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**Cover image**  
Leisure & tourism

**April's theme**  
Environment &  
Sustainability

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MARCH 2019  
Focus on **LEISURE & TOURISM**



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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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# — No longer Scotland's best kept secret —

**AS A nation, we have ambitious targets to grow the visitor economy. Tourism is a growth industry with consumers around the world spending more time and money on leisure activities. For as long as anyone can remember, Scotland has been one of the strongest brands in the world but until recently, the North-east corner was out of sight, out of mind and closed for business.**

That is beginning to change with tourism firmly at the heart of our regional economic strategy and one of the five identified sectors for diversification and growth.

Last year the Destination Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire tourism strategy was authored collectively by the industry with the aim of growing visitor spend in this region to £1 billion per annum by 2023- an increase of around 60%. Ambitious? Yes, but achievable.

We have a much clearer understanding of our consumers: who they are, where they are coming from and why they visit. And we have the space and capacity to welcome them, unlike many of Scotland's traditional hotspots where there is no room at the inn.

Of course the most important ingredient is our amazing offer - a genuinely contemporary Scottish experience. Coastline, countryside, castles, golf, world class festivals and events...the list goes on. But we are not resting on our laurels with new attractions being added all the time. Already in play we have the Fife Arms, Macduff Aquarium and the Music Hall. The pipeline includes Aberdeen Art Gallery, a BrewDog hotel, the Duke of Rothesay Highland Games Pavilion and much more.

Don't just take my word for it. The New York Times recent 52 places to go in 2019 listing saw Aberdeen in at 24 ahead of Lyon, Doha and LA!

Lots of work is taking place to ensure we are 'cruise-ready' to provide an unrivalled experience to the thousands of passengers that will be arriving at the new Aberdeen South Harbour from next year with the AWPR providing faster access to all parts of the area.

However it isn't all about leisure visitors. TECA does not just offer us the chance to host headline concert acts, it gives us the chance to change the game on business tourism. Attracting high-spending national and international professional association conferences supported by Visit Aberdeenshire's new conventions & events bureau with its unique 'Business Events Ready' guide to help local businesses make the most of the opportunities.

Underpinning all of this the North-east tourism industry is reliant on the recruitment, development and retention of a skilled workforce. There are many strands to this but the Chamber is playing its part through the Developing the Young Workforce team partnering with the Aberdeen City and Shire Hotels Association to engage with schools across the region highlighting to pupils and parents the varied and life long career opportunities available in the hospitality sector.

It's late for resolutions but make this one anyway. Become a local tourist. Plan in some time to get out and rediscover the incredible places on our own doorsteps. And you can do all this basking in 27.9 hours of sunshine a week, three hours more than the rest of Scotland. To help you, there's a fully refreshed What's On guide [enjoyabdn.com](http://enjoyabdn.com) aimed at local folk, ex-pats and their visiting friends and families. Go on. Do it. Instead of talking our area down, fall back in love with Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. And then tell someone else.

**Russell Borthwick**  
chief executive



## BGF's investment in Scotland



**Mike Sibson**, BGF investor, **Graeme Coutts**, FrontRow chairman and **Stuart Ferguson**, FrontRow CEO

THE Business Growth Fund (BGF) has invested more than a quarter of a billion pounds in Scottish businesses to date. This includes 30 new investments, as well as follow-on funding for existing portfolio companies, since BGF was set up in 2011.

BGF's team in Scotland, based in local offices in Edinburgh and Aberdeen, provided £42m of patient capital to businesses with three new investments in 2018. These included Parklands Group, one of Scotland's largest independent care home providers and BGF's first investment in the Highlands and Moray; and Cumbernauld-based Moulded Foams, the UK's largest independent manufacturer of moulded foam products.

Follow-on investments into existing portfolio companies included Aberdeen-headquartered oil and gas service providers SPEX Group and the commitment of a further £10m to oilfield technology group FrontRow Energy Technology Group to support further growth in its group companies, taking BGF's total commitment to £20m.

## Neptune contract for Bureau Veritas

BUREAU Veritas has been awarded a four-year contract with Neptune Energy to provide second and third-party inspection services for the new Fenja oil and gas field development, offshore Norway.

The Fenja Field, which is estimated to hold 100 million barrels of oil, lies in the Norwegian Sea. Formerly known as the Pil and Bue discoveries, it was granted approval for development by the Norwegian government in April 2018 and is expected to start production in 2021 following an investment of around \$1.2 bn. The six-well field will be developed as a subsea tieback to Equinor's Njord A facilities, 35km to the North-east.

## Arrow expands in Scotland

ARROW Business Communications Limited has strengthened its presence in Scotland with a third acquisition and new office in Aberdeen.

Arrow has acquired Abica Ltd and its subsidiary PCR IT Ltd. Abica and PCR are leading providers of telecoms and IT services with offices in Glasgow. Abica and Arrow have much in common as both deliver a similar range of solutions from the same suppliers to customers in all industry sectors.

## Ellon firm's Chinese success

A NORTH-EAST engine pump manufacturing specialist has secured long-term contracts and is working on new product collaborations with several leading diesel engine manufacturers, following a successful sales and training visit to China.

