provision and environmental services.

It combines this with specialist technical and advisory services across marine, materials, inventory and lifting operations and world-class technology via its proprietary integrated Logistics Management System to meet the needs of global energy operators.

ASCO has more than half a century of logistics and materials management experience and its expertise and capability help customers by transforming operational efficiency and improving processes.

It has recently implemented a range of major changes to create a more sustainable business and to become a net zero greenhouse gas emissions business by 2040.

These changes include the transition of its light vehicle fleet to electric in both the UK and Norway.

ASCO's "Zero Waste to Landfill" initiative was designed in response to Scottish regulatory requirements which will ban the disposal of general waste to landfill by 2025. The initiative diverts industrial waste, currently bound for landfill sites, to sustainable facilities in North-east Scotland where "waste-to-energy" technology is used to produce electricity and hot water. So far, the company has achieved a reduction of 57% waste sent to landfill in the UK.

Family Business Winner

Schoolhill Hydraulic Engineering Ltd

High quality and diversification have been fundamental to the success of Aberdeen-based Schoolhill Hydraulic Engineering Co Ltd over the past 74 years and through four generations of the Whyte family.

In the 50s the company manufactured precision replacement parts for earth moving and agricultural machinery. The company's present area of operations covers several industry sectors, including oil and gas, whisky, agriculture and industrial process control systems.

Until the industry collapse of 2016, 80% of the company's revenue came from subsea oil and gas, but the downturn forced the company to reduce its number of employees from 44 to 18.

A strategic decision to focus on its legacy products for the whisky industry to replace the revenue lost from oil and gas - and diversify away from its dependence on this sector - proved visionary.

Staff levels are almost back to before the slump and 70% of Schoolhill's revenue now comes from whisky barrel working machinery and 30% from oil and gas.

Schoolhill machinery can be found in every cooperage in Scotland and in most distilleries with their own barrel working operations. The company's High Speed Hoopdriver is the main workhorse of whisky barrel operations in Scotland and has a reputation for reliability and longevity.

Many of the innovative products Schoolhill has designed and manufactured for the North Sea oil sector have become the industry standard and are used in oil provinces around the globe. Locally it has designed and manufactured specialist hydraulic equipment for Aberdeen City Council, including a hydraulic stage for the city's Beach Ballroom.

Sponsored by



Sponsored by



Going Global Winner

JBS Group

JBS Group is a North-east success story with 60% of its sales coming from international markets.

It is based in Peterhead and clients include NASA, Blue Origin (Jeff Bezos), SpaceX (Elon Musk), the European Space Agency, the Ministry of Defence, the US Navy, Shell and Total Energies.

The multi-disciplined engineering business has contracts in 80 countries from Algeria to Azerbaijan, from Peru to the Philippines and from Venezuela to Vietnam.

JBS patented products include the Sea Axe which is both the most advanced controlled flow subsea excavation system and environmentally friendly solution on the market. It is on average three times more efficient than similar products.

In the five years since managing directors Mike McCafferty, Alex Whyte and Stan Green purchased the company, when there was no international work, turnover has risen 290% from £2.3million to £6.7million.

Turnover for the year just ended was on track to achieve £10million.

Its strategy to develop the business is to increase awareness of its products and services, specifically in the US and the Middle East, by attending exhibitions to build relationships and engage with firms.

Huge opportunities have been identified in the US, particularly in the renewables sector and there are also opportunities in Taiwan and Australia where JBS is looking for strategic partners.

They also monitor news and industry publications and update their database with contacts and relevant projects. The team then maps out potential clients and makes direct approaches – confident they are likely to be able to provide solutions. The management team at JBS has extensive international expertise and has worked tirelessly to enhance the skill sets of the team to respond to client demands.

Inspiration from Innovation Winner

DeltaTek, an Expro Company

DeltaTek Global was launched in 2015 by founder and CEO Tristram Horn in response to the growing need for efficiently implemented, intelligent, cost-saving and risk-reducing products for the subsea market.

The company is on a passionate mission to deliver “ultimate cement placement” using cleverly-engineered technology.

It specialises in well construction and has developed pioneering technologies which are deployable to all well operations projects.

Having identified problems in the well construction process, Tristram saw a gap in the market for a simple system designed to optimise cement jobs and take land cementing techniques to the subsea market.

SeaCure®, a revolutionary subsea cementing system, is the company’s flagship technology. It delivers stabbed-in, inner string cementing services for subsea wells and eliminates shoe tracks, improves drill out performance and removes the need for remedial cementing techniques.

DeltaTek, which was recently acquired by energy services provider Expro, has taken inspiration from the industry and has enhanced existing techniques and applied them to the subsea sector to create solutions which are changing the way wells are constructed.

Over the last five years, DeltaTek has successfully completed 35 patent applications and received 12 grants, an indication that its innovative solutions will show continued growth in global markets.

DeltaTek Global has more than doubled its UK footprint recently and also established a US operational base. It has formed partnerships with firms worldwide to support the continued global distribution of its disruptive technology. Its innovative solutions are set to continue maturing and delivering operations around the globe in Norway, the Middle East, Asia Pacific, the Americas and African markets.

Sponsored by

**Aberdeen International
Airport**

Sponsored by


**PORT OF
ABERDEEN**
EST. 1136

Inspiring Futures

Winner

Aberdeen FC Community Trust

Aberdeen FC Community Trust (AFCCT) was established in 2014 to provide support and opportunity to change lives for the better.

It works with people of all ages and backgrounds to maximise the potential of our communities and to improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

Using the power of football and the passion for AFC, the Trust has a unique approach which fosters engagement and enthusiasm among participants. From its work in schools to the provision of football coaching, camps and festivals, management of football leagues and community initiatives including dementia friendly active ageing programmes, the Trust enriches lives across the North-east of Scotland.

It provides a supported pathway for young people through its work in its partner primary schools, City and Shire academies, youth ambassador programme, volunteering opportunities and employability projects amongst other community offerings. AFCCT currently works in 10 academies and 17 primary schools supporting some of the most vulnerable and disengaged young people to help close the poverty-related attainment gap.

AFCCT began working in schools delivering before and after school activity - Breakfast Clubs and Footy Teas. The impact was huge and it was quickly identified by young people, families, school and Trust staff that using AFCCT was a great vehicle for improving learning and delivering key health and wellbeing messages.

AFCCT's focus on mental health through the MINDSET programme is a direct response to the needs of the community in the last few years. Listening and adapting to community needs continues to strengthen its school relationships.

Across schools, year on year, there is improved attendance, reduced lateness, improved wellbeing and improved engagement.

Making the Difference

Winner

CFINE

CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East) is a charity and social enterprise which provides access to a range of support services for families and individuals experiencing financial hardship.

Based in the North-east of Scotland, CFINE improves health and well-being and the environment, tackles poverty and builds resilience for and with disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals, families and communities. It is also the FareShare Regional Centre for Grampian, Highlands & Islands, redistributing in-date surplus goods from the food industry to charities and organisations.

In the past 12 months, CFINE has supported around 27,000 individuals with access to emergency food and additional support services which work towards tackling the underlying causes of poverty.

This has included welfare, financial and budgeting support via its in-house SAFE Team (Support Advice Finance Education); cooking on a budget through its community training kitchen; skills development and employability support including work experience and volunteering opportunities involving 281 volunteers; redistribution of 2.1million meals in 2021 via FareShare; health and wellbeing support including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT); and engagement and support of those within the criminal justice system.

CFINE identifies and develops the strengths of its beneficiaries/volunteers, individually and collectively, and builds on these. It recognises the importance and experience within the communities from which the volunteers come, largely disadvantaged, vulnerable geographical or interest communities. It establishes relationships with local community groups, centres, churches and schools to work together to provide coherent, effective support for each individual because without the support of its volunteers CFINE would cease to operate.

A pre-release course focuses on the fundamental areas of support required in preparation for release from prison including financial inclusion, housing support, health and wellbeing, employability, preparing for liberation and adjusting to life outside. Sessions are held nearing release, and evidence shows that this has reduced the likelihood of reoffending.

Sponsored by



Sponsored by



Marketing Magic Winner

Mission10 and Kirkwood Homes

Kirkwood Homes is an Aberdeen-based homebuilder, with developments across the city, shire, Broughty Ferry and Fife and a track record of more than 30 years.

