

Flower power

Creating green spots
in urban spaces

Polution solutions

Changing our approach
to plastic

Super food

Consumer appetites in
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Blow your mind



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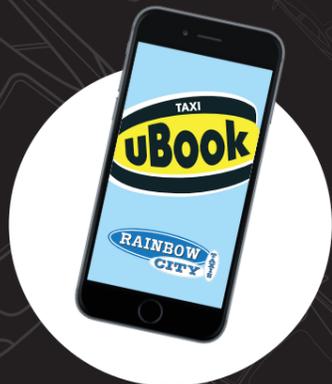
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May's theme
Transport & Infrastructure

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Our Partners

As well as helping our member businesses to be better through a range of activities, the Chamber is committed to progressing key issues to create the conditions for success.

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.

If you'd like to find out more contact our head of membership, Seona Shand

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— Creating a sustainable future

THE Regional Economic Strategy provides a shared vision and ambition for the future to align commitment, investment and action in pursuit of its economic growth and diversification objectives. Its co-signatories are Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Opportunity North East, although the strategy is influenced and driven by a wider collaboration, including a range of national partners with the Chamber playing a key role in the authoring and delivery of the refreshed action plan published late last year.

The vision is one of economic renaissance that results in a diversified and resilient regional economy. The plan is built around the four pillars of innovation, internationalisation, infrastructure and inclusive economic growth and it's the latter two that I will focus on in keeping with the theme of this issue.

What do we mean by inclusive economic growth? A broader and more resilient economy will see companies growing through investment, generating high-value products and services. This will create new employment opportunities in the region across all sectors and enhance productivity, enabling as many people as possible to benefit, including groups that currently face barriers to accessing high quality and productive jobs, reducing inequality across the city region.

This will require the development of the right motivations and skills across all age groups, with Developing the Young Workforce playing a key role. In turn this will assist in retaining the best people here and attracting new talent from outside the region; one of the objectives of the regional narrative project.

Allied to this, developing key assets such as our tourism and cultural offerings, continued progress with the City Centre Masterplan and

regeneration of our northern towns, will provide the necessary economic catalyst and contribute towards our proposition to attract the investment we need to make all this happen.

Sustainability is a key theme within the action plan. The region's natural assets and clean environment are also its economic assets and therefore must be safeguarded to support our sectors, particularly tourism, food, drink, agriculture and fisheries. We have exciting opportunities associated with carbon capture and storage; and energy transition as the oil and gas industry and its supply chain evolves to a lower carbon future. The Chamber is also working with Zero Waste Scotland to create real traction around the circular economy concept.

The North-east already has significant strengths in the quality of its built and natural environment, global connections to key markets and we are in the midst of our biggest ever programme of infrastructure projects as outlined in our investment tracker.

But we can't rest on our laurels and our future connectivity, both physical and digital, needs to remain a priority - more on that next month.

On all of this, the Chamber continues to work with a range of stakeholders to deliver on our policy plan priorities. Bringing to life our commitment to help businesses to be better and create the buoyant, diversified regional economy that will enable our members and their employees to be more successful and prosperous.

Russell Borthwick
chief executive



Blackadders merges with Plenderleath Runcie



Johnstone Clark, managing partner, Blackadders

NATIONAL law firm Blackadders LLP is to reinforce its service offering by merging with Aberdeen-based solicitors, Plenderleath Runcie. The merger will result in the firm increasing its talent pool to 28 partners and more than 230 staff. Partners at Plenderleath Runcie - John Plenderleath, Colin Runcie and Neil Robb - will become partners with Blackadders with both companies trading under the Blackadders banner.

Plenderleath Runcie has particular expertise in the fields of corporate law, commercial property and private client. Johnstone Clark, managing partner at Blackadders, said: "Plenderleath Runcie is a highly-respected law firm in Aberdeen and brings considerable expertise and a well-established track record.

"The merger underpins Blackadders' investment in people and our business infrastructure to reinforce our position for continued strategic growth. By joining forces with Plenderleath Runcie, Blackadders will have a stronger presence in the North-east and further increase the strength and depth of our client service. We look forward to welcoming the team on board and working with them and enhancing our services to clients."

BP North Sea contract for Subsea 7

SUBSEA 7 SA has been awarded a substantial contract by BP Exploration for the provision of subsea construction, inspection, repair and maintenance services covering BP's North Sea region portfolio of assets West of Shetland and in the Northern North Sea.

Under the terms of the five-year agreement i-Tech Services will provide a life of field support vessel complete with work class and observation class ROVs capable of performing inspection, survey, intervention, light subsea construction and emergency response services.

Unique music theme for CLAN lunch

NORTH-EAST charity CLAN has announced plans for a unique music theme for its annual fundraising lunch.

The CLAN Jukebox Lunch is the first of its kind and, after enjoying a glass of fizz, guests will be asked to choose their favourite tunes, which will be played throughout the afternoon.

The BP sponsored event will take place on Friday, May 10 at the Marcliffe Hotel and Spa. In 2018, the lunch, attended by 200, raised £12,000 for CLAN's cancer support services.

During the afternoon there will be a raffle and auction, live entertainment and a two-course lunch.

SureVoIP strikes partnership

A SCOTTISH technology firm has agreed a new strategic partnership that will provide comprehensive communications solutions to businesses and other users across the UK. SureVoIP is a Software as a Service (SaaS) provider which specialises in using the internet to deliver telecoms - more commonly known as voice-over internet protocol (VoIP).

The Aberdeen-based company, which is a network operator with its own equipment in Edinburgh and London, has been selected by state-of-the-art gigabit fibre network provider, Grain Connect Ltd, as its new VoIP partner.

In the first five weeks 500 business customers migrated across to the SureVoIP network, increasing the firm's customer base by 40%.

This collaborative approach has resulted in greater performance and reliability for calls and consistently high service delivery for Grain's clients.

\$8m contract for Wood

WOOD has been awarded an \$8m contract by ADNOC Refining to deliver pre-front end engineering and design (pre-FEED) for a new refinery in Ruwais, in the western region of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, which is set to become the world's largest refining and petrochemicals complex.

The award is for a state-of-the-art refinery with a capacity of 600,000 barrels of crude oil per day. The new refinery will be designed to have full conversion capability and allow integration with existing petrochemicals infrastructure in Ruwais.



— It's easy being green —

IMAGINE a portable garden which waters and feeds itself, which can be changed with the seasons and can be as small as a car parking space or as big as a football pitch.

Imagine how, with grass, shrubs and flowers these gardens could transform urban spaces, from city centres to the areas outside offices or even atriums.

Aberdeen company Portable Ecosystems has just installed the first prototype of such a garden at the Solway Air Museum in Carlisle.

The firm has built the prototype having been awarded £20,000 as a winner of the 2018 Geovation Challenge for companies with ideas for using smart technologies to improve our communities. The challenge was for innovative solutions to make our communities greener, smarter and sustainable.

Company founder and director Andrew Sage, who has an IT background, joined forces with his brother Philip, who is from a forestry background, to develop the idea.

"Portable Ecosystems is dedicated to improving the quality of life of urban dwellers by creating new green spaces in the heart of our communities," said Andrew. "This is essential for our future because research has shown that green spaces improve mental and physical health and wellbeing, as well as contributing to improving air quality and providing a vital habitat for pollinating insects.

"Rather than the uninspiring planters you sometimes see in city centres these are actual gardens which you can walk on and interact with. They are self-contained so they have their own water and feed unit controlled by our computer technology so they monitor themselves and report back and we can then send someone out to deal with any issue if required."

He explained that the individual units are based on the footprint of a shipping container so they are easily transportable but are designed to enable multiple units to be joined together.

"Our thinking is that if, for example, a building is knocked down and it is likely



"Research has shown that green spaces improve mental and physical health and wellbeing, as well as contributing to improving air quality and providing a vital habitat for pollinating insects."

**Andrew Sage,
company founder,
Portable Ecosystems**



Unclad demonstration garden unit by Portable Ecosystems



Plans are underway to introduce street-side seating in the city centre

to be some time before work starts on a new development the derelict land could be temporarily transformed into a green space which people could use. The units are leased so when work is about to start they could be removed and taken elsewhere.”

He said they were ideal for creating green spaces in city centres.

“Two or three units could be placed outside St Nicholas House, for example, with grass and plants and the units can be changed with each season. They could be installed in office car parks or atriums giving people a pleasant place to sit in spring or summer and there is clear evidence that seeing a bit of garden as opposed to concrete makes people feel better.

“There are multiple uses for them. Another possibility is that they could be used as security barriers because once in place they cannot be moved. Now that our prototype is in place we are geared up and ready for our first orders.”

The gardens aren't the only green thinking happening in the Aberdeen City Region. Chris Smith is one of the volunteers who has been working on a series of transformational projects

for the area as part of the Vanguard initiative, including looking at how outdoor seating might be introduced on Union Street and other city centre places.

“One of the criticisms we keep hearing about Union Street is that there are few opportunities to stop and spend time, to appreciate the buildings - that there's no real linger space,” said Chris.

“When you look at the top half of Union Street, the pavements are actually very generous. There have been previous planning applications for outdoor seating but these have tended to propose the seating directly alongside the buildings, which is right in the main pedestrian route. This also causes pinch-points at bus stops and other street furniture, so often applications have been refused.

“Our proposal is to place areas of seating next to the street, between the bus stops and other structures, in what are effectively dead spaces, so as not to interfere with the flow of pedestrians.

“As it's obviously not ideal to sit next to a bus lane, we would introduce reasonably high glazed screens and low-level planting to create pleasant

spaces and to protect people, as far as possible, from the traffic, noise and, importantly, any breeze that may be blowing down the street. Businesses could then supply loose seating and tables and potentially heaters, blankets - anything they think will help encourage use.

“We're not proposing anything radical as this is done in many other cities - including those with climates similar to ours. We're not suggesting people are going to sit down for three course meals necessarily but they might have a coffee, a sandwich and just spend a bit of time there.

“We also think the Rose Street and Thistle Street area could really benefit from a similar idea given just how many food outlets and other businesses there are. Almost all the pavements in this area are too narrow for seating, so what we propose to introduce are 'parklets,' which are typically decked areas of seating which sit on the roadside itself, leaving the pavements clear. These could be located in an existing parking space, or on a one-way street which may be wider than it needs to be. They're about the size of a parking space, can be modular and easily transported,

often including planting and bikes racks. Again, they're popular in other cities and we think they could work well here too - we've already got a very popular one down at The Green.

“And why stop at just Rose and Thistle Streets? There are plenty other similar sites and businesses around the city that could potentially benefit.”

An Aberdeen City Council spokesperson said: “Aberdeen has



“Research has shown that green spaces improve mental and physical health and wellbeing, as well as contributing to improving air quality and providing a vital habitat for pollinating insects.”

Andrew Sage,
company founder,
Portable Ecosystems

many beautiful parks and green spaces and Aberdeen City Council works with residents, communities and businesses to maximise the benefits of these to all. The council's Green Space Network connects various habitats and species, urban and rural green spaces to each other and the communities around them. It offers a wide range of social, health economic and environmental benefits.

“Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) explains the purpose of the network and how it will be protected and enhanced through the planning process. The network has been identified to protect and enhance designated natural heritage sites; to improve connectivity between habitats and open spaces; and to promote opportunities for physical activity and access to the outdoors. It also considers climate change adaptation opportunities and flood risk or alleviation, the distribution of existing open spaces and their relationship with communities, development opportunities, health and deprivation information and transport issues.”

The leader of Aberdeenshire Council, Jim Gifford, said: “The open spaces of Aberdeenshire contribute greatly

to the quality of life of our residents whether it is for active or passive recreation, or just enjoyment of the open air.

“While we have a wide range of managed, formal open spaces for residents to enjoy, our area is also blessed with a multitude of beaches, forests, mountains and other exceptional outdoor opportunities, as well as a rich cultural history.

“Our Parks and Open Spaces Strategy aims to provide high quality multi-functional open space that is easily accessible, safe, welcoming, rich in biodiversity and sustainably managed for the future; which encourages a sense of belonging and enhances the quality of life of those people who live, work in and visit Aberdeenshire.

“The delivery of open space in new developments is achieved through the master planning process in accordance with the Local Development Plan, and with specific reference to the Supplementary Guidance on Public Open Space.”

What would you like to see happen in your work environment to make it greener?



"During the past few years, Aiken Group has spent over £1m of its own reserves on research and development projects. One of our primary areas of focus has been on looking at new ways of improving clean-up technology such as sloop treatment and ground remediation because, for us, it is crucial to look at sustainable methods of diversification which play a part in creating a greener future for us all.

"We see working in collaboration with others as one of the routes forward and we firmly believe that progress in this area could be better achieved with greater support and increased investment at all levels, including government."

Danny Donald, *managing director, Aiken Group*



"Having taken over the management of one of the most prestigious and historic sites in the city some two years ago, the environmental challenges were obvious. The Hill of Rubislaw site is unique in so many ways and with most of the buildings being constructed in the 1980's there remains the need to change. Fortunately, the site owners are engaged with contributing to making our environment greener which is in line with my own vision.

"My hopes are that the site will evolve into an area of environmental excellence. We are looking at various projects which will meet client and tenant expectations. I would like to see the recycling improved, electric car charging ports implemented, inclusion of more designated bike lanes on the site; and water conservation."

Kevin Stirling, *senior building manager, Mayfield Asset and Property Management*



"In order to be able to accomplish big sustainable changes in our work environment, we need to realise that we cannot do it on our own, we have to work together across communities, business and countries. Our trading house Bertling Enviro has one way of contributing to this by transporting waste from the UK to Sweden and converting it to energy.

"Our offices are located in Sweden and the UK but we are supported by a wider global setup of all the Bertling offices. The strength in our organisation is our access to the Bertling group's global logistic network and our hands on approach with all of our partners within waste management."

Michael Yannakoyorgous, *development director, Bertling Enviro*



An Industry In Transition

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The crucial role of Vision 2035 in driving the continued competitiveness of the UKCS will come under the spotlight at the OGUK Industry Conference.

With a 2019 conference theme of 'An Industry in Transition', delegates will hear industry leaders and keynote speakers reflect on the people, business processes and diversification opportunities needed to unlock growth as the sector continues to emerge from one of the toughest downturns in its history.

At the heart of the agenda is industry's shared ambition for the future – Vision 2035 – which looks to add a generation of productive life to the UK Continental Shelf and expand supply chain opportunities at home, abroad and into other sectors.

The agenda will take on three broad areas;

- Energy transition
- Business transition
- People transition



The importance of nurturing leadership

by Mitch Crichton,
regional chair,
Engineering Construction Industry Training Board
(ECITB)



AS projects become ever more complex in all areas of industry, creating and maintaining a sustainable business is increasingly dependent on competent and responsible leaders. There is, in fact, a growing recognition of the value that competent and capable project professionals can offer to all areas of society.

While the onus is on employers to ensure that their workforce receives the best possible training to equip them with the skills to manage such complex projects, the benefits to both employer and employee, as well as clients, are manifold.

In the North-east of Scotland, some 22 local employers and a number of training providers are supported by the local ECITB team to give the engineering construction industry workforce the skills it needs to meet the challenges of the future. Nationally, ECITB invests around £25m each year supporting employers across the country to attract, develop and qualify their people in a wide range of craft, technical and professional disciplines.

The main focus is on all aspects of development and training for

everyone working in the industry, from new entrants to senior personnel. In recent years, it became apparent through conversation with employers in Aberdeen that there was a specific skills gap in a number of areas across the discipline of project management.

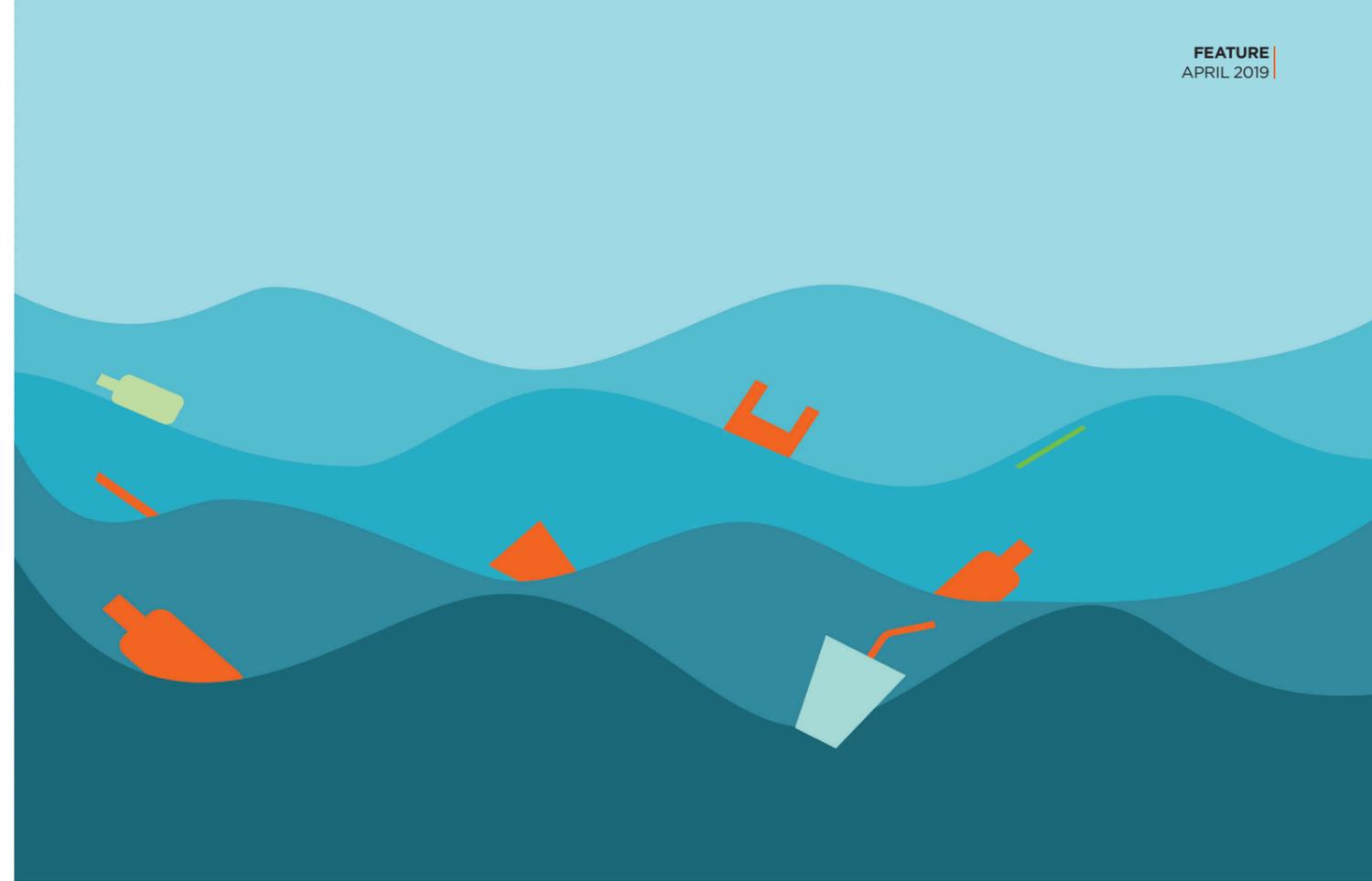
As a consequence, ECITB invested in the delivery of the Association for Project Management's Registered Project Professional (RPP) qualification – a pan-sector standard for those who can successfully demonstrate the capabilities of a responsible leader and who has the ability to manage a complex project.

As well as being a recognised route to becoming a Chartered Project Professional (ChPP), the benefits of such a programme are felt all round: by developing and recruiting APM-registered RPPs, employers are actively demonstrating an investment to deliver competitive advantage through improved project delivery with a greater likelihood of project success. For the employee, it is a demonstration of their competence, ethical behaviour and commitment that makes them stand out and sets them apart in the profession. Clients, meanwhile, have an increased

confidence in the capabilities of the project leader they are dealing with.

RPP is all about identifying those who can achieve success in a complex project, programme and portfolio environment through the management of others. As someone who has gone down both the RPP and ChPP route, I can testify to its recognition of the diverse paths individuals take into the profession having begun my career as an apprentice working for a manufacturer and installer of tanks, vessels and heat exchangers in Motherwell.

Meanwhile, as requests for support increases, ECITB is working hard to ensure that its strategy captures all aspects of what industry needs going forward. Collaboration is key: it is imperative that we tackle the common issues together as a community and, as such, our short, medium and long term focus very much aligns with Vision 2035, a joint initiative by the Oil & Gas Authority and Oil & Gas UK which aims to help shape the oil and gas elements of the UK Government's emerging Industrial Standard.



Plastic fantastic



“My personal vision is to get close to 100% of plastic staying within the system when right now, depending on where you live, it is something like 6 to 14%.”

**Carole Monnier,
founder,
Mare Nostrum Global Initiative**

EVERY 60 seconds the equivalent of one refuse truck full of plastic waste is being dumped in the world's oceans, with an estimated 80% coming from land-based sources.

While it may be a massive worldwide problem the Mare Nostrum Global Initiative, a not for profit organisation whose founder is based in Aberdeen, believes that the solution lies as much in changing the behaviour of individual communities as in innovation and technological solutions.

That is why Carole Monnier is working to make Aberdeen the first 'plastic neutral' city in the UK.

Carole, a Canadian by birth, thinks Aberdeen is an ideal location not just because she regards it as home, but because of the city's affinity with the sea which has provided its livelihood for generations through trade, fishing and today, energy.

“When we talk about plastic neutrality we are talking about creating a more circular economy, moving away from single use plastics,” she said. “We use a piece of plastic for a couple of

seconds, literally, and then is lost to the value chain. Plastic neutrality is how we might move forward into a new plastic economy which allows plastic to stay within the value chain.”

She said that considerable interest has already been expressed by people from a range of sectors including energy, academia and other not-for-profit organisations and the next stage is to establish a steering committee and then map the plastic footprint of Aberdeen to establish the 'hot spots' and where changes can most readily be achieved.

“My personal vision is to get close to 100% of plastic staying within the system when right now, depending on where you live, it is something like 6 to 14%. We are in no way saying 'no more plastic' because it is ubiquitous, highly useful, has created economy, has created solutions around the way we package food and is very useful. However, we can't just keep using it and throwing it away.