Representatives from Ellon-based LFH Engineering visited China to develop relationships with existing customers and work together on custom-built pump designs which will meet the specific needs of the Far East manufacturers. CEO Les Hill and his colleagues also delivered technical training to local staff on LFH Engineering's bespoke high-quality diesel engine coolant pumps, including precise fitting and maintenance.

Since 2013, LFH Engineering has worked with Hudong Heavy Machinery in Shanghai, the market leader in marine power equipment in China for low and medium speed diesel engines and power system integration. The company is also collaborating with Shaanxi Diesel, a global marine diesel engine and diesel generator spare parts supplier.

## Middle East contract for Tendeka

INDEPENDENT global completions service company Tendeka has secured a multi-million-pound contract with a major national oil company in the Middle East.

Tendeka will provide reservoir modelling and the installation of its FloSure Autonomous Inflow Control Devices (AICDs) to boost production and improve reservoir performance in several mature fields.

Tendeka will perform reservoir simulations for each well, working closely with the client to ensure optimum reservoir performance, with the technology helping in the reduction of unwanted fluid production.

# Eyes wide open

WHETHER you come from near or far, the North-east is a great place to be. Across the area there is a wealth of culture, amazing heritage, great food and drink and one of the most spectacular landscapes in the world. →



**“There are many ‘undiscovered’ places in Aberdeenshire that add to the story and history of the area. Most people are familiar with the National Trust but fewer know about the properties managed by Historic Environment Scotland for example. In some not-so-tucked away places you can find amazing insights into our culture and legacies. We always assume there is time to visit ‘one day’ and we seldom make it ‘today’ when exploring in our own surroundings.”**

**Jacqueline van den Akker,**  
*director, Grampian Escapes and Tours*

“There is a rich and vibrant creative sector in the region and having a sustainable creative output in the North-east will bring benefits to the economy – improving quality of life, attracting visitors and making it a more appealing place to work and establish business. Through Look Again festival and our ongoing programme of support for creative business, we aim to create a step change in the way that the creative sector is valued in the city.”

Hilary Nicoll,  
associate director, Look Again

“Local attractions are intrinsically linked to the community in which they are located. They are all able to tell a little of the social history of the area. Many people from the North-east will have had a Gordon Highlander in their family tree so visiting the museum may also tell them a little more about themselves too.”

Bryan Snelling,  
chief executive, The Gordon Highlander’s Museum



AS 2019 unfolds, the Aberdeen City Region is celebrating a series of events, investments and new openings that show how broad, modern and vibrant the North-east is.

A new what’s on guide, enjoyabdn.com, has been unveiled, bringing together a list of must-attend events taking place across the region together into one place. The portal was among the suggestions volunteers involved in the Vanguard initiative put forward as a way to boost tourism in the region and the site was launched by VisitAberdeenshire in January.

This year the Look Again Art Weekender is inviting us to ‘become tourists in our own city’ by seeing Aberdeen city centre through fresh eyes.

The festival in June is a celebration of the very best contemporary visual art and design, showcasing both local and internationally acclaimed talent in Aberdeen. It is urging people to explore the city, to ‘look in, look out, look up, look down, look again at Aberdeen in 2019’.

It is just one of a year-round calendar of festivals and events in the North-east providing a feast of entertainment for residents and visitors.

They include the Jazz Festival this month and the Scottish Traditional Boat Festival in Portsoy plus TechFest and the Sound Festival later in the year.

While Aberdeen remains a major energy hub it has now also developed into a destination with a host of cultural and sporting activities to draw people from outwith the area but also to provide year-round attractions for those of us who live here.

Key green spaces and buildings, such as Union Terrace Gardens, Marischal Square and Provost Skene’s House are being reinvented; while His Majesty’s Theatre, the Music Hall, the Tivoli Theatre, The Lemon Tree and The Barn regularly welcome the biggest names in music, west end shows and comedy, as well as up-and-coming local talent. The new The Event Complex Aberdeen (TECA) will open its doors this autumn to replace the AECC and welcome even more big names in entertainment.

There can be few areas which present a more varied offering of attractions for tourists and local residents than Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire as a glance at the top ones on TripAdvisor demonstrates.

One of the most popular is the medieval fortress Dunnottar Castle which dates back to medieval times but which is best known because it is where the Honours of Scotland, the Scottish crown jewels, were hidden from Oliver Cromwell’s invading army in the 17th century.

The ruins were also used for Franco Zeffirelli’s Hamlet movie in 1990, which starred Mel Gibson, and more recently is thought to have provided the inspiration for Princess Merida’s home of Dunbroch in the film Brave. Visitors can also see the dungeon in which many prisoners were held over the centuries.

Another prison is among the most popular attractions in the North-east. For more than a century it was a place no one wanted to go but now it is a place everyone wants to visit.

Since opening its doors as a museum three years ago Peterhead Prison has become the Alcatraz of the North-east, drawing around 30,000 visitors a year keen to see where the country’s toughest criminals were once incarcerated. It covers every aspect of the prison’s history from the story of safe blower Johnny Ramensky, a prolific escaper who was recruited by