"Bringing Quality to Life" is Kirkwood's strapline and was at the heart of a campaign to engage budding home buyers, showcase the quality of Kirkwood's homes and inspire them to choose Kirkwood and ultimately increase sales.

As well as the product, the campaign shone a light on the lives of those who surround it from Kirkwood team members who design, build and sell the homes, to the individuals, couples and families who will live and grow inside them.

It focused on the consideration and decision stage of the sales funnel - people actively researching and reviewing options for moving home and those already in discussions with Kirkwood.

It involved content marketing, digital advertising and website optimisation - all mapped out to provide a strong journey which maximised the potential of attracting high value people to the website and generating and nurturing leads.

The campaign was a resounding success and included, in June and July last year, achieving 1,594 landing page visits, 35,904 blog post visits with 30 leads directly generated. Other successes included 671 views of a video showcasing everything which goes into creating quality homes and how it has an impact on customers' lives.

During those two months the campaign influenced 37 won deals totalling £13.8million revenue.

Rising Star Winner

Shane Pirie, Entier Ltd

Shane Pirie didn't know what he wanted to do when he left school until a team from Entier visited as part of its Fresh Olives Apprentice recruitment programme.

Shane knew that he preferred hands on work more than work with an academic focus, so entered the selection process and joined Entier's Modern Apprenticeship scheme in 2013 as a Trainee Chef.

He quickly achieved SVQ level 2 and then 3 in Practical Cookery, demonstrating he was a competent and eager Chef. He was given experience across Entier's onshore facilities preparing food from in-house client restaurants, for events of more than 200 people to small fine dining experiences. His positivity and determination shone through from an early stage.

He was the recipient of the Rising Star award as part of the company's SHINE awards and has taken on an ambassadorial role for Modern Apprentices on many occasions for the company at local authority events and for Skills Development Scotland.

To give him a comprehensive experience he had to undertake work internationally on a variety of units including marine vessels and docked rigs travelling to Brazil, Alabama and Houston. He quickly demonstrated his ability to take on major operations like facility mobilisations, unsupervised, and as well as demonstrating his ability to his manager and seniors at Entier, he won the confidence and praise of the clients.

As an Apprentice Chef, and then as a Trainee Operations Manager, Shane watched and learned from others in their roles. He experienced how interactions could differ depending on the setting.

Over time he built his confidence to be able to support at client meetings, and now has responsibility for leading the client meetings for the area of the business for which he is responsible.

Shane now has operational responsibilities for Entier's marine operations fully managing 12 assets.

Sponsored by



Sponsored by



Staff Matter Winner

W M Donald Ltd

W M Donald is the largest civil engineering contractor in North-east Scotland. Its head office in Stonehaven is supported by regional offices in Inverness and Perth and it has a skilled and dedicated workforce of 227, with a further 80 subcontractors.

It counts many national and regional housebuilders amongst its clients and undertakes complex enabling and infrastructure works to provide developers with a prepared and serviced site on which to build their properties.

Over the last three years, in particular, the firm has been committed to investing in employee development to ensure it has the workforce to deliver its business growth objectives across a wider geographical area.

There are several strands to W M Donald Ltd's approach to employee development. A key initiative has been the creation of the W M Donald Ltd Apprenticeship Scheme and it now has 25 apprentices, 12% of the workforce. Each apprentice has a site mentor and is encouraged to engage in extra-curricular activities such as making presentations in schools or mental health training. The company has also recruited a cohort of recently qualified graduates who are continuing their training in areas such as quantity surveying, construction management and purchasing and supply. As a result of these steps and others, the average age of the workforce has dropped from 39 in 2019 to 36 in 2022.

The construction workforce is ageing, technology is changing rapidly, and W M Donald Ltd is growing. W M Donald Ltd is ensuring potential skills shortages are addressed through a combination of training and development and focussed recruitment.

To foster an interest in construction among younger generations, W M Donald Ltd has delivered skills days for S3 and S5 students at local academies. It was invited by The Wood Foundation to contribute to the Excelerate "School Leaver Profile" event to determine the skills, attributes and competencies a young person should develop during their time at school. It was also a major participant in the "Lift Off & Grow" programme created by Aberdeen City Council and DYW North East.

Start-Up Business of the Year Winner

ABERDAM Dutch Fries

ABERDAM Dutch Fries is an award-winning fast-food takeaway that offers a fusion of high-quality local produce from Aberdeen (ABER) and underrepresented Dutch street food (DAM). They specialise in exclusively imported, triple cooked Dutch fries, sauces, and fried snacks, as well as their now infamous Aberdeen Angus smash burgers and loaded fries.

In April 2021, ABERDAM began as a small fries stall at an outdoor post-CV19 street food event, which they co-organised to give the local street food community a CV19-compliant space to rebuild after the loss of events income from the previous year.

After taking £136k in 4 months at Backyard Beach Collective, they realised they needed to take themselves out of the day-to-day and reimagine the entire concept into a delivery-focused takeaway that could also serve in-house and be franchisable.

With ever-growing demand, the owners of ABERDAM located a derelict bricks and mortar unit in the city centre on Shiprow five months later. They completely pivoted their menu and launched on delivery platforms, as well as serving in four neighbouring wet-led bars. ABERDAM has now become one of the fastest-growing food businesses in the North-east, consistently achieving 18k gross revenue weeks.

In just one year, they have used over 50 local suppliers for their staple menu items, packaging, signage, merchandise, and more. ABERDAM feels a great responsibility to support and promote fellow local businesses as much as possible, as this is key to their ethos. Some of their local food suppliers include Tilly Butcher for all meat, Vegan Bay Baker for buns, Fat Batch for desserts, Angus and Oink for seasonings, Amity Fish Co for fish, Fierce Beer for their collab beer LAGERDAM, and many more.

Managing the incredible demand and rapid growth has been the largest challenge for ABERDAM in the year they've been trading. ABERDAM was put together in just two weeks and completely self-funded, with the owners reinvesting everything to grow it into what it has become and will be. They have always looked to the future and never thought small.

At the end of their first financial year, they had a gross revenue of £490k.

Sponsored by

Bancon Group



Sponsored by

ledingham | chalmers
SOLICITORS

Student Placement Winner

Prospect 13

Sarah Kelly says the extent to which Prospect 13 has gone above and beyond the call of duty is summed up by the fact that she was offered a full-time job, half-way through her initial 12-week placement.

Sarah is studying BA (Hons) in Digital Marketing at Robert Gordon University and her third year placement was aimed at providing hands-on practical digital marketing experience to put the theory learned into practice. She joined Prospect 13 and became part of a team developing two websites.

The scope of her placement quickly stretched beyond the original brief, as her mentor, Managing Director, Cerri McDonald, was keen that her experience should have no boundaries. She wanted her to feel like a key team player and receive exposure to the wide variety of digital marketing activities delivered across a broad client base.

Sarah showed initiative in quieter times by helping the busy team with other projects and was given the opportunity to communicate with clients, something she feels placements sometimes don't offer.

"Very quickly, I was trusted to support wider projects and be involved in day-to-day activities," she said. "I became part of the team and soon I didn't feel like I was on placement. A particular high point was working with communication colleagues to plan, implement and deliver two focus groups for International School Aberdeen as part of ongoing market research."

Sarah was the focal point for the project and was given the opportunity to work closely with kindergarten and grade seven parents and report findings back to ISA with a clear set of actions and recommendations.

"In addition to launching two new websites and completing a market research project, I enjoyed a range of unique opportunities including writing everything from social media content and blog articles to creating facts and stat carousels for client platforms.

"I feel I have matured in verbal and written communication ability and have honed my skills in being able to listen carefully to what customers want and deliver it effectively. Prospect 13 offered an environment for my creativity to flourish and develop skills which will stand me in excellent stead, wherever my career takes me."

Sponsored by



Regional Contribution Winner

Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The prestigious Regional Contribution Award is given annually to those people who have made an outstanding contribution to the economy of the region.

This year, with the blessing of King Charles, in recognition of her incredible contribution to the North-east of Scotland, it has been conferred upon Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the first person to be posthumously given the award.

David Cameron, Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeen and Sandy Manson Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire accepted the award from sponsors Shell on behalf of the Royal Family.