“There is no lack of motivation or lack of passion for change. There are no simple solutions but there



are actions we can take beyond technological innovation. Innovation, technology, policy and the behaviour of responsible citizens - all these pieces have to come together for the whole system shift in the way we need it to."

There are some truly fantastic changes happening when it comes to plastic technology. A former oil worker is transforming the way fresh food is transported and also helping reduce the huge amount of polystyrene currently used in the operation which can be difficult and costly to recycle.

Alex Duthie Junior, a mechanical engineer, has been working on the project for five years and gave up his job as a quality consultant 15 months ago to concentrate on the Methlick-based family business ThermaPak.

While the unique packaging which has been developed may have other uses, the company is concentrating on the food sector - predominantly fish and meat - and has a growing number of small to medium sized clients around the North and North-east.

Alex explained that for around 75 years expandable polystyrene (EPS) has been used to keep products cool during transportation to destinations around the UK and overseas.

"We have been working with a number of butchers and fish companies who deliver all over the UK, including to Michelin starred restaurants, and who obviously have to get their produce to its destination in prime condition and below the 8°C limit set by the Food Standards Agency.

"Until now they have, to some extent, had to accept the EPS containers which the producers supply. Not only does that create a disposal problem but these containers can be fairly easily damaged which can mean the goods may not be accepted on delivery.

"For polystyrene to be recycled it generally has to be compacted and as only a handful of places around the country offer that service it makes it difficult for the end users. Our challenge was to provide a price competitive bespoke alternative which was as efficient and could be easily recycled or reused. One of our customers has actually had to go round and collect the polystyrene containers in which his butcher meat was delivered to ensure he doesn't lose the orders.

"We have a product based on two parts - a completely water and

moisture resistant outer skin and an independently tested thermal lining. Both are fully recyclable and able to be put in your general plastics recycling bin.

“Supermarkets and takeaway shops are quite happy to take in lorryloads of materials and sell to us and then leave us with an end-of-life product - packaging - we can't do anything with. It ends up in general waste or recycling and we then have to pay for that disposal through our local authority.”

**Craig Donoghue,
director,
One Stop Waste Solutions**

"Both are flat packed but can be turned into a sturdy and effective container in seconds or returned to their flat state for easy storage. We also manufacture the bio-degradable gel packs which keep the produce at the right temperature for up to 40 hours.

"This is all about sustainability. While polystyrene is 100% recyclable, in some forms it is so expensive to achieve it makes it impractical.

"Society is changing and methods of cold chain transportation have to change which is why we have spent so much time finding the right product for the small to medium companies we are working with.

"There is tremendous interest in our products and we are looking to expand to meet the demand."

Craig Donoghue, director of One Stop Waste Solutions, believes the responsibility for the cost of disposal of materials should lie with the producer, although he believes legislation may well drive that.

"Supermarkets and takeaway shops are quite happy to take in lorryloads of materials and sell to us and then leave us with an end-of-life product - packaging - we can't do anything with.

It ends up in general waste or recycling and we then have to pay for that disposal through our local authority.

"Much of the 'recycled' material which could not be recycled in the UK was being shipped to China, but there has been a major clampdown on contamination and they will now no longer take the bad with the good. This has had a significant effect on the value of recyclables.

"Legislation is driving everything away from landfill and there is going to be a ban on black bag general waste in Scotland from January 1, 2021. However, it has been estimated there is a one million tonne gap in capacity in Scotland for landfill which might mean shipping it abroad to waste to energy plants in Europe or landfill in England."

He said a £150m waste to energy plant is to be built in Aberdeen but it is not yet clear if that will be operational by the time the ban is imposed (estimated for completion in 2022).

He believes part of the solution lies with a change in attitudes and better planning. One major step would be to make any packaging which comes in contact with food compostable because of the difficulty of cleaning contaminated plastic.

"If plastic bottles had some value through a 10p or 15p deposit that would provide the incentive to take them back rather than have them end up as rubbish. Coffee cups are another huge problem. Massive coffee shop corporates, and local coffee shops, are using single use packaging waste every day - hundreds of thousands of cups - and for me everything they produce should be 100% recyclable or compostable and collection facilities should be clearly identified.

"That might put a few pence on the price of a cup of coffee but if everyone has to do it then no one gains any advantage.

"Business has to start being creative and think not just about what they are buying, producing and selling, but what waste they produce and the end of life of the product."



Add Energy's EVP, Peter Adam

Add Energy adds contracts and staff

ENERGY consultancy, Add Energy, is on track to achieve its growth ambitions after a strong start to the year.

The firm's Aberdeen headquartered Asset and Integrity Management (AIM) division has secured new contracts totalling more than £250,000 in recent weeks, bolstering its £1.1m of new wins announced at the end of 2018.

Add Energy has recently recruited 19 staff and contractors in the last month and is continuing its recruitment drive.

Executive vice president Peter Adam said: "With oil and gas production expected to increase over the next five years, maintenance and integrity management is critical to both safe and efficient operations. We look forward to working with our clients to enhance their activity."

Xodus expands in Perth

INTERNATIONAL energy consultancy Xodus Group has grown its team in Perth by almost 50% after a batch of new contract wins in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region over the last 12 months.

The revenue of Xodus' APAC office increased by more than half and work worth A\$1.2m was secured in the first few weeks of 2019.

The strong start to the year led to the creation of new jobs with several more additions expected over the next few months.

Simon Allison, Xodus' operations director for the APAC region, said: "Last year was our strongest year since we opened the Perth office in 2012. We have had a very positive start to 2019 which is allowing us to strengthen our team in key areas such as field development, where we are expecting a rise in new projects this year.

"After a tough few years for the industry, it's positive to see an increase of activity in Western Australia. As well as our Australian work, we're also growing our presence in South-east Asia where we have established relationships with several key players in the region."



Simon Allison

How to save £831m

MILLENNIALS in Scotland could save a whopping £831m a year by making minor changes to their spending habits, new research from Barclays found.

Seven in 10 (69.5%) of millennials in Scotland admit they don't save enough – or anything at all – with new findings showing that the average 20-37-year-old in the region spends £3,186 a year on takeaways, eating out, daily treats, socialising and buying new clothes. This is slightly less than the UK average of £3,312.72.

According to Barclays' research, millennials in Scotland spend, on average, £766.32 a year on socialising; £739.92 on new clothes, shoes and accessories; £673.80 on eating out; £526.92 on takeaways; and £478.92 a year on daily treats like coffees.

Rather than consigning themselves to a life of frugality, Barclays' research shows that making small 'sacrifices', such as replacing every fifth takeaway, shop-bought coffee and night out with free alternatives or having a night in, could save Scottish millennials a hefty £637.17 each a year on average.

Energy centre operator for TECA

SCOTTISH facilities management firm FES FM has been appointed to operate the energy centre for The Event Complex Aberdeen (TECA) and two on-site hotels, which will showcase renewable technologies contributing to the city's position as the energy capital of Europe.

The multi-million-pound venue will attract increasing numbers of visitors from local, national and international markets due to its capacity for attracting global events. The inclusion of energy centre will mean it will be one of the most sustainable venues of its type in the UK.

The energy centre's combined cooling heat and power (CCHP) facility will use various technologies to provide power, heat and cooling to TECA.

At the heart of the CCHP is the largest hydrogen fuel cell installation in the UK. Originally pioneered by organisations such as NASA, fuel cell technology now provides a well-proven commercial heat and power solution, delivering significant air quality improvements over conventional power generation methods.

An anaerobic digestion plant will use Aberdeen's food waste, agricultural crops and waste products to produce renewable biofuel which will also feed into the CHCP. The energy centre has the potential to be expanded to supply sustainable energy to the remainder of the wider masterplan development area and surrounding neighbourhoods.

Watch, share and comment

THE Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) has released a collection of short videos on YouTube, where six inspiring social entrepreneurs share their innovative ideas on the theme of health and wellbeing.

Filmed at the sold out Enterprising Third Sector conference in October last year, these TED talk style videos cover a variety of different topics including how to reimagine city spaces to be welcoming to all, how to empower clients through employment and how we can improve public transport for those with a dementia diagnosis.

Filmed and edited by Station House Media Unit, the videos showcase the expertise and work of a wide range of local and national organisations. Absafe, Inspire, SACRO, Business Pastors, Sheddocksley Baptist Church and Go Upstream all provided speakers.

The videos are now available on ACVO's YouTube channel.

Biotech company's £1.8m grant

NOVABIOTICS has secured £1.8m in grant funding as part of a Department of Health and Social Care research competition aimed at tackling antimicrobial resistance in humans.

The funding is to further develop Novamycin, NovaBiotics' first-in-class antifungal compound with potential to combat life threatening and drug resistant blood stream and tissue fungal infections.

The project aims to transform Novamycin from an exciting, laboratory-stage antifungal compound to a fully formulated antifungal drug candidate ready for clinical testing. This would represent a potential breakthrough in advancing Novamycin further towards addressing the significant need for new, safe, effective and therapies for life-threatening invasive fungal infections.

The grant was made as part of a £10m Small Business Research Initiative competition run by Innovate UK on behalf of DHSC, with the aim of supporting the implementation of the Government's UK Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy.

Grampian Cycle Partnership launched

A NEW collective voice for all those interested in cycling across the North-east has been formally launched. Grampian Cycle Partnership (GCP) is now formally constituted as a voluntary organisation with appointed committee members. This follows on from the event, hosted by Nestrans at Robert Gordon University in September last year, 'Cycling in the North East - Moving Forward Together' which brought together almost 200 of the area's cycling community.

Anyone looking to get involved or for more information on the Grampian Cycle Partnership please visit www.grampiancyclepartnership.org or email info@grampiancyclepartnership.org



OLD BUSINESS WAY

NEW BUSINESS WAY

Some examples of circular initiatives

CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East) is a social enterprise working to improve health, wellbeing and the environment and create employment within disadvantaged communities in North-east Scotland.

It operates FareShare Grampian, part of the UK-wide FareShare network, which receives perfectly good, in-date surplus from the food industry that would otherwise go to waste. This is distributed to charities and community organisations who in turn distribute it to those in food poverty. FareShare distributed around 500 tonnes of produce in 2018, saving 2,125 of carbon emissions.

The **Joint Equipment Centre** is a partnership between Aberdeenshire Council and the NHS to share and reuse items such as hoists and specialist equipment. An impressive 42,724 items were delivered in the last year – a tenfold increase on what organisers were expecting.

The vision was to rationalise the small equipment stores to enable better management of stock and resources. In the last eight years, the service has delivered £24m with an equipment spend of £3.5m. Located in Inverurie, the centre has helped to stabilise the budget needed to equip Aberdeenshire residents with the important tools and support they need.

SEA is committed to adjusting economic, social and environmental behaviours to build a resourceful and sustainable future. To support this goal and to avoid large quantities of fully-functioning equipment simply being disposed of, SEA launched Legacy Locker.

An open industry portal for the re-manufacturing, recycling and upcycling of subsea equipment, it is a repository of spare parts that SEA own and hold which can be bought, rented or reused and includes an engineering service to test, refurbish, re-certify or reverse-engineer obsolete items owned by SEA or their clients.