Her Late Majesty was a regular visitor to the region and had a warm relationship with the people of Aberdeenshire and the Granite City.

She held a special place in her heart for Balmoral and often seemed happiest spending time with family at her home on Royal Deeside.

Her love for this area was clear, and it was often said that Balmoral was her favourite place on earth. Almost every person and business in Ballater and Braemar has personal stories about meeting the royals as they relaxed in the surroundings of the Cairngorms.

She seldom missed the Braemar Games, as a regular visitor at many other events in the North-east and scores of businesses in the area proudly held Royal Warrants for supplying the Royal Household with goods or services.

Add all this to the tourism worth tens of millions of pounds to our economy every year generated as a result of the royal connection. We felt it was important to recognise the huge legacy that her passion and support for the region will leave for generations to come.

We trust that the royal family's love story with Deeside will continue to endure as the very soon to be crowned King Charles takes over the duties of monarch from Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

Sponsored by



UPSKILL YOUR STAFF

Grow your business with the Chamber's training courses



May 09

***£330 +VAT**

Assertiveness at work

Learn to communicate your point of view without causing conflict.



May 10

***£330 +VAT**

Sales and account management

Develop a structured approach to selling.



May 18

***£330 +VAT**

Customer service excellence

Discover the techniques to excel at customer service.



May 19

***£270 +VAT**

Best practice for protecting business and customer information (½ day)

Ensure your organisation is secure and competitive.



June 05 + 06

***£620 +VAT**

Advanced Management Skills (2 days)

Grow as a manager and improve the performance of your team.



June 05

***£330 +VAT**

Interview Skills

Understand interview theories and common applications.



May 16 *£330 +VAT
Advanced social media masterclass for marketing and PR professionals

Increase brand awareness, generate more leads and increase sales.



May 17 *£270 +VAT
Taking notes and minutes (½ day)

Record meetings effectively and accurately with high quality minutes.



May 23 *£330 +VAT
Communication and interpersonal skills

Develop effective communication techniques.



June 01 *£330 +VAT
Reviews and appraisals

Assess performance constructively and increase reviewee's motivation.



SCAN HERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Or visit agcc.co.uk/training





Escone Solutions continues to invest in its future

Aberdeen-based Escone Solutions continues to pave the way for the next generation of Business Application Support Analysts as it welcomes its fourth apprentice.

The company, which provides business application support to clients across a range of sectors, is committed to helping young people from across the North-east starting on their career journey.

Set up in 2015 by Mike Charles and Kevin Wyness, Escone Solutions worked previously with QA Ltd and now Rewards Training, an established training provider specialising in Modern Apprenticeships to offer young people the opportunity to learn and gain practical experience while working with an employer.

Escone Director and Co-founder Kevin said that from day one he and Mike were passionate about bringing through the next generation of young people.

“When we started the company in 2015, it was always our aim to offer apprenticeships in order to grow a young team who will learn all about the company from the bottom up,” he said.

“As well as learning from their colleagues, the apprentices themselves bring a great deal to the business – they add a different perspective and outlook, and Jodie, Leon, Kayla, and Sam have all shown a desire and determination to progress their knowledge and careers.

“They have proven themselves to be hard-working, willing to learn and committed to Escone. We are very proud of all they have achieved and hope to have them with us for a long time to come.”

Caledonian Sleeper launches limited edition whisky to celebrate 150-year anniversary

Whisky-lovers can now get their hands on a limited-edition Caledonian Sleeper Single Cask Single Malt to celebrate 150 years of Scotland to London sleeper services.

The whisky is launched in partnership with Annandale Distillery (est. 1836), which is one of the oldest operating distilleries in Scotland and the first distillery as you cross the border from England.

With only 200 numbered 70cl bottles in existence, the self-named whisky – Caledonian Sleeper – offers enthusiasts the chance to add a truly one-of-a-kind bottle to their collection and can be exclusively purchased online.

Profits from the sale of the 70cl whisky bottles will be donated to Railway Children, the international charity working with street children in India, East Africa and the UK.

Kathryn Darbandi, Serco's Managing Director for Caledonian Sleeper, said: “When the North British Railway introduced the first regular sleeper service from Glasgow to London 150 years ago, they set the wheels in motion for a truly unique travel experience. Today, we're proud to carry the torch. Whether you're commuting, going home or exploring a new destination, our service lets you travel in comfort overnight and wake up ready to hit the ground running.

“As an iconic Scottish brand, it's only right that we celebrate this landmark anniversary with the launch of our very own limited-edition whisky.”

EnerQuip scores a try for MND fundraising

EnerQuip has added its support to a renowned charity which was set up by a late sporting hero.

The Aberdeen-based company jumped at the chance to donate to the My Name's Doddie Foundation whilst enjoying a 'ticket and travel package' to a recent Scotland home game at Murrayfield. The service was provided by city-based premium chauffeur service, Vchauffeur, with all proceeds from the venture being donated to the foundation which was set up by rugby legend Doddie Weir following his MND diagnosis.

Thanks to their combined efforts, EnerQuip and Vchauffeur have sent £1,000 to help the Foundation which is committed to its vision of a world free of motor neurone disease (MND).



Brian Ritchie

Seven-figure fleet investment programme for Denholm Environmental

A world-class name in specialist industrial services, specialist waste management services and process decontamination has announced plans for seven-figure investment in its UK fleet this year.

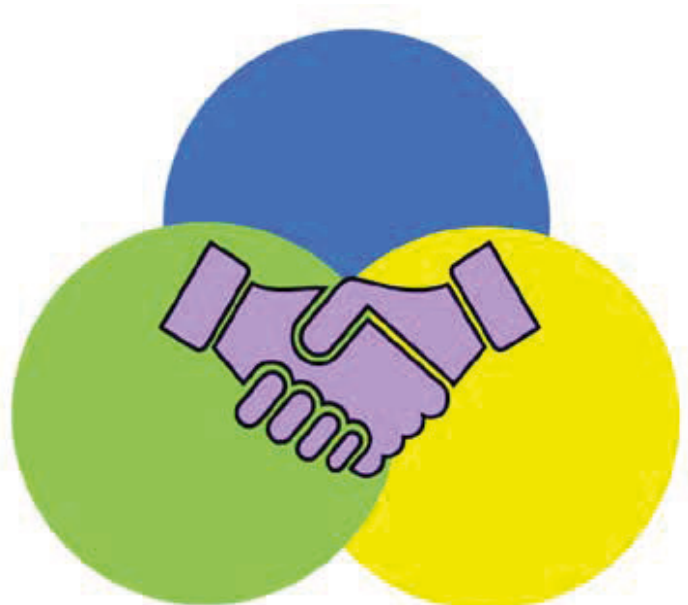
Denholm Environmental Limited (a Denholm Energy subsidiary) will invest £1.5million in significantly expanding its fleet of trucks, tankers and more. They will be spread across the company's four sites in Invergordon, Grangemouth and Carlisle as well as its headquarters in Inverurie.

The move is in response to a significant uptick in business, particularly in the brewing, distilling and utilities sectors where the company continues to carve a growing reputation as a market leader. Waste to energy project maintenance, including anaerobic digestion units, also make up a large portion of UK work whilst overseas energy projects continue to keep the team busy.

Commenting on the latest investment announcement, Denholm Environmental Managing Director Brian Ritchie said: "This investment in fleet will allow us to uplevel our service offering across the UK, increasing our capacity and our ability to flex in meeting the needs of a growing client base."

Provision of commercial consultancy, training and support services. From interactive commercial awareness workshops through to bespoke consultancy, training and support for specific roles or projects.

Areas of expertise include customer and supplier contracting, supply chain risk management, supporting operational teams to maximise commercial performance without adversely impacting operational performance, in-house and public training workshops, facilitation and the development of commercial processes and procedures tailored to meet your business compliance and performance needs.



Paratus Commercial Services

Consultancy Training Support

For more details on how we can be of assistance, please contact us and we will be happy to arrange a no obligation discussion on our range of services.

+44 (0) 1224 900400

enquiries@paratuscommercial.com

Business lessons I've learned



Stephen McCallion,
Founder and CEO, ZLX Business Solutions

What does your company do that others don't?

One of our core specialisms is R&D tax credits. Supported by our team of legal, accountancy and technical experts, ZLX's experienced management team identifies projects eligible for tax relief and navigates clients through the claims process. We offer a full range of compliance services, including the defence of any HMRC audits, and have invested in the creation of our own in-house specialist legal department. Our global database of industry experts also allows the business to create skilful, technical reports that present the technical advance being development by the client in a robust and professional manner.

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

There has been a historical acceptance by HMRC of poor technical reports as part of a company's R&D tax credit claim, often due to lack of resources. This has created a large sector of agents who have managed to make claims in the past under the impression that their technical narratives were acceptable. Now that HMRC is

imposing the rules properly, as well as increasing its number of specialist inspectors, there are many companies that are falling foul of HMRC and receiving penalties without having realised that their agent was not technically qualified in the first place to write such reports. This has been translated by the press as an increase in wrongful claims being submitted to HMRC, ranging from inaccuracies to technically incompetent.

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

Accepting that a successful business requires expert advisors, either within the senior management team or externally, to help with unexpected problems. When I had my own robotics company, I thought I could do it all by myself. As the business expanded and opened international offices, however, I realised that I didn't have the same buy-in and commitment from staff who hadn't been rewarded or given opportunities to develop.

Quick fire round

What was your first job?

Administrative Assistant for a company that manufactured fasteners.

When would you like to retire?

I would like to work until 75. I've always been passionate about designing new products and machines and have been fortunate to have had exposure to different industries and innovations.

What did you have for breakfast?

Poached eggs with sausage.

Who, or what, inspires you?

Individuals like Steve Jobs or Richard Branson who look at every opportunity and see the potential to make a difference or improve others' lives, often through technical solutions or innovations.

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

A friend who worked at KPMG once advised me to consider my time as costing £800 per hour. This made me think very carefully about if and when I should attend a meeting or event.

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

My proudest moment in business was the offer I received to form a joint venture with one of the largest industrial groups in Spain. The company had so much faith in my ability that they provided one million euros to start up a subsidiary in the UK to develop robotic systems for the global food market. I subsequently sold my shareholding back to the parent company.



Findlay Leask

Caber Coffee stirs up hospitality fight-back

Aberdeen-based Caber Coffee has unveiled plans to help fellow hospitality businesses navigate ongoing economic challenges – by bucking the trend and lowering prices.

With so many products and services experiencing price increases, the family-run company has taken the bold decision to stir things up and pass on decreases in wholesale prices. From coffee beans to disposable items, and from syrups to sugars the company has also brought in sweeping changes to its range to provide greater choice than ever before.

It is hoped the initiative will help bolster some of its catering and hospitality sector customers as they face an ongoing battle to chart a course through rising costs on many fronts.

Caber Coffee Managing Director, Findlay Leask, explained: “As well as our own experiences during the pandemic, we’ve heard of so many customers either struggling or going out of business that we felt it was incumbent upon us to look at how we could do our bit to help.

“Like our customers, we see rising costs in every corner of our business, but we must do everything we can to prop each other up across the sector, so it is only right that any savings we can achieve should be passed on.

“It may be a cliché to say that our customers are our business but it is true that we depend on their viability and this additional facet to that two-way relationship is something we feel is important to add during these testing times.”

Innovative JBS secures £3million worth of contracts

JBS Group has had its best ever start to a year with £3million worth of contracts secured.

The latest contracts involve fabrication work, screw conveyors and its patented Sea Axe subsea excavation technology.

Peterhead-based JBS has increased its team from 50 to 62 in the past six months, including adding two apprentices. JBS delivered fabrication projects for operators and energy services firms. The work included flying lead deployment frames – part of a wider collaboration project with Scottish engineering firm HCS Control Systems – and several other large-scale fabrication work scopes for long-standing clients.

ROVOP lands £20million to fuel further growth

ROVOP, one of the world’s largest independent remotely operated vehicle (ROV) solutions providers, is pleased to announce a new \$25million senior secured credit facility with Cordiant Capital (Cordiant), the specialist global infrastructure and real assets manager.

Backed by global private equity firm Bluewater, ROVOP is known for providing its customers with best-in-class equipment and services and is a long-term and trusted partner to blue-chip customers in all key offshore sectors, including the installation of wind-farm related infrastructure, gas pipelines and undersea internet cables.

With a management team well known to Cordiant, the firm is pleased to support ROVOP as it continues to invest in its fleet infrastructure and employees and to allow the business to continue capitalising on highly favourable offshore market dynamics by securing new contract wins across both new build construction, decommissioning, surveillance, and maintenance services. After a cycle of significant industry underinvestment, the ROV services market is expected to benefit from robust investment, with ROVOP well positioned to help facilitate the global energy transition, as the leading independent operator of underwater ROVs.

This latest investment by Cordiant via its LP credit mandates, builds on existing credit facilities in solar and wind power and upstream gas in Greece, Romania, and Turkey respectively and is aligned to the firm’s belief that a once-in-a-generation opportunity currently exists to supply flexible credit solutions for energy transition infrastructure across Europe thanks to the twin imperatives of national energy security and combating climate change.

Neil Potter, CEO of ROVOP, said: “ROVOP is seeing record demand for its services, and Cordiant’s investment means we’re better placed than ever to take advantage of increasing international demand for subsea robotics in both renewable and traditional energy sectors.”

The journey to net zero

International energy services and solutions company Centrica is aiming to supercharge the UK's net zero ambition.

The group, whose operations include Scottish Gas, has now launched new services in solar, home energy efficiency, insulation and electric vehicles to help customers accelerate the journey to decarbonise their homes and save on energy bills.

These are in addition to an existing heat-pump price guarantee and next-generation smart-home Hive technology which allow customers to manage energy usage and save on bills.

Centrica has just set up a new unit to help drive its net zero agenda, with Scotland leading the way in the rollout.

Aberdeen-born Steve Petrie has become the Scottish Director for the net zero division – the first Regional Director for the unit to be appointed in the UK.

He is based in the Granite City and is now recruiting for the new operation north of the border.

Steve Petrie, a visiting Professor at Robert Gordon University, has hit the ground running in his new role as he is able to call on the services of more than 1,000 Scottish Gas engineers.

He explained that the speed of the expansion of his team will depend on how quick the uptake of the new technology is.

But the Director said he was delighted with the response to the new Scottish unit.

“There is a groundswell of excitement and interest in net zero products - and Centrica is ready to help customers reduce carbon and cost with expert advice from our engineers.

“I feel the North-east is ripe as a location for installing the net zero technology we are offering.

“The area has a well-earned pride in its globally-recognised role at the heart of the nation's oil and gas industry.

“The drive to deliver a just transition towards a net zero future is a big opportunity for the North-east to continue in that leadership role.”

The Director, who started his career with Scottish Gas back in 1984 as an Apprentice Gas Engineer, will be working with local customers, businesses and communities to make sure that they get the right opportunities, advice and solutions to help them reduce cost and cut carbon.

Prof Petrie said: “As heat accounts for approximately 40% of energy consumption and is the single-biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in the UK, decarbonising the country's heating systems is the toughest challenge the country faces on its way to reaching net zero.

“There won't be a one-size-fits-all approach in decarbonising our heating systems - therefore a phased approach will be important.

“This will ensure that the transition is affordable for both consumers and businesses while maintaining or, in some cases, improving consumer comfort levels.”

Centrica believes that hydrogen boilers could play a significant role in decarbonising heat in buildings in combination with heat pumps, as part of a hybrid system.

Steve Petrie



centrica

The Director explained the benefits of heat pumps. They use electricity, so are a low-carbon way of keeping a home warm all-year-round. And they are built to last for at least 20 years – longer than the average lifespan of a gas boiler. There can also be government financial incentives to get a heat pump.

The first step in the hydrogen transition will be blending hydrogen into the UK mains supply.

Centrica is to start injecting hydrogen into its existing-gas peaking plant at Brigg in England as part of a trial later this year – the first-time hydrogen will be used within a grid-connected gas-fired power plant in the UK.

Prof Petrie said: “Some manufacturers have already developed hydrogen-ready boilers, which are designed for hydrogen use, but optimised to run on natural gas – and designed to be easily converted to hydrogen use once required.

“This would enable the UK to use its existing gas infrastructure, manufacturing and installation capabilities in deploying hydrogen boilers in homes.”