Coming around

THE last two years have seen an unprecedented change in the public's view of waste and resources.

Harrowing images of the devastation that waste plastic is causing to marine life are increasingly frequent on our television screen, raising a new consciousness in the general population about how we manage and look at waste.

Terri Vogt, project manager at Circular North-east, the focal point for informing and inspiring businesses in the region to realise the benefits of the circular economy, says this public view is increasingly reflected in the business landscape.

“The pressure on businesses to understand their resource use is continuing to grow,” she said. “The future presents significant opportunities for those businesses that are tackling this issue head-on, or are bringing new solutions to the market. However the environment is complicated and more needs to be invested in education of both consumers and businesses to make the right choices.

“The circular economy is ultimately about trying to eliminate waste by decoupling economic growth from the need to extract finite materials. This can be achieved by designing

out waste, avoiding non-reusable materials, exploring the use of by-products or what might be deemed ‘waste’ by one business as feedstocks for another, considering the reparability and durability of products and their potential for reuse; and finally recycling.”

While the will to get involved is growing, what's already clear is the scale of opportunity in the North-east. A research study carried out on behalf of Zero Waste Scotland predicted potential economic benefits from adopting a circular economy in the Aberdeen City Region in the scale of £625m, including £286m in the construction and built environment sector; £250m in the energy sector (including oil and gas and renewables); £52m in food, drink and the wider bio-economy; and £37m in manufacturing.

Since its launch last April, Circular North-east has identified nine projects where companies have secured funding to help them develop circular opportunities. Some are looking to generate new commercial opportunities and revenue generation through the management of waste materials in a different way.

Others are looking to generate cost savings by looking at designing out waste and waste reduction measures. For example, Grampian Housing Association is looking at how to reduce

waste arising through its supply chain from the design and management of its housing stock.

The companies involved come from a range of sectors including food processing, construction, waste management and the third sector.

“Our progress so far shows the enthusiasm and interest of companies in the area, in particular this is demonstrated in start-ups that are trying to do things in this space. Examples include Origin, a spin out from Robert Gordon University that has developed an innovative new way to recycle plastics to make new products using low cost technology making it accessible to a wide range of organisations,” said Terri.

“We have engaged with about 500 stakeholders, including individuals, small and large businesses and community groups. What has touched me most is the level of personal engagement people make with the issue of wastefulness.

“People have demonstrated their willingness to adapt when encouraged through the taxing of plastic bags and this trend will continue when other options are opened to them. It is the role of businesses to allow them to make the right choices through the products and services they offer.

“Collaboration is an important element of any circular economy programme and we are working with a range of local partners to build relationships and raise awareness, in particular in the academic sector. These include a collaboration amongst third sector organisations looking at growing mushrooms on waste coffee grounds and one between the food sector and an Aberdeen university looking at extraction of high value compounds from the by-products of food production.

“All businesses should be carefully considering their vulnerabilities and risks in relation to resource and waste management and looking at ways that they can reduce these risks. More education and understanding is required of the myriad of options available and there needs to be leadership from government to set the framework which encourages businesses to make the right decisions.

“Ultimately experience is showing there are considerable business benefits to be gained in cost savings and new opportunities, as well as being the right thing, which will in turn secure customer loyalty. The circular concept isn't a flash in the pan, it isn't going to go away – it's a growing area and a fundamental as we face future resource shortages, rising material costs and the challenge of managing the vast amount of waste we generate

as a society.

“Businesses are already looking beyond their current business models – things are changing and companies need to understand how this could potentially impact on them. The work we are doing now is creating a network that will allow organisations to build their capabilities and realise that value. And its growing all the time so if there doesn't appear to be any opportunity for your business now, that doesn't mean that in six months or a year from now there won't be.”

Circular North-east is managed by the Chamber with funding from Zero Waste Scotland and the European Regional Development Fund. Its aim is to help businesses address the challenges of the circular economy through support and funding. For more information visit agcc.co.uk/circular-northeast or email circulareconomy@agcc.co.uk





Performance-related pay: The good, the bad and the ugly

by Keith A. Bender,
*SIRE professor of economics,
University of Aberdeen*



ECONOMISTS oversimplify the 'real world'. I teach my students about the concept of 'ceteris paribus' – the idea that when looking at an economic relationship, we assume all other things are equal. While useful in thinking about economic models, it does not help much in modelling 'real world' complexity. This has led many economists to worry about unintended consequences of policies that are designed to do one thing but do other things too.

A research interest of mine is employment contracts that have elements of performance-related pay (PRP). It is a characteristic of many contracts – from its purest form (piece rates) to bonuses. Research in PRP has a long history but recent work has identified important unintended consequences.

The good

PRP's appeal is that it ties pay to productivity. In cases where monitoring is relatively easy, PRP gives incentives for higher productivity. It also sends signals to workers outside

the firm that their productivity will be rewarded, which helps recruit productive workers. A substantial body of research confirms these relationships, echoing what many employers already know.

The bad

Well – maybe not 'bad' but 'hard' might be the better word. One oft-cited problem with PRP is that it can lead to unintended behaviours if the contract is incorrectly specified. Workers on piece rates may emphasise quantity over quality or waste raw materials to increase output. There are further difficulties if output is hard to measure or there is variability in output that is outside the control of workers.

The ugly

A newly researched unintended consequence of PRP was actually noticed in 1776 by the Scottish economist Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations*, which noted: 'Workmen... when liberally paid by the piece, are very apt to overwork themselves, and to ruin their health and constitution in a few years'.

Smith observed a link between PRP

and health. Interestingly, there is little research on this topic and nobody has examined the causal link. In co-authored research, I find that PRP is correlated with increased injury rates and with poorer health. In addition, I am the lead researcher on a new interdisciplinary ESRC-funded grant that examines whether PRP increases stress by measuring cortisol – the stress hormone.

Like any economic activity, PRP generates costs and benefits. The key responsibility for decision makers is to ensure that all costs and benefits are counted. The benefits may outweigh the costs but unless unintended consequences are identified, costs may be underestimated or left unmitigated, possibly leading to poor decisions and lower productivity.

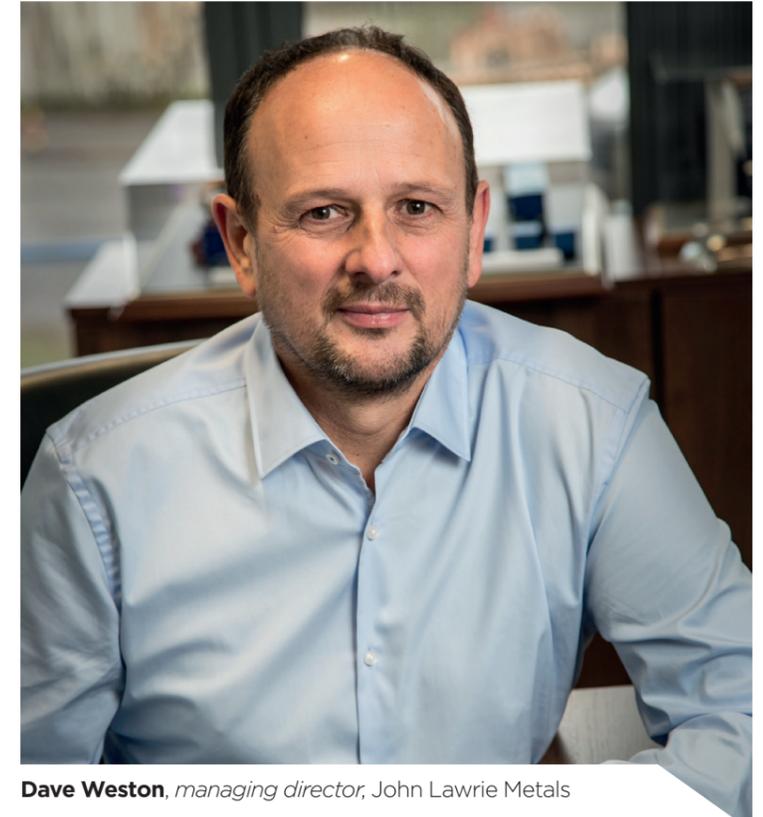
John Lawrie Group Dundee expansion

METAL recycling, decommissioning and steel tubulars specialist, John Lawrie Group, is set to expand its operations in Scotland after agreeing a multi-million pound deal to develop a new site at the port of Dundee.

The Aberdeen-headquartered company has reached an agreement with Forth Ports to establish a new metal recycling and decommissioning base at the port. Both organisations will invest in the project, which will involve an existing two-acre site at the city port being redeveloped to create a new purpose-built concrete pad.

The site will support the existing supply chain in Dundee in delivering oil and gas and decommissioning projects in the city. A combined investment of around £5m is being made by both businesses in the development, which covers construction costs, the long-term lease of the site and the purchase of plant and equipment.

John Lawrie Group will use the site to dismantle redundant offshore infrastructure brought ashore during oil and gas decommissioning projects and also for metal processing operations.



Dave Weston, managing director, John Lawrie Metals

STV Growth Fund to double to £10m

STV's highly successful Growth Fund, established to make it easier for Scottish businesses to advertise on television, is to double in size to £10m as part of STV's strategy to help drive the Scottish economy.

The fund, launched in May last year, has already helped more than 100 businesses to fulfil their growth potential, allocating £3m of television airtime so far.

The aim of the fund is to use television to connect Scottish businesses with their consumers earlier in their business journey, allowing them to capitalise on the connection STV has with consumers as it reaches 87% of all Scots every month.

STV Growth Fund investment is available for companies seeking to boost their marketing activities. Further information is available for companies at www.stvgrowthfund.tv

DEKRA commits to Turkey

DEKRA Organisational Reliability, a consultancy with expertise and services in the fields of safety and behavioural change, has confirmed its commitment to a developing Turkish market through the launch of several new services, each designed to create and embed an organisational culture of care within the region.

As a part of its continuing global growth strategy, DEKRA has also confirmed renewal of its partnership with Turkish-based health and safety company, Donusen Adam.

Derek Smith, DEKRA managing director, said: "With over 20 years' experience in the Turkish market, Donusen Adam's local pedigree in organisational health and safety transformation projects is second to none. Recognising this, DEKRA chose the company as its strategic partner in the area, back in 2011.

"Strategically, this is the ideal time to renew our partnership with Donusen Adam, whilst launching new services to the Turkish market," he added.

THE AMAYZING BALL



In aid of the Aberdeen Arts Centre café/bar refurbishment

With the theme of 'musical theatre' and tables decorated accordingly, this will be no ordinary black-tie event! Put your glad rags on, or dress in character, and be prepared to enjoy a pre-dinner reception, 3-course meal with coffee, cabaret, auction and dancing to the Graham Geddes Band.

Friday 24th May 2019

The Marcliffe Hotel, Spa and Restaurant

7pm-1am

Dress: Fabulous! – Formal, informal or in character

Tickets: £90 each | Table of 10: £800

Tickets available online at www.aberdeenartscentre.com/mayball or contact Anne Iravani on 01651 891790 for more information

[Great sponsorship opportunities available](#)



Investment is key for agriculture and fishing sector

by **Stephen Hepburn**,
*head of customer banking, Aberdeen,
Clydesdale Bank*



THE first quarter of 2019 has certainly been busy for the agriculture community, including the continuous challenge of unpredictable weather and the debate around the future of the UK being pushed and pulled in just about every direction.