Looking to the future, he said: “The transition to a net zero economy will impact all our lives over the coming years as the UK seeks to tackle climate change, achieve a just transition away from a fossil-fuel economy and become more resource-efficient.

“There are huge opportunities in these changes for employers and employees – and we need to ensure workers and businesses in the North-east are well-placed to make the most of these opportunities.”

Research by British Gas has found that almost four in five people

“

There is a groundswell of excitement and interest in net zero products – and Centrica is ready to help customers reduce carbon and cost with expert advice from our engineers.

are willing to make changes to their own homes to tackle climate change.

Electric vehicles are also supported by consumers, with 35% willing to install a home charger to power an EV.

British Gas has the largest energy engineering workforce in the country – and this decade will be hiring and training 3,500 engineers with new green skills.

Andrew Middleton,
Managing Director
of Net Zero

at British Gas, said: “We are on a mission to help consumers lower their household energy bills, whilst at the same time reducing their carbon emissions.

“We recognise that many households are being cautious with their spending currently but want to make sure the right products are there for those who can make these changes – and we want to do all we can to make greener home solutions more affordable and accessible so that no one is left behind.

“With the UK’s largest network of energy experts, we are uniquely placed to guide customers and equip them with actionable insights on how to manage energy consumption.

“Our trusted engineers are already giving our customers energy-efficiency advice at every appointment and have installed over 17,000 electric car- charging points and more than 2,300 heat pumps.

“Our expert teams have helped improve the insulation of millions of properties, and support solar-panel installations around the country each day.”

The four new energy-efficiency products being offered by Scottish Gas are:

Solar installations

Scottish Gas will give free home consultations for solar-panel installations, and the option to install a battery as well. A survey will give estimated costs, savings and installation options without any commitment. Installation will be able to save customers up to 90% on electricity costs.

Home health checks

A Scottish Gas home health check provides consumers with what is described as the most comprehensive energy efficiency check on the market. The 90-minute consultation will provide customers with a personalised action plan to help them decarbonise their home and reduce their energy bills.

Hive EV charging

A new and improved Hive electric vehicle charger will be one of the smallest on the market. Scottish Gas is partnering with EO Charging to build the chargers which will be installed by its engineers and backed by a three-year warranty. Scottish Gas energy customers with the new charger will be able to benefit from a new SmartCharge service which allows them to charge off-peak and get rewarded for charging their car in a cheaper and greener way. In trials, EV customers saved around 20% from their electricity bills with the SmartCharge add-on, whilst helping to balance demand on the grid.

Insulation

One of the most straightforward and effective changes that many homes need is better insulation. Scottish Gas experts can help with anything from loft to cavity insulation, enabling customers to find the right solution for their home. Around 25% of the heat loss in the home is through the roof and about 35% through the walls. That means investing in good-quality insulation can really lower energy bills in the long term.

Centrica says Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce member companies and their employees can now benefit from its friends and family offers on a range of net zero products.

For further information on the new net zero division operations, Scottish Director Steve Petrie can be contacted direct on steve.petrie@britishgas.co.uk





Companies urged to Go Green like Greenwell

Companies are being urged to do more and rethink environmental policies in an effort to join the circular economy movement in the North-east.

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) is a major focus of many companies and within that falls climate, waste and pollution, but many firms are likely missing key opportunities to improve performance in these areas.

Waste is a hot topic following a recent report published by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) which revealed that Scotland generated 9.58million tonnes of waste in 2021, of which only 56.3% was recycled. Plus, there was a 2% increase in waste following the CV19 pandemic.

In addition, an increase in Scottish landfill tax rates from the beginning of April 2023 is yet another push for companies to start rethinking how they manage waste.

Aberdeen headquartered Greenwell Equipment has been diverting waste from landfill throughout its 27 years in business, ensuring that items from each of their divisions, office furniture, cabins, containers, and pallet racking, are continually given a new lease of life.

The phrase 'circular economy' may be fairly new but Julie Wood, Director at Greenwell, has been supporting companies to recycle and reuse for years.

She said: "25 years ago we bought solid oak project desks from one of Aberdeen's large oil and gas operators in Altens, revarnished them and sold them on. Recently the same company moved to a new building in the city centre and, once again, we've bought large quantities of furniture to re-sell at our Aberdeen furniture showroom.

"We've also recently been modifying large workstations into more workable hot desks, so they are a better fit for today's working environment!"

"Over the years, we have saved a vast number of items from ending up in landfill, and a number of major infrastructure projects, such as the AWPR, new Aberdeen Harbour and Peterhead Harbour redevelopment have all benefitted from the use of second-hand modular buildings as site offices.

"All of this not only brings massive cost savings to businesses, but it also supports the circular economy and diverts waste from landfill, reducing the impact on the environment and climate change."

Julie also delivers any scrapped or damaged furniture to Aberdeen's Wreck It Room, which works with a number of recycling businesses to ensure left over pieces, such as wood, metal, glass, ceramics, and plastics, are given a second life.

In addition to furniture and modular recycling, Greenwell also keep a stock of second-hand containers and support customers to re-use any pallet racking when they are expanding or redesigning storage space.

Reduce, reuse, and recycle is a key phrase that Greenwell has focussed on since day one of business, and it is encouraging other companies to rethink their environmental approach and investigate if there is more that they could be doing to support Scotland's climate targets.

ETZ Ltd launches £2million challenge fund

ETZ Ltd, the not-for-profit company tasked with spearheading North-east Scotland's energy transition ambition, has launched the first round of its new fund which is part of the overall energy transition supply chain pathway and challenge fund programme aimed at supporting high-growth potential companies servicing the oil and gas market take advantage of new or existing opportunities in green energy.

Specifically targeting companies located in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray, ETZ Ltd's Energy Transition Supply Chain Pathway and Challenge Fund, backed by the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund, will support development of company plans to enter new energy markets, identify capital requirements, and deliver capital investment grants to assist the energy supply chain in realising low carbon sector opportunities.

Grant funding of between £50k and £250k from an overall tranche of over £2million will be awarded to accelerate innovation and market entry, support business growth and create new jobs in the energy transition into the low-carbon market. The first tranche was announced following a successful initial pilot of the programme which saw the allocation of £1million to support 11 companies.

Freda Miller, Energy Supply Chain Programme Manager, ETZ Ltd, said: "Following on from the success of our pilot fund, which awarded just under £1million to 11 companies across the North East, ETZ Ltd is delighted to launch this first round of the programme which will deliver capital investment grants to help the energy supply chain realise new low-carbon sector opportunities.

"This fund will ultimately accelerate the development of new industry-related facilities, new equipment and existing infrastructure upgrades, including digital infrastructure, to drive innovation and market entry and therefore support company growth and creates sustainable jobs. I urge businesses which meet the criteria to apply and take their next step as the North East looks to achieve an accelerated and successful energy transition."

The first round of the ETZ Ltd Challenge Fund closes on June 5, 2023.

Milltimber School wins prestigious architectural award

The new Milltimber Primary School has won a prestigious architectural award.

The £16.4million facility, located within the Oldfold Farm development, has won the Aberdeen Society of Architects Education Design Award 2023.

The school was completed as a replacement by Robertson Construction – part of a £100million investment by Aberdeen City Council in four new schools.



KR team

KR Group recognised for their community efforts

Local Steel and Cladding company, KR Group, has won the Community Award hosted by the Federation of Small Business UK.

Thanks to their charitable and social initiatives, in particular their work with young people in the North-east, the local business was named as Scottish finalists earlier this year. In March, they attended the FSB finals in Glasgow and ultimately won the category.

"We were delighted to attend as finalists and for our efforts to be recognised on this level. To win was a very proud moment for us and our team," explains Nicola, KR Group Business Director. "Thank you to FSB for championing small businesses in this way, it's a great reminder that what we do is making an impact."

OEG Offshore continues growth with Pelagian acquisition

OEG Offshore has announced the acquisition of Pelagian, a leading provider of consultancy, engineering and installation management services to the submarine cable and offshore renewable energy industries.

Pelagian is an established UK-based company with over 20 years of experience in the subsea cable industry. Their worldwide expertise in the provision of subsea cable construction services makes them a valuable asset for OEG Offshore.

With this acquisition, OEG will be better equipped to support the cable sector across different end markets including telecommunications and interconnectors as well as offshore wind.



Ross Jamieson and Craig Palmer

Aberdeen Chef scoops top culinary accolade

An award-winning Aberdeen-based catering, events and hospitality company, is celebrating one of their chefs scooping the top accolade of Scottish Chef of the Year 2023 at the Scottish Culinary Championships held in Glasgow.

Craig Palmer, Head Chef at Wilde Thyme, which is part of the Entier family, staved off tough competition from across Scotland to take home what is classed as the Olympic gold medal for Chefs in the industry.

Craig commented: "I still cannot believe that I have won Scottish Chef of the Year; it was such an incredible honour to be recognised and make it to the finals let alone win.

"Over 200 hours of research, development and preparation went into creating the vision that was presented to the judges. I will be forever grateful to Peter and the wider Entier family for their belief in me and the investment they have made in helping me to develop my skills over the years. They have actively encouraged my creativity and have always provided support to push me outside my comfort zone to continually strive to exceed our client's expectations. When the judges announced I had won, I stood in disbelief for a few moments, but it made all my hard work over the years and leading up to the event all worthwhile."

Guiding you to weather the storm

Every business and individual has unique accountancy needs and we approach every client with a completely personal approach.

Our SBP teams in **Aberdeen, Fraserburgh, Peterhead, and Banff** can support you through anything and we have helped many local businesses to weather an uncertain storm towards calmer waters.

Whether you need help or advice on steering your business forward in 2023, let us work together with you towards a strong financial future.



SBP Accountants & Business Advisers
42 Queen's Road / Aberdeen / AB15 4YE
01224 647300
sbp-ca.co.uk

Joe Wells to appear at Aberdeen neurodiversity event

Celebrated comedian, Joe Wells, who is possibly best known for his viral clip about the struggles of having a non-autistic brother, will be in Aberdeen in May.

Joe will be speaking at an upcoming conference on the benefits of employing a neurodivergent workforce and creating a workplace culture that supports employees to reach their full potential.

During the one-day event, Neurodiversity in the Workplace - Unlocking Potential and Driving Business Success, Joe will provide an insight into his own lived experience of neurodiversity and how this has contributed to his success.

"I'm looking forward to speaking at The Umbrella Project's Neurodiversity event. It's an exciting time to be autistic as people are waking up to the, often untapped, potential of neurodivergent people and the benefits of a neurodiverse society," said Joe.

The conference will be held in Aberdeen on Tuesday, May 30 and will support the return of the popular ADHD Foundation Umbrella Project to Aberdeen.

Strings of coloured umbrellas will once again be seen across the city from the end of May until September, in celebration of the 'umbrella' term of neurodiversity, which includes ADHD, autism, dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyspraxia.

Both the Umbrella Project and the conference are being organised by city centre BID Aberdeen Inspired.

Sponsored by Harbour Energy and TMM Recruitment, the conference will be held at the Aberdeen Douglas Hotel, adjacent to the main umbrella installation on Shiprow.

It is aimed at both private and public sector businesses, with separate sessions on neurodiversity being planned for teachers and parents on Monday, May 29.

XIC brings the North-east's largest health and safety expo to P&J Live

XIC is bringing the North-east's only dedicated QHSE event, The Safety Expo, to P&J Live on September 21, 2023.

Open to everyone the expo is free to attend and aims to highlight local businesses' immense talent for health and safety products and services.

Showcasing training providers, workwear and PPE suppliers, equipment demonstrations and safety literature specialists all under one roof, the event provides the ideal opportunity for attendees to network with exhibitors and discover innovative solutions that align with their operations.

Aberdeen city makes progress in real living wage campaign

An ambitious action plan to make Aberdeen a Living Wage City, launched in November 2022 by the Aberdeen Living Wage Action Group, has seen early progress in growing the number of accredited Living Wage employers in the city.

The Action Group is a collaboration of employers and stakeholders from across the public, private and third sectors, on behalf of Community Planning Aberdeen.

There are now more than 80 accredited employers committed to voluntarily paying staff the real Living Wage in Aberdeen, including recently accredited Grampian Fasteners and bspq. The Action Group hope this activity will encourage more employers to join the movement.

However, around 10,000 workers in Aberdeen City still earn less than a real Living Wage and around 5,500 children in the city live in poverty. While the economy of Aberdeen has prospered, there are large numbers of the population who have never benefited directly from this prosperity but instead continue to be negatively impacted by the high cost of living.

Peterhead Port looks to the future

Peterhead Port Authority (PPA) has embarked on a major piece of work to help it best embrace the opportunities presented by the energy transition.

With climate change driving policy change in general, and the drive to net zero in Scotland by 2045 in particular, the PPA Board and senior management want to better understand how Peterhead can be scaled up to function more efficiently as a multi-sector port.

The study, by experts at Royal HaskoningDHV, has been commissioned by PPA in conjunction with ScottishEnterprise and is supported by port-based companies ASCO and NorSea, as well as key stakeholder Storegga.

"There are a great many opportunities arising from sectors such as offshore wind, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage, alternative fuels and decommissioning," says Keith Mackie, PPA Head of Business Development – Energy Transition.

"This study, done in collaboration with our key stakeholders, will allow us to take best advantage of these new areas while continuing to support our existing oil and gas and fisheries activities."

The joint review follows on from an earlier study commissioned by ASCO, the global integrated logistics and materials management company which operates and owns South Base terminal at Peterhead.

Plain sailing (or flying, or driving) from June onwards

Lorraine Neish,
International documentation team leader
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

The glamorous world of international trade is an ever-changing one – and the next change coming might not sound particularly sexy, but I assure you it's a welcome one.

With effect from 1, June 2023, we will migrate to plain paper printing for United Kingdom Certificates of Origin.

Over 40% of Certificates of Origin issued worldwide are now printed on plain paper.

As we move into a digital future, Chambers like ours will be at the vanguard working with the UK Government to achieve its digital ambition for a paperless border by 2025.

The move to plain paper Certificates of Origin is the first step in this journey.

It will simplify the printing process as exporters will no longer need to insert a blank Certificate of Origin correctly into the printer or hold a stock of blank certificates.

It is written in the international conventions controlling Certificates of Origin that they must be printed in colour otherwise it is likely to be refused by customs authorities.

There will also be the option to save the certificate in PDF format and email directly to your customers saving time and money.

From this date all applications will have to be made via our online platform. However, we will continue to offer the Chamber print service, which may be necessary if the country of destination requires a wet stamp.

If needed, the Chamber can prepare and complete applications for you on our esscert platform for a small fee.

Certificates of Origin approved via the online platform have additional security features such as the QR code allowing anyone with the Certificate of Origin to scan the QR code to verify the authenticity via the ICC verification website (<https://certificates.iccwbo.org>). Increasingly Customs authorities worldwide are looking to be able to verify Certificates of Origin online.

A unique certificate number will be generated by essCert when you print on plain white paper or save to PDF. You will only have the option to print once, unless you save the PDF file.

If you hold a stock of blank Certificates of Origin, please return them to us by June 30 and we will arrange a refund.

There will be no change to the issuing of Arab British Certificates of Origin and preference EUR1 certificates.

The Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce International team offer a range of services enabling up to \$1billion of goods every year to reach over 100 countries around the globe.

Last year alone we certified over 11,000 documents - and if you would like to chat about your import or export needs, we'd be delighted to hear from you.



Leading street-art festival to return to Aberdeen in June

Nuart Aberdeen, the award-winning and internationally renowned street-art festival, is to return to the walls of the Granite City from June 8-11.

The theme for this year's festival is rewilding and will see 10 acclaimed artists visit Aberdeen to create new artwork in the city, ranging from large murals to smaller, more intricate installations.

Councillor Martin Greig, culture spokesperson for Aberdeen City Council, said Nuart was a much-anticipated event, both for Aberdeen and the international street art community.

"Nuart Aberdeen has been enjoyed by many residents and visitors to the City. The designs and images have added so much welcome colour and vitality to local streets. It will be good to see the latest imaginative creations when Nuart Aberdeen returns this June."

Since the first festival in Aberdeen in 2017, it has attracted tens of thousands of visitors and locals, boosting the local economy as well as providing a lasting legacy alongside new and inspiring pieces of art throughout the city centre.