The Scottish Government released the Total Income from Farming (TIFF) report in January, which projected an 8% drop in farming income for 2018, which was not a massive surprise but still not easy reading.

One challenging figure was that productivity dropped for the second year running. Of course, some of this is caused by the weather but it is a worrying trend that will need to be addressed in the new support regime, post-Brexit. This regime will be important, with various forms of farm support payments accounting for 82% of the profit from farming.

The productivity gap in Scotland is nothing new and last year the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) published a paper highlighting how negatively we compare with the rest of Europe; more hard reading,

especially given the hard work that goes into farming. It's not just about how much we produce however, but how effectively we do it. Investment in new systems that will enable farmers to work more efficiently is key to bridging this gap. Help towards this was announced in the November budget, with the raising of the annual investment allowance to £1m for two years from the start of 2019.

For example, in the fishing industry, we have seen an increased level of investment in orders of new fishing vessels across the white fish and pelagic sectors, with more new deliveries scheduled for this year. SMEs are future proofing their business with new capabilities that are more fuel efficient, produce lower carbon emissions and boast the latest touchscreen technology. The vessels are also usually larger than previous purchases, which allows the business to increase hold capacity to maximise the quality of the fish.

Fishing is such a vital part of our local economy and it was encouraging to see that the tonnage value of fish landed by Scottish vessels increased by 3% year on year in 2017. However this was countered by a 1% fall in real

value (£540m). We await the official figures for 2018 but it looks like they will be broadly in line from the previous year, with some notable increases in prices in mackerel, despite a fall in quota for this species during the same period.

The figures also revealed how important this sector is to the people living in the North, as there were more than 2,000 vessels employing 4,800 people, in 2017. There was also significant employment across a variety of other support functions, including ports and harbours, processing and haulage, with the North-east of Scotland and the Shetland Islands responsible for most landings in Scotland.

Despite the challenges, the agriculture and fishing communities continue to produce quality food at an affordable price for the UK public. Their ability to adapt and change at a rapid rate to change is well proven and we pride ourselves on playing a vital role in this sector, working with our customers to ensure their continued growth and development.



Louise's Farm Kitchen



Craig Somers, head chef, The Silver Darling

Sustainable sustenance



“Whatever challenges arise also create opportunities and you simply have to grasp them.”

Louise Urquhart,
Louise's Farm Kitchen

WHO knows exactly what will happen in post-Brexit Britain. Questions have been posed over food standards and supply, with speculation in some quarters over how the Great British menu might change after our exit from the EU.

Domestic produce means there will likely be no shortage of eggs or bread in a post-Brexit Britain but with 60% of pork coming from the EU, demand for potatoes exceeding our home-grown supply; and about 400,000 tonnes of fresh tomatoes imported from European countries every year, we may have to be prepared for change.

One thing for sure however, in amongst the challenges there's also opportunity. Could we use this as a turning point to become more sustainable consumers?

Louise Urquhart of Louise's Farm Kitchen is looking upon Brexit as offering an opportunity, no matter what the outcome.

Her successful and growing business which 'specialises in bringing naturally good food from our farm gate to your dinner plate' was established out of adversity.

“Whatever challenges arise also create opportunities and you simply have to grasp them,” said Louise.

She explained that she and her husband Ahren operate his family farm, Milton of Auchinhove, at Lumphanan, near Banchory, and they began their 'meat box' business when they required to raise cash after soil health issues arose on land they rented which had an adverse financial impact on their business.

“We needed cash flow and diversified,” she said.

Now they deliver meat boxes all over the North and North-east and they also provide a hog roast, lamb roast and barbecue service which has taken them as far south as St Andrews and north to Elgin.

Louise has been farming “since I was old enough to put on a pair of wellies” and she studied agriculture at the University of Aberdeen.

“The meat boxes and the hog roasts are future-proofing the farm,” she said. “The problem which arose with the land was the catalyst for us launching Louise's Farm Kitchen providing 'local food for local folk' and we are developing it. It has been outdoor reared pork we have concentrated on but we are now trying to increase our lamb and mutton sales.

“The pork is slow grown and we have rare breed pigs - Oxford Sandy and Blacks - and it tastes completely different to the pork you will buy in the supermarket.

“Scottish farmers are the best in the world and more and more people seem keen to know exactly where the food they are eating comes from. In our case the animals have been born on the farm and have spent their entire

lives here. Whatever Brexit means, the high welfare which Scottish farmers maintain will stand us in good stead.

“We are planning to continue to diversify and intend dipping our toes into the free-range chicken market which has really been prompted by the fact we simply don't like the chicken



“Scottish farmers are the best in the world and more and more people seem keen to know exactly where the food they are eating comes from.”

Louise Urquhart,
Louise's Farm Kitchen

we get at the supermarkets and by requests from our regular customers who know what possibilities the future may bring.”

Craig Somers, head chef at The Silver Darling restaurant in Aberdeen, shares the view that no matter what the Brexit outcome it can create opportunities.

He believes that if a situation does arise where imported goods are harder to source it will only strengthen the existing trend for local produce

“Seasonal food is key to any restaurant with customers increasingly demanding fresh local produce and this is a vital part of the food offering at The Silver Darling.

“When relaunching the restaurant at the start of last year, we knew it was vital to not only refresh the restaurant with new interiors but also update the food offering in line with current trends and customer demands.



Deferment is not a forever solution

by Chris Lloyd,
chief executive officer, MSIS



THE decommissioning story has been prevalent across the oil and gas industry for over 10 years now yet in the North West European Continental Shelf (NWECS), only 99 decommissioning projects have been completed to date. There are a number of reasons for this, but the biggest is cost.

Decommissioning is dead money, which has led operators to defer decommissioning projects for as long as they safely can. However, as rightly stated in a recent Wood Mackenzie article, 'deferment is not a forever solution'. The decommissioning day will come but 'when' exactly we don't know. To those of us who have started many business cases to support investment in this sector, based on the latest forecast, the experience of delays and deferrals is a shared 'joy'.

Many offshore and onshore facilities are already past their design life so whilst the decommissioning boom continues to be delayed and the need to focus on exploration and production activities is the priority, the industry must still remember the importance of sustaining environmental values and remaining fully committed to doing the right thing.

I praise the work of industry bodies such as Decom North Sea who are focussed on developing a singular approach, not just in the UKCS but around the world. As an environmental specialist, for me, decommissioning represents the chance to improve the environment. Through a collaborative approach and the industry working together, we can develop safe, cost effective and sustainable decommissioning activities.

Currently there is no global regulation and operators leading the decommissioning journey set the standards. However, a well-equipped UK supply chain could have a golden opportunity to become a centre of excellence for decommissioning on and offshore, not just in the North Sea but worldwide. To make this happen, we need to be prepared to be innovative and flexible, but collaboration will be key.

Historically, the industry has been poor when it comes to collaboration and this must improve to meet the challenges of decommissioning. The supply chain most definitely requires a mindset shift from competitive to collaborative. Together, service companies can help operators to

reduce costs and improve productivity to decommission safely and provide environmentally responsible solutions.

We need to focus our efforts on strengthening relationships to secure future projects which support maximising economic recovery and maintaining production efficiency as opposed to souring relationships by exhausting cash out of the decommissioning sector.

For companies like MSIS, our services primarily tie into the make safe and preparation stage of decommissioning projects. These scopes of work typically require the same skill set whether delivered on a producing asset or those at the end of their life. Therefore, as specialists in that field, with experience of both onshore and offshore decommissioning projects the ability to offer innovative cost saving solutions should come naturally.

With only 41 confirmed decommissioning projects in the NWECS in 2019 and another 40 in 2020, unless we see this mindset shift, the decommissioning market will continue to be flat in the short-term and projects will keep deferring.

But only time will tell if the industry can effectively change its behaviours.

"Nowadays customers want to know where their food is coming from and proactively look for venues sourcing the top quality produce and that is why we pay close attention to this. All of our suppliers are Scottish with more than 90% of our menu sourced locally in the North-east or Scotland wide.

"In Aberdeen, we are lucky to have some of the very best produce from fish to meat, literally on our doorstep and, as an independent business, we aim to support local wherever possible. Given our location and reputation for quality seafood it is so important that we use only the best produce that is freshly delivered and prepared in house daily.

"We source our fish direct from Peterhead and I speak to my fish supplier nearly every day to see what has landed so I can make sure our daily specials are as fresh as possible. We also source from reputable fish suppliers such as Loch Fyne who

provide our mussels, oysters and salmon and I use small local producers to get lobster and crab.



"Seasonal food is key to any restaurant with customers increasingly demanding fresh local produce and this is a vital part of the food offering at The Silver Darling."

**Craig Somers,
head chef,
The Silver Darling**

"It is vital these products are fresh and sustainable which you can only ensure by sourcing locally direct from the producers and trusted suppliers. Of course there are items on our menu that need to be imported via our suppliers such as chocolate and olive oil and we are already seeing price increases on such items due to external influences/Brexit. This is where we may see further difficulties going forward but it is hard to predict the impact at this stage but it may well create increased opportunities for Scottish companies."

University nurses want to help you be ready to save lives

A TEAM of hard-working student nurses from Robert Gordon University's (RGU) School of Nursing and Midwifery have made it their mission to train the public in CPR, with the hope of doubling survival rates across the country for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest.

These efforts are part of a national campaign - Save a Life for Scotland - which aims to equip an additional 500,000 people with CPR skills by 2020.

The campaign states that every year over 3,500 people across Scotland are treated by the Ambulance Service after having cardiac arrest, but only around one in 12 will survive.

Mark Drummond, one of the nursing students involved in organising the event, said the number of people surviving thanks to CPR is slowly on the rise: "Every week in Scotland, 70 people will have a sudden cardiac arrest - that's more than a full double-decker bus - and it can happen to anyone, of any age, at any time."



Lauren Anderson and Mark Drummond

On your marks, get set, for Corporate Games

NORTH-EAST businesses are being urged to take part in the inaugural Aberdeen Corporate Games, which has been launched by Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV).

The games will involve teams competing against each other in a range of sporting events between May and September. ASV has launched the initiative to promote a healthy and active workforce.

Research has suggested that promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace could save businesses an estimated £1,600 per year, per employee, with reduced stress, depression and anxiety, less risk of back pain, reduction in sick leave, fewer industrial injuries and a lower staff turnover.

The games include a team rowing challenge, table tennis, touch rugby, diving, football and volleyball. Teams taking part will also secure free limited entries to the Simplyhealth Great Aberdeen Run 10k and half marathon with the games culminating in a Highland Games closing ceremony on September 7 with teams taking part in traditional events such as shot putt, tug of war, egg and spoon race; and a team relay.

Businesses can enter as many teams as they wish with squad numbers no lower than eight for the larger events for a minimum donation of £1,400 per team.

New drive for diversity

THE leading representative body for the UK's offshore oil and gas industry has announced plans to ramp up efforts to maintain and encourage a diverse and inclusive workforce.

OGUK marked International Woman's Day by announcing the launch of an industry network to highlight efforts to encourage diversity and inclusion, and identify collaborative approaches to encourage talent through the sector's doors.