Widely regarded as the best street art festival of its kind in the world, Nuart Aberdeen is a not-for-profit event supported by partners Aberdeen Inspired and Aberdeen City Council and delivered by Reed Projects.

Aberdeenshire Council focus on circular economy

Aberdeenshire Council recycles around 70% of its street sweepings and the recovered materials have now been turned into sustainable, highly adaptable, building blocks.

The council collects all its street sweepings, which would previously have been sent to landfill, and currently sends them to Levenseat's recycling facility in Forth, Lanarkshire.

Sweepings are washed, sieved, separated, and filtered. The aggregate and graded sand recovered from the process is used to create concrete that ultimately becomes an interlocking building product known as Lev-co blocks.

With Aberdeenshire Council rolling out its new kerbside collection strategy across Aberdeenshire, blocks such as these can be used to create separated, adjustable bays so that no contamination between the various recycling streams can take place.

Chair of the council's Infrastructure Services Committee Councillor John Crawley said: "This innovative use of street sweepings is an excellent example of the circular economic approaches we should all be aspiring to for our waste and recycling.

"A circular economy helps to reduce waste, conserve resources, and in this instance is an opportunity for a business to create a new revenue stream."



Moray Barber and Derek Leith

Change at the top of EY in Aberdeen as Derek Leith exits

Energy tax expert Derek Leith has announced that he is leaving global professional services giant EY this summer.

During Mr Leith's time at the firm, EY has gone from a global headcount of around 100,000 to nearly 400,000, and revenue generated by EY's Aberdeen team has almost trebled since he took over in 2012.

Mr Leith's departure paves the way for Moray Barber, currently Head of Tax for EY in Aberdeen, to take over as head of office from July 1.

Rysco International expands operations

Rysco International, a leading provider of corrosion monitoring services for the oil and gas sector, is pleased to announce the launch of its new office in the United Kingdom. The new office will serve as a base for the company's expanding operations in the region, providing clients with access to state-of-the-art corrosion monitoring technologies and expert technical support.

The new UK office located within the Aberdeen Energy Park, Bridge of Don, will be staffed by a team of experienced corrosion monitoring professionals, who will work closely with clients to develop customised corrosion monitoring programs tailored to their specific needs. The team will also provide ongoing technical support and maintenance services, ensuring that clients can rely on Rysco Corrosion UK for long-term corrosion protection.

"We are thrilled to be expanding our operations with the launch of our new UK office," said Ryan Finlayson, CEO of Rysco International. "This new location will allow us to better serve our clients in the region and provide them with the highest level of support and expertise in corrosion monitoring."

The launch of the new UK office comes at a time of increasing demand for corrosion monitoring services in the oil and gas sector, as companies seek to minimise downtime and optimise production while ensuring the safety and reliability of their assets.

TEXO Engineering and Fabrication chosen as preferred fabricator by Mocean Energy

Wave energy specialists Mocean Energy and TEXO Engineering & Fabrication (TEXO E&F) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for TEXO E&F to become Mocean's preferred fabrication, assembly and load-out contractor for its Blue Star and Blue Horizon wave energy converters.

Aberdeen headquartered TEXO E&F was chosen by Mocean Energy after a competitive tendering process and is already providing technical support to design Mocean Energy's products for manufacture. The intention is that a formal fabrication and assembly contract will be agreed, following design completion.

Donny Marshall, Divisional Director at TEXO E&F said: "We are delighted to be working with Mocean on its cutting-edge wave energy technology. Their Blue Star product is currently in its design to manufacture phase and is being tailored to be built at our dedicated fabrication facility in Dundee."

"Harnessing wave power is an exciting way to generate renewable energy, and both our companies are ideally placed to work together to make this technology a successful commercial reality. TEXO E&F having the engineering and design capabilities along with the fabrication requirements for Mocean made it a great fit from the outset and our Project Manager Stewart Kerr's technical knowledge and experience particularly in this area was a fundamental element which was evident during the tender process".

J+S Subsea shortlisted for sustainability award

In the energy industry's only awards dedicated to decommissioning excellence, J+S Subsea has been shortlisted for the sustainability award.

The Decom North Sea Awards celebrate innovation and success in the decommissioning sector. J+S Subsea has been announced as a finalist for its significant impact in the last year in driving energy efficiencies, the circular economy or decarbonisation aligned with the energy transition.

Business Development Director, Lucinda Craig, said: "It is so gratifying to get this sort of recognition from within the industry for our sustainability initiatives.

"For J+S Subsea, our core work in oil and gas has expanded with decommissioning projects as well as a strategic move into supporting the offshore renewables sector.

"Our commitment to the net zero journey is demonstrated by our innovative Legacy Locker project, which runs alongside our other industry-leading initiatives."



Ice cream brand launches new indulgent flavour

A family-run ice cream brand has launched a new flavour after consumer research found it to be the nation's most appealing choice.

Mackie's of Scotland will see its new ice cream flavour, toffee fudge, hit shelves this month after it commissioned a thorough market research campaign which surveyed new and existing flavours with consumers.

The study was carried out by food and drink business consultants, Levercliff, and found that out of 26 different combinations, toffee fudge had the broadest appeal across the UK, with 40% of people saying it was their preferred choice.

The ice cream will be available in Scottish Tesco stores, as well as Ocado across England and Wales. Scottish Sainsbury's stores will also stock the flavour from mid-May.

Kirstin McNutt, Development Director with Mackie's oversaw the extensive market research project and subsequent flavour creation.

She said: "When developing the product, we gathered numerous amounts of data on trends, supplier ideas and market gap analysis, and ended up with a host of different flavour ideas.

"We narrowed it down to five flavour concepts, and our research found toffee fudge to be by far the most popular. The research insights also showed consumers really enjoy the textural experience of the ice cream.

"We want to provide our consumers with the flavours they love the most, and with our recent survey findings we believe our latest flavour will definitely be a crowd pleaser."

Produced on Mackie's farm in Aberdeenshire, the flavour is created by using fresh milk from its own herd of dairy cows.



Robin Mooldijk and Philippa Bounds

Shell has announced Executive Committee changes. Harry Brekelmans will step down at the end of June from his role as Projects and Technology Director, a position he has held for almost nine years. The role is being taken up by Robin Mooldijk, currently Executive Vice President Chemicals and Products. Meanwhile, Donny Ching will stand down at the end of June from the post of Legal Director, a position he has held for just over nine years. His replacement is Philippa Bounds, currently General Counsel Trading and Supply.



Natasha Mahoney

Natasha Mahoney has joined FortyTwo Studio as Senior Account Manager. She has more than 10 years' experience in digital marketing and social media gained through agency and in-house roles across Glasgow and Edinburgh. She has a BA (hons) in international marketing.



Adam Irvine

Sword UK, a provider of platform, data and applications, has welcomed Adam Irvine to the team as a Business Development Executive. He joined Sword's software services team.



Mark Riddell

TGT Diagnostics has named a new Business Development Manager to support continued growth and development in the North Sea. Mark Riddell brings over 17 years of experience gained in the oil and gas industry worldwide to his new role.



Karen Watt

SSE Thermal, a developer of flexible low-carbon energy across the UK and Ireland, has appointed Karen Watt as a Community Liaison Officer to support its ambitious carbon-capture and storage plans at Peterhead. She joins from Stewart Milne Group's Countesswells housing development in Aberdeen.



Georgios Leontidis

A leading academic from Aberdeen University has been appointed to a prestigious role helping to deliver Scotland's national artificial intelligence (AI) strategy. Georgios Leontidis, Director of the university's Interdisciplinary Centre for Data and AI, has been appointed as a member of the Scottish AI Alliance Leadership Group.



Craig Pike

Scottish law firm Ledingham Chalmers says Partner Craig Pike has been promoted to Head of its private client team. Mr Pike joined the firm as a Trainee Solicitor in 2005, qualifying in 2007 and was promoted to partner in 2015. The Aberdeen University graduate is Chairman of Aberdeen Performing Arts.



ON THE
MOVE

**Have you
changed role
recently?**



Nial McCollam

Aberdeen-headquartered STC INSISO has announced the appointment of a Senior Technology Specialist as its new Chairman. Nial McCollam's previous senior leadership roles include being Chief Technology Officer at Lloyd's Register.