According to the Workforce Dynamics Review by OPITO, in partnership with RGU's Oil and Gas Institute, the industry will have to recruit and retain over 40,000 people between 2018 and 2035 - this includes 10,000 new roles in areas such as data science, robotics, material science, nano-technology and cyber security.

Deirdre Michie, OGUK's chief executive, said fostering a diverse workforce was critical to business success: "The moral and business cases for better balance are clear and well-established and we need to embrace them if we are to ensure this sector sustains and improves its competitiveness."

"Our industry supports over 280,000 skilled jobs but with women representing only one in four of the sector's talent pool, there is clearly still more work to be done."



Buchan Alpha at Dales Voe with its 12.5 metre water depth, 127 metre quay and 60 tonnes per square metres capacity heavy lift pad, one of the strongest in the UK.

Maintaining the momentum at Lerwick

Projects, planning and preparations underpin decommissioning

LERWICK Harbour's position as a leading UK location for the decommissioning of offshore structures for the oil and gas industry is being sustained and advanced across a broad front, from current activity to development of future requirements.

"It sometimes seems decommissioning in the UK is treated as the new game in town," said Captain Calum Grains, chief executive of Lerwick Port Authority. "But it is an industry which values experience and Lerwick provides the track record proving capability and capacity."

"Over the past 15 years or so, contractors have used the Authority's Greenhead and Dales Voe bases to dismantle and recycle around 80,000 tonnes of materials from offshore. That said, it is vital that we keep moving forward to ensure that the port meets the industry's changing requirements."

Plans for another heavy duty pad at the Dales Voe base are at the detailed design stage, with a contractor expected to be onsite in the summer

in the latest development at the deep-water facility. Leading energy logistics contractor, Peterson, was granted planning permission for the quayside pad last year. Its partner, Veolia, is applying for a Pollution Prevention and Control permit to process materials at the site.

The Port Authority has been awarded funding by the Scottish Government under its Decommissioning Challenge Fund towards the feasibility study into the concrete pad, measuring approximately 20,000 square metres.

Discussions on adding an ultra-deep-water quay at Dales Voe are ongoing between the Port Authority and governments, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, the Oil & Gas Authority and industry to refine the potential into a development. In 2018, a Scottish Government-commissioned feasibility study identified Dales Voe as the optimal location in the UK for such a facility.

With the Port Authority's emphasis on quality performance, late last year Lerwick became one of the first UK

ports to be accredited to ISO 45001, reaffirming its commitment to the highest health and safety standards across its operations, including the offshore industry.

The decommissioning of the former Buchan Alpha floating production unit by Veolia/Peterson continues to progress alongside at Dales Voe, with completion expected early-summer.

Other decommissioning projects at the Shetland port through 2019 include infrastructure from subsea installations.

Preparations begin this year for the arrival in spring 2020 of the 12,600 tonne Ninian Northern topsides for dismantling-and-disposal by Veolia/Peterson. They will be delivered from the North Sea field by Pioneering Spirit, the world's largest construction vessel, on her first visit to Lerwick.

www.lerwick-harbour.co.uk

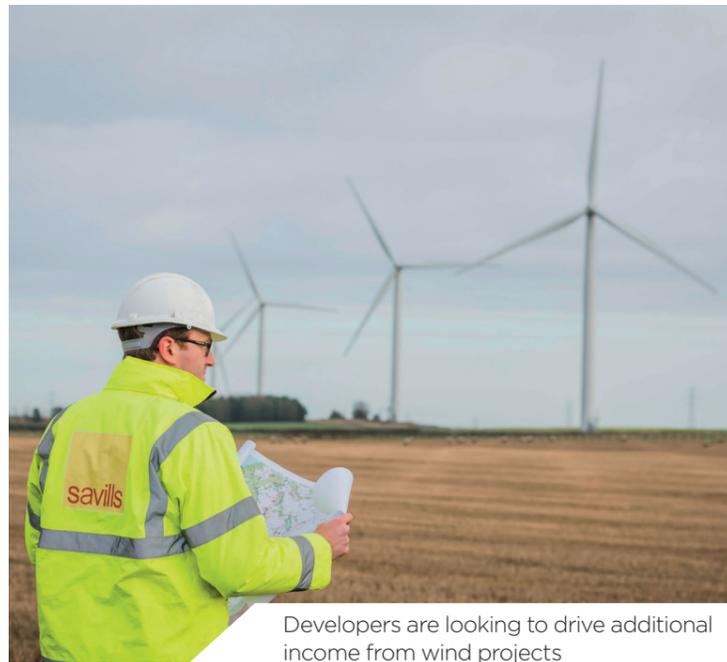
A powerful future for renewables

THE future of renewable energy has been given a vote of confidence by Scottish Power, who has just announced an investment of up to £2bn in the sector. In order to achieve its goal of making electric vehicles possible for everyone, the energy giant plans to increase battery storage capacity at its wind farms.

Scottish Power plans to invest in 'smart grids' for customers to buy and sell electricity and deliver charging points for electric cars, amid a predicted shift away from diesel and petrol vehicles.

Savills said the latest Scottish Power announcement is in line with a general uptick in activity and interest in the solar PV sector and a return of onshore wind after a few years in the doldrums.

Savills UK head of energy, Nick Green, said: "Renewable energy developers are looking to drive additional income from existing wind projects either through adding additional turbines or by co-locating with other technologies, for example energy storage or solar."



Developers are looking to drive additional income from wind projects

Contract award for energy from waste facility

THE award of the contract to build and operate the energy from waste plant for Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Moray Council has been approved by the three local authorities.

A multinational consortium led by global construction company Acciona has been chosen after a two-year procurement process by the NESS Energy Project team. Acciona will lead the project using its own in-house construction skills to build the plant; and experienced waste company Indaver will then operate the plant for a 20-year contract period.

Moray Council and Aberdeen City Council members gave their approval at separate meetings on March 4 and Aberdeenshire Council agreed the award and the inter authority agreement which defines how the councils will work together. The councils will continue to work with the contractor towards contract award.

The £150m energy from waste plant will take non-recyclable waste from Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, and Moray Councils and burn it cleanly and completely conforming to the latest and known future strict European standards for emissions. The energy produced will be sent to a district heating network.

Thousands raised for local charity

BUCKET collections at the 2018/19 Qdos pantomimes production, Snow White, raised an incredible £13, 618.46 for The ARCHIE Foundation at Aberdeen Royal Children's Hospital.

Aberdeen Performing Arts, chief executive, Jane Spiers said: "We were absolutely blown away by the generosity of theatre-goers over the Christmas period. We're delighted to support the ARCHIE Foundation again this year, which makes a huge difference to the lives of children and their families when they are unwell."

West End and television leading man Lee Mead (who played the dashing Prince Charming), was joined by his co-stars Alan McHugh (Nurse Nellie MacDuff), Jordan Young (Muddles), Juliet Cadzow (the Wicked Queen), Jenna Innes (Snow White), and cast member Stephen Lorient, in a visit to the Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital in full costume in the run up to Christmas, to spread Christmas cheer and hand out gifts.

Jamie Smith, fundraising manager for The ARCHIE Foundation, said: 'The HMT panto has been making children in Aberdeen smile for generations. This incredible donation from collections at the panto will go on to brighten the lives of even more local children, making the experience of being in hospital as positive as it can be for them and their families. On behalf of them, and us, thank you to everyone who donated.'

Fuelling the transition

by Shane Taylor,
research and policy manager,
Aberdeen and Grampian
Chamber of Commerce



IN THE North-east of Scotland we sit at the heart of debates around the environment and sustainability, particularly within the UK. We're also clearly at the heart of the transition to an all-energy economy, with organisations across our region investing to develop sustainable solutions for the future.

The ability of the oil and gas industry to export is crucial to achieve this transition, with increased exports also forming a core pillar of the Vision 2035 strategy. Exporting brings benefits to our domestic firms by allowing them to grow, diversify their operations and secure their own fiscal sustainability, while supporting energy access across the globe. Around one billion people continue to lack stable access to electricity, with significant impacts on economic growth and access to opportunity in affected regions.

It's in this context that the Environmental Audit Committee at the UK Parliament are currently considering the role of UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK's Export Credit Agency, in funding fossil fuels projects in developing countries. Mary Creagh MP, committee chair, argues that: "We need joined-up thinking across Government to make sure that overseas financial support does not fly in the face of UK Government's environmental commitments."

It's right to scrutinise the performance of the UK Government when it comes to our climate goals but there's a pragmatic reality to consider too. When it comes to domestic energy consumption in the UK, BEIS figures predict that oil and gas will account for over 70% of energy usage up to 2035 and beyond. Meanwhile, global predictions from the US Energy Information Administration suggest that although we see a sharp rise in renewable energy consumption, petroleum and natural gas will also grow, with both remaining predominate sources of energy in 2040.

However, this isn't a binary choice. Focused support for fossil fuel projects overseas can also deliver material reductions in carbon emissions. The Offshore Cape Three Points (OCTP) project, based in Ghana, is supported by \$400m in funding delivered by UKEF. The largest foreign direct investment in Ghana's history, it allows for gas reserves to be developed which will feed thermal power plants for decades. By displacing the use of heavy fuels with natural gas, the project is expected to deliver a reduction of 1.6m metric tonnes of carbon emissions, the equivalent of 1.2m cars off the road.

When firms access finance with the support of UKEF, it acts to anchor supply chains in the UK, ensuring that engineering talent and skill is maintained in the North-east. Through carbon capture projects like ACORN, these same skills will be instrumental in supporting the development of transitional technologies and alternative energy sources.

We need to ambitiously move toward a global low-carbon economy, that's clear, but we can't lose sight of the critical role which oil and gas will play in getting us there - delivering energy security to billions as we develop sustainable alternatives. UKEF support remains an influential factor which anchors the supply chain in the Aberdeen City Region and the Chamber will continue to argue for export support for the sector as we work towards the opportunities outlined through Vision 2035.

Now, is a very good time to buy

by John Low,
managing director, Stewart Milne Homes North and vice chair of Homes for Scotland



SINCE the oil price began its rapid descent in 2014, the subsequent economic downturn suffered in the North-east has been one of the most protracted in our history. Much has been reported about the impact on property and house prices during this time. Our view is that we're finally turning the corner and starting to see a pick-up in consumer confidence which, we forecast, will be more evident in the second half of this year.

The North-east property market needs to be viewed in segments. The overall availability of second hand properties has reduced to around 15% less than it was during the bottom of the downturn. We're also seeing more buyers coming into the market, due to home buyer needs and market correction since 2014. This is most evident in flatted properties where there continues to be an over-supply.

The strongest segment of the market has been in three and smaller four bedroom properties.

Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT) requirements for the higher end of the market are proving to be a barrier and, as a result, we've seen the trend towards lower volumes.

The impact of LBTT is preventing the market from operating to its full potential with many stuck in homes which no longer meet their requirements. For all these reasons, now is a very good time to buy.

Last year, we invested in a significant number of developments, based on our forecasts of around 1.2% increase in employment in oil and gas. We now believe this has been surpassed and are hopefully in a position to capitalise on this.

This increase in employment has come at a time when there is much more positivity in the economy. The AWPR, in particular, will have a major impact on property as it is likely to influence decisions on where people choose to live.

There are also opportunities in the affordable housing segment. Aberdeen City Council has been proactive in its delivery of affordable homes, creating opportunities for developers which are likely to continue to 2021. After that, it's more difficult to predict as it's likely that Government grant funding will become less available in the longer-term. Meanwhile, Aberdeenshire has undershot their targets for affordable homes. With planning decisions either

having to go to appeal or taking longer, developers are finding it more difficult to invest in Aberdeenshire.

This leads me on to the new structure plan for the region where we have concerns over the current imbalance between what is referred to as the Aberdeen housing market (the city and its immediate surrounding areas) and more rural locations. Providing land for residential development in areas where people want to live, not where they are forced to live, is crucial to attracting and retaining people and therefore the overall economic prosperity of our region.

Finally, we're now into stage three of the planning bill in which the industry, obviously, has a very keen interest. There are growing concerns among housebuilders about the many proposed amendments. If it's going to achieve its aims, it has to ensure that it streamlines, not over complicates, the process.

An efficient planning system will ensure that we can unlock Scotland's economic potential. We must view the planning bill as an opportunity to deliver what's right for the country in terms of investment and economic development opportunities in the longer-term.

Cutting-edge software in place at ARI

FRIENDS of Anchor has funded a state-of-the-art software upgrade which will improve cancer management for those with breast cancer or suspected tumours.

The local charity paid £19,000 for a software licence which allows a new type of advanced 3D scanning to be carried out.

The cutting-edge technology is in place within the breast symptomatic department at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary and will benefit around 250 patients a year.

The upgrade allows the existing mammography machine within the radiology department to carry out tomosynthesis-guided biopsy; a relatively new, advanced type of mammography, which makes biopsies more accurate and helps to improve cancer detection.

Former NHS breast consultant, retired oncologist Andy Hutcheon, is Friends of ANCHOR's vice chairman and trustee. He said: "As a charity, we are delighted to be able to support the breast symptomatic services at ARI, with the latest software now in use thanks to funding from Friends of ANCHOR. The difference this upgrade has brought to the department is marked, with around 250 patients a year benefitting."



Dr Gerald Lip, Dr Daina Greiskalna and Andy Hutcheon

Spring into Sustainability BusinessBreakfast

Date: Thursday, April 18

Time: 7-9am

Venue: The Aberdeen Altens Hotel

BAFTA-award winning wildlife presenter and co-host of the BBC's hugely popular Springwatch, Autumnwatch and Winterwatch series, Michaela Strachan, will be speaking at the Chamber's April Business Breakfast.

A regular face on our screens for over three decades, Michaela has fronted The Really Wild Show, Orangutan Diaries, Elephant Diaries, Shark Encounters, Orangutan Rescue and spent 10 years as host on Countryfile.

Join us to hear her thoughts on sustainability and the environment by booking your place today.

agcc.co.uk/events



Photo by Caroline McClelland

May

June

5

218
courses
run by the Chamber



Covering
55
different
subjects

Attended by
1,250
delegates



- 2 Thu**
1 day
Report Writing
Produce clear, concise and effective reports that achieve objectives
- 7 Tue**
1 day
GDPR Essentials
Demystify the new regulation and principles in a digital landscape
- 8-9**
2 days
Essential Management Skills
Become equipped with the knowledge and skills required of a manager
- 9 Thu**
1 day
Communication & Interpersonal Skills
Develop communication techniques to positively influence
- 14 Tue**
1 day
Winning More Bids
Produce professional proposals/tenders that stand out from your competition
- 14 Tue**
1 day
Assertiveness at Work
Clearly communicate your point of view without causing conflict
- 15 Wed**
1 day
Personal Effectiveness
Enhance your personal and professional potential
- 15 Wed**
1 day
Project Management - The Fundamentals
Understand the principles of project management and the complexities of scale
- 16 Thu**
1 day
Essential Supervisory Skills
Bridge the gap between doing and supervising in order to motivate staff
- 16 Thu**
1 day
Negotiating and Influencing Skills
Learn tactics and skills of persuasion that lead to success
- 22 - 23**
2 days
Finance for Non-Finance Managers
Gain an understanding of many aspects of finance and how it impacts business
- 28 Tue**
1 day
Is your business ready for Brexit?
Accurately complete a customs declaration

- 5 Wed**
1 day
Motivation and Delegation
Create a motivational environment and use effective delegation
- 6 Thu**
1 day
BCC Letters of Credit - Methods of Payment
Ensure your letter of credit is not rejected and compare payment methods
- 6 Thu**
1/2 day
Digital Transformation for Leaders
Learn how to future proof your business
- 6 Thu**
1/2 day
Blockchain & Cryptocurrency 101
Discover the basics about blockchain tech, cryptocurrencies and decentralisation
- 11 Tue**
1 day
Business Development Accelerator
Develop a powerful sales structure that will improve your sales results
- 12 Wed**
1 day
HR Business Partner - Masterclass
Explore key HR topics and feel confident taking HR to the next level
- 12 Wed**
1 day
Improve your Professional Confidence
Promote a positive and confident self-image in a professional manner
- 13 Thu**
1/2 day
Understanding the Oil & Gas Industry
Gain an understanding of the basics of oil and gas production and processing
- 19 Wed**
1 day
Boost your Sales Success
Maximise your sales success to attract new business and open new doors
- 19 Wed**
1 day
HR for Non-HR Managers
Understand the responsibilities and techniques in relation to HR requirements
- 20 Thu**
1 day
Essential Supervisory Skills
Bridge the gap between doing and supervising in order to motivate staff



Become a motivator



Boost your sales results



For information on our training courses, with funding from Scottish Government to fully cover Brexit and HMRC Customs Training, please contact training@agcc.co.uk





The Chamber hosted the first 2019 strategy meeting of the Vanguard volunteers where the groups set out their ambitions for the year ahead.

The Leadership business breakfast at Ardoe House Hotel & Spa saw around 100 delegates gather to hear from speakers including Administrative CEO John Peebles and former AFC player John McMaster.

Developing the Young Workforce took part in Scotland's Biggest Parents Evening on March 6, highlighting apprenticeship routes to young people and their parents.



Alex Drummond,
managing director, Drummond Finance

What does your company do that others don't?

We are an independent firm of commercial brokers, sourcing and securing all types of commercial lending for all sizes of businesses. Unlike the banks, we do not differentiate our service offering by turnover, income, sector or the size of the lend. It's not so much about doing what others don't do, as doing what others no longer do. With access to over 150 commercial lenders we believe that the best way to understand and support the growth, ambitions and investment opportunities of local businesses is through traditional face-to-face relationships and meetings.

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

I worry about the number of local businesses that are not being supported with their lending requests because their bank does not understand what they do. This is exemplified by a situation I learned about recently concerning a local engineering business servicing Christmas trees offshore who required working capital. They called their bank and were directed to a call centre. The call handler believed their business to be a seasonal one and could not understand how the client could work with Christmas trees all year round, especially on oil rigs!

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

The importance of a good work/life balance has been the most important thing to learn, and one of the hardest things to achieve for me. I am pleased to have learned from my mistakes but

do regret the impact that not having that balance right in the past has had on myself and those around me.

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

Quite simply, trust your instincts. I am a great believer in asking yourself: 'does it feel right?' and that ethos also works for me away from the business environment too.

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

I get the most pride from when I've been able to help support a deal that has created or protected jobs. I recently managed to close out a lend which allowed an SME business to buy their own premises. The client was so happy and grateful - they had not been able to get their bank to support their plans and had, therefore, assumed that the deal could not be done. This will transform and secure a family business, being able to help make that happen makes me proud of what I do.

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

Without doubt, I would encourage more people and businesses to buy local. SMEs are the lifeblood of our local economies and, while they need to be better supported by the UK, Scottish and local governments, each of us can and should do our bit to support and promote our local businesses.



Quick fire round

What was your first job?
Paperboy.

When would you like to retire?
When I start to cast an envious stare towards those of my friends who have already done so.

What did you have for breakfast?
Cereal, fruit and green tea.

Who, or what, inspires you?
My kids constantly inspire me with their complete disregard for doubt and a brilliant can-do attitude.

What's the last book you read / film you saw?
I saw Mary Poppins Returns recently and was pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed it.

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07717 441280



Property market maintains momentum as sales break £18bn

PROPERTY sales across the North-east maintained their momentum during the final part of 2018 as the Scottish housing market once again proved its resilience in the face of both domestic and international political issues, with sales breaching the £18bn barrier last year.

During a year dominated by Brexit uncertainty, markets across the country remained busy, with the country enjoying its best spell of growth since the financial crash in 2008. Across Scotland as a whole, average prices, sale volumes and overall market values all rose in the last three months of 2018. Overall, the value of property exchanging hands in Scotland during 2018 reached £18,133,170,202, a rise of over £400,000,000 on 2017.

The latest figures from Aberdeen Considine's Property Monitor highlighted the strength of the housing market in Aberdeenshire with the area showing increases in sale volumes, average prices and market values for the second consecutive quarter.

Following a 2.8% rise in average prices in the third quarter, Aberdeenshire saw

the cost of a home increase a further 2% year on year to £216,929. The area also enjoyed a 6.7% uplift in the number of properties changing hands and an 8.6% rise in the value properties sold, at £262,100,304. Overall, £860m of property was sold in Aberdeenshire 2018.

After a positive third quarter, where both sale volumes and market values rose, the Granite City did not fair quite as well in the final part of the year with falls across all areas. However, whilst the city saw a 3.7% year on year drop in average prices, December saw it hit £206,499, the highest average price it has seen in 2018.

Despite the broader health of the Scottish property market, research conducted by Aberdeen Considine has revealed that the lack of clarity on Brexit as well as property tax policies are affecting both the levels of confidence among consumers and property buying decisions.

A survey of more than 1,000 individuals in Scotland, the biggest since the firm began publishing the Property Monitor at the start of 2017, found that 50% of those asked said

they anticipate a decrease in the value of their home post Brexit. This was the highest figure for 2018, and a strong indication of what appears to be diminishing confidence in the UK Government's attempts to secure a positive Brexit outcome. Only 3% believed that Brexit would increase house values.

Jacqueline Law, managing partner, Aberdeen Considine remained cautiously optimistic about the year ahead: "These figures demonstrate that the wider market has to a large degree recovered from the difficult days of the financial crash but we cannot ignore the uncertainty which Brexit presents," she said.

Whilst the figures in Aberdeen fell back slightly, the optimism in the city is palpable, and there is a view that whilst it may take a little time to see the full benefits of the wider investment plans, there is a renewed sense of growth and ambition."

Sunshine and exports boost Mackies



Mac Mackie

A SCORCHING summer and increased exports has helped Mackie's of Scotland achieve record revenues and profits from ice cream sales in 2018.

The company has reported an annual turnover of £13.9m and gross profit exceeding £1.3m for the financial year ending May 2018.

Turnover was up 13% on the previous year thanks in part to boosted ice cream sales in supermarkets across the UK, increasing sales in the Far East, the addition of a range of chocolate bars and revenue from production of renewable energy on the Mackie's farm.