Tom Walker

Tom Walker has been appointed as the new Head of Wind for Statkraft in the UK. He has 15 years of experience in the energy sector. Mr Walker joined Statkraft four years ago, but his connection with the company goes back much further - through a previous role at Airvolution, which was Statkraft's Exclusive Development Partner.



Andrew Smith

The Alternative Board (TAB) Aberdeenshire East has appointed Andrew Smith as its first Business Development Manager. Waterloo Quay-based TAB currently has more than 15 Aberdeenshire members utilising its business advisory, planning and coaching services.



Kirsty Dunning

Kirsty Dunning has returned to Raeburn Christie Clark & Wallace as an Associate Solicitor, where she will be focusing on supporting clients with legal advice on executries, as well as wills and powers of attorney, tax and care planning.



Nicola Hook

OEG Offshore UK has welcomed Nicola Hook to its Aberdeen team as Key Account Manager. She joins the Kintore office with more than 15 years of experience in commercial and business development roles in the energy sector.



Linzi Walker

Estate and lettings agency Northwood Aberdeen has appointed Linzi Walker as Marketing Co-ordinator to help support the firm's further expansion and continued growth of its estate-agency offering. With a marketing career spanning more than 10 years, she has worked in a range of sectors from oil and gas to retail at Union Square.



Mario Cincotta

EthosEnergy has appointed Mario Cincotta, Former CEO of ItalPresseGauss and Senior Vice President of Norican Group, as its new Executive Vice President of East Hemisphere. He will be based in Italy and report to the CEO. He brings with him 25 years of experience across the energy industry having spent 20 years with the GE Energy business in various leadership roles.



Helen Peterkin-Nicol

Helen Peterkin-Nicol has joined Doqaru as Sales Enablement Projects Lead, bringing over 20 years of industry experience in sales process and data management.

Send your good news to bulletin@agcc.co.uk
to feature in our new weekly mailer.



Marc Coull and Craig Davis

Rovco, a global provider of advanced subsea robotics and integrated survey solutions, has taken a major step forward as it progresses plans for greater growth. The company will now operate through two separate business units - each one focusing and delivering on a specific area of expertise. Marc Coull, who joined the company last year as Operations Manager, has been promoted to Director of Inspection, Repair and Maintenance. Craig Davis, formerly Global Account Director at Rovco, becomes Director of Site Characterisation and will be responsible for leading the development of the new business unit.



Philip Crawford

Asthma and Allergy Foundation has appointed Philip Crawford as its new Head of Income Generation and Business Development. The Scottish charity provides evidence-based health information, confidential advice, and support to people with asthma, their families, and carers across Scotland.



Rob Wicks

Rob Wicks has been announced as Managing Director of P&J Live, Aberdeen. He has 25 years of experience in the sports and events industry, working with rights holders, brands, host venues, governing bodies, promoters and agencies. Mr Wicks joins P&J Live on June 5 from his current role as Commercial Director at Aberdeen Football Club.



Irene Grassick

AberNecessities has a new Operations Manager. Irene Grassick worked for over 40 years in the NHS. As a senior nurse and midwife, the charity says she brings a calm and practical outlook to AberNecessities, which will be vital at the busy Dyce HQ. Irene joins the company as it forecasts continued high demand due to the ongoing effects of CV19 and the cost-of-living crisis.



Abrar Khan

TechForce, a provider of cyber-security solutions, announces the recruitment of a new employee to support the company's continued growth and enhance its ability to defend businesses against the rising tide of cyber threats. Abrar Khan is a cyber enthusiast with a master's degree in cybersecurity.



Mel Smith and Jolene Edwards

CS Group has announced two appointments. Mel Smith has been promoted to Business Manager at Grampian Packaging Supplies. She has extensive experience in commercial sales and business development within the packaging industry, as well as a background in the commercial-waste sector. Jolene Edwards has joined CS Group as Group HR Manager. She possesses in-depth knowledge of HR and commercial management across numerous industries, both in Aberdeen and abroad.



Heather May Morgan

Heather May Morgan, a lecturer in the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, has been appointed to the role of Dean for Enterprise and Innovation at Aberdeen University. She will take forward key institutional priorities including increased engagement with businesses and other organisations, for commercial and societal impact.



Amy Truesdale

Amy Truesdale has joined Surface Corrosion Consultants as an Accounts Assistant. She is a first-class honours history graduate from Edinburgh University and takes on the role after a period of travel and work experience in hospitality, retail, administration and recruitment.



Katie Stewart

Aberdeen-based, family-run packaging company Packed Up has promoted Katie Stewart to Operations Manager. The firm, which was founded in May 2021, has further ambitious growth plans in the pipeline.



Leah Hutcheson

Children's charity AberNecessities says Leah Hutcheson has joined the team. With a track record in various financial and administrative roles in the hospitality sector, she will be responsible for accounting, budgeting, financial reporting, invoicing and payroll.



Guy Finlayson and Mike Cuthbert

The conservation charity dedicated to restoring the River Dee's potential has appointed two new trustees. The River Dee Trust is welcoming Mike Cuthbert and Guy Finlayson. Mr Cuthbert lives on the Dee at Dinnet. Following a career in finance, he is keen to help restore salmon stocks and habitat. Mr Finlayson is a local business owner at the Strong Water Co. on Banchory High Street.



Fiona Heinonen

Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action has welcomed Fiona Heinonen, CEO of children's charity Kayleigh's Wee Stars, to its Board of Directors. She was appointed to the role at AVA's annual meeting.



Paula Holland

Paula Holland has taken on the leadership of KPMG UK's Aberdeen office with the retirement of Martin Findlay following 31 years with the professional services firm. Ms Holland is now Office Senior Partner, leading 125 colleagues in the city. She joined KPMG 21 years ago and moved north from Leeds to join the Aberdeen office in 2015, initially as a Director, before becoming a Partner in 2022.





Architect appointed for Hutton institute's Just Transition Hub

Architectural practice jmarchitects has been chosen as the architect for The James Hutton Institute's multimillion pound Just Transition Hub project in Aberdeen.

The new hub will create a state-of-the-art virtual and physical collaborative facility in the heart of the Institute's Craigiebuckler campus to drive engagement, training and innovation around nature-based net zero solutions in the North-east and across Scotland.

This will include acting as an incubator for "spin out" companies, drawing on the institute's expertise in environmental, crop and food science, as well as wider public engagement, including a café. It is expected to create 200 new jobs and draw £1.6million into the local economy.

Yunming Thomson, Project Director for jmarchitects says: "The James Hutton Institute's new Just Transition Hub represents a shift in the way sharing of knowledge is delivered in the transition to net zero in the North-east. We are delighted to be involved with the development of such an innovative and significant project."

Prof Lee-Ann Sutherland, Project Lead on the Just Transition Hub at the Hutton, says: "We're already really excited by the design proposals we are working on, including remodelling areas of our existing

building, which would result in lower lifecycle carbon dioxide emissions. It's just one element of the wider work we're doing towards the transition and climate resilience, alongside our HydroGlen green hydrogen demonstrator and work to further reduce our own footprint as an institute across all our sites in Scotland."

In addition to jmarchitects' appointment, Goodsons Associates and CCDP have now also been appointed to the design team, providing civil and engineering services and mechanical and electrical engineering respectively, alongside project manager Faithful+Gould.

The hub has the backing of the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund, which awarded the institute £7.2million to help develop the project late last year.

The Just Transition Fund also awarded a further £6million to the institute to fund its HydroGlen green hydrogen powered farming community demonstrator project at its Climate Positive Farming Initiative at Glensaugh research farm, in Aberdeenshire.

Design and planning of the hub, which will be part of The James Hutton Institute's International Land Use Study Centre (ILUSC), is expected to continue through this year, with planning permission expected to then be sought in 2024, with construction targeted for 2025.

An early start to develop a passion for learning

ISA's state of the art Preschool is a caring, supportive, and stimulating environment that encourages creativity, exploration, and investigation across our curriculum.

From Preschool age upwards, we pride ourselves on ensuring children are free to be themselves, encouraging natural curiosity and a zest for learning.

www.isa.aberdeen.sch.uk



ISATM | **50**



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE



ANNUAL CALENDAR REF. 4947/1A

BEGIN YOUR OWN TRADITION

Jamieson & Carry

142 Union Street, Aberdeen
Tel: 01224 641219