Mackie's enjoyed record-breaking sales in 2018, with £12.4m turnover for ice cream and chocolate.

Its export sales to markets in the Far East soared by 182% to £1.1m - now contributing 8% to Mackie's total turnover thanks to continuing demand for Mackie's ice cream and the additional export of Mackie's chocolate.

The brand has developed with the success of Mackie's 19.2 parlour - its first retail venture.

Mac Mackie, managing director and one of three sibling owners, said: "2018 was certainly a significant year for Mackie's, with substantial growth in our export trade as well as developments closer to home. Our current financial year has started well with the hot summer months with growth continuing into 2019."

Top Tweets

— A month in social media —



Steven Sweeney
@StevenSweeney85

Excellent #AGCCbreakfast this morning - 'Leadership in Disruptive Times'

Mattresses, elevators, winning mentalities, humility, people...

Great to pick up a copy of #AbzolutelyProud - Aberdeen has been a fantastic place for me to live & work for the past 6 years, & counting!



Rosemary Bruce
@Rosemary_Bruce

Really interesting event for #shireconnections about creative industries with great presentations from @TheBarnArts @vanillainkUK @chambertalk @Aberdeenshire So many inspiring things happening.



Join the conversation
@chambertalk

Sustainable seafood and trading on the world stage

by Bertie Armstrong,
chief executive,
Scottish Fishermen's
Federation



ONE of the daftest myths about the fishing industry – and sadly there are many – is that skippers and crew don't care about sustainable stocks or the environment more generally.

It is promulgated ceaselessly by NGOs, many with questionable sources of corporate funding and all with little or no understanding of the complexities of modern natural resource management.

The logic first. Why would a fisherman want to deny himself an income tomorrow, or the next day, or in 10 years' time for the sake of a larger one today? No other business sector faces regular accusations of such cannibalistic behaviour, so it is difficult to understand why fishing is singled out so mercilessly.

Especially when the evidence to the contrary is so clear. The current position is that 53 out of 76 EU stocks (97% of the total volume caught) are now fished sustainably, at or below the ecological concept of maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

Key Scottish commercial stocks, including cod, haddock and herring, have been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) as sustainable and carry the

distinctive label with its white tick on a blue background identifying the provenance of the produce to consumers.

Yes, that's the same cod which appeared in headlines just a few years ago because there were apparently only 100 left in the North Sea! In the shellfish sector, king scallops and brown crab from inshore waters around Shetland are also MSC-certified. These achievements were driven by and secured by the industry.

When we leave the EU we will become an 'independent coastal state'. The industry believes that sovereign control of some of the richest fishing grounds in the world will lead to improved management of stocks, more accurate and robust scientific assessments and much closer collaboration between independent scientists and industry operatives.

A key feature of visits to Norway and Iceland by Scottish industry representatives in 2017 was learning about the systems deployed to ensure and improve sustainability in those major fishing nations. While different, both systems are superior to that of the Common Fisheries Policy, and the UK and Scotland will look to the East and to the North-west as they seek to build a new sustainability framework.

But the real prize of sovereignty over our own natural resources will be the uplift in the UK's share of the catches. Under the present CFP arrangements we get 40% of the seafood resource, with 60% going to non-UK EU fleets. The keep figures in Iceland and Norway are 90% and 85%. When we leave the EU we will be able to move away from the absurdity of our present fishing opportunity.

The UK 'first sale on landing' revenue is close to £1bn, so the extra economic opportunity is obvious. A study in mid-2018 by Scottish Government estimated an extra £540m and 5,000 FTE jobs for Scotland.

A significant amount of this will come to the North-east where the heavyweight end of the UK industry resides. This 'sea of opportunity', if properly prepared for, will lift us into the world sustainable seafood stage, potentially overtaking Iceland in volume and value of international trade. Sure, there will be challenges but let's keep our eyes up, focused on the prize.

16

April

May

3



The network provides a forum for discussion on current topics and issues impacting on the property sector

16 Tue

Property Network

11.45am-2pm
Spaces, MSq1

The property sector network is a quarterly event series open to Chamber member organisations active in the North-east property sector. This month's network meeting includes influential property speakers from Aurora Planning, Aberdeen Inspired and the Chamber.

18 Thu

Business Breakfast: Spring into Sustainability

7am-9am
Aberdeen
Altens Hotel

We are delighted to announce that Michaela Strachan BAFTA award-winning wildlife presenter will be in Aberdeen at this breakfast on 18th April. She has been a regular face on our screens for over three decades. Michaela has fronted The Really Wild Show, Orangutan Diaries, Elephant Diaries, Shark Encounters, Orangutan Rescue and spent 10 years as a host on Countryfile. More recently, she is best-known as a co-presenter of Springwatch, Autumnwatch and Winterwatch on BBC2.

Come along to hear her views on sustainability and the environment.

24 Wed

Premier Partner Informal Networking Event

10am-1pm
His Majesty's Theatre

An exclusive premier partner event at one of Aberdeen's iconic venues, His Majesty's Theatre including a behind the scenes tour of the 113 year old Edwardian theatre.

26 Fri

Maximise Your Membership

8:30am-10am
AGCC

This event is ideal if you're thinking of joining the Chamber, have just joined or are new to a member organisation and want to find out more about the benefits available to you.



Our exclusive Premier Partner event

May

2 Thu

Speed Networking

8am-10am
No.10 Bar & Restaurant

Kick start your day with this face paced and exciting Speed Networking session. Leave feeling empowered and ready to tackle the day with new contacts and strengthened relationships.

3 Fri

Feel Good Friday with David Lloyd Clubs

9am-11am
David Lloyd Clubs, Garthdee

Let go of the week's stresses and join us for a unique networking experience. The morning will start with a chance to try the new and dynamic workout class, BLAZE. Participants can look forward to some healthy competition with each other or simply inspire to beat their personal best. After working out, enjoy a healthy breakfast and a chance to network with other participants before heading off or stay and enjoy David Lloyd Club's facilities.

10 Fri

Brexit Business Breakfast

7am-9am
Marcliffe Hotel

Domestic produce means there will likely be no shortage of eggs or bread in a post-Brexit Britain but with 60% of pork coming from the EU, demand for potatoes exceeding our home-grown supply; and about 400,000 tonnes of fresh tomatoes imported from European countries every year, how your great British breakfast looks is an interesting illustration of how the UK's wider economy may also change.

30 Thu

We Mean Business - Gender Expression in the Workplace

11.45am-2pm
Aberdeen
Altens Hotel

Allow Rikki Arundel, author and inspirational speaker, to highlight how your organisation can benefit from embracing diversity and help create a fairer world in which every person's gender, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation are accepted and respected. Hear how Charlie Craggs, trans activist and author, is tackling transphobia fabulously, through education and empowerment. In unveiling her journey she will talk about Nail It, the pop-up manicure station nailing transphobia, and reveal why the lobster emoji is so important.

June

12 Wed

The TUBS Business Breakfast

7am-9am
AECC

This breakfast will focus on the importance of a strong brand in today's competitive marketplace and launches The Ultimate Business Show. Hear from Ed Brooke of The Leith Agency, the brand makers behind Irn Bru and CalMac.



End your week with a bang at Feel Good Friday

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Morgan Cooper

David Lloyd Clubs has appointed Morgan Cooper as sales and marketing manager. Morgan brings more than 15 years of experience working in business development, has a strong passion for fitness and wellbeing and will play a key part in delivering the ambitious growth plans of the club.



Caroline Walker

Caroline Walker Property Leasing has opened in Aberdeen. Caroline has over 30 years of experience working in the hospitality and hotel sector and rental and leasing industry. She has worked in locations throughout the UK and returned home to Aberdeen to launch her career within a leading leasing company where she developed her knowledge and skills.



Alan Golightly

Aberdeen personnel specialist, Prodrill, has strengthened its team with the appointment of recruiter Alan Golightly to support the growth and realignment across the business's technical recruitment division. Alan joins as senior resource specialist, supporting client operations manager, Drew Alexander, enhancing the company's technical recruitment offering.



Graham Smith

Graham Smith has joined Scott James Wealth Management, a representative of St James's Place Wealth Management on Queen's Road. Graham has a wealth of expertise in retirement planning, investment planning, protection, estate and tax planning following a career spanning nearly 30 years in the financial services sector, largely in the central belt.



John Robertson

John Robertson has moved within the Nucore Group from Dubai to join Oteac, the international service company specialising in fire and gas detection as well as security solutions, as offshore development manager. Headquartered in Aberdeen, John has more than 40 years' experience in the fire and security industry.



Stuart Clow

OPITO, the global, not-for-profit skills body for the energy industry, has appointed Stuart Clow as director with a remit focused on supporting industry safety through high-quality training and competency standards. Stuart has more than 30 years' experience in the oil and gas industry.



Robbie Hedderman

Robbie Hedderman has been appointed business development manager for the Aberdeen Football Club Community Trust ahead of AFC's move to Kingsford. He is a former youth player and also brings experience working in finance as part of a hedge fund administration company.



Mike Naysmith

The managing director of CALA Homes (North), Mike Naysmith, has been appointed to the board of Homes for Scotland. Mike has more than 20 years of property and construction experience to and will help the organisation support more than 200 companies involved in growing Scotland's housebuilding industry.



Graeme Cant, Pam Mackintosh and Darren James

Jelf, adviser in insurance, risk management and employee benefits, has announced a new leadership team in Aberdeen as part of growth plans in the North-east of Scotland. The team is led by branch director Graeme Cant. He is joined by client services director Pam Mackintosh, formerly a team manager with Marsh and Darren James, who was recently promoted to business development director. Each has over 30 years of experience in the insurance sector. Around 60 staff are based in the Westhill office which formerly operated as Central Insurance Services (CIS).



Sheila Graham and Bob Ruddiman

Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV) has boosted its board with the appointment of non-executive directors Sheila Graham and Bob Ruddiman. Sheila, commercial leader at Shell's global upstream operated business, has more than 25 years' international experience across a variety of senior roles in oil and gas businesses. Bob Ruddiman, global head of oil and gas at Pinsent Masons, is a sporting enthusiast who enjoys running, cycling, golfing, rugby, skiing and hillwalking. He has been involved in ASV since the outset and his passion for sport continues through his family, who participate in various sporting activities at ASV.



Calum Wilson and Michael Eaton

Aberdeen Cooling Solutions has appointed Calum Wilson as air conditioning and refrigeration engineer and Michael Eaton as air conditioning and refrigeration apprentice to help meet demand for its services. The company, which expects to hire a further two engineers and potentially another apprentice by the end of this year, is led by managing director Ryan Pirie.



Caroline McBain

Albyn Architects, set up last year as a new partnership between the owners of two Aberdeen architectural businesses, has added to its team by bringing in Caroline McBain as an associate architect. The appointment is in response to a number of new contract wins since the company was formed.



Sarah Liversidge

Law At Work, the employment law, HR and health and safety specialists, has appointed Sarah Liversidge to the new role of health and safety manager in Aberdeen. Sarah, who previously spent eight years as an inspector with the Health and Safety Executive, joins following a number of new client wins and a 40% increase in work across 2018.

Welcome to the Chamber

Aberdeen Cooling Solutions

Air conditioning & refrigeration contractor

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C Ryan Pirie, managing director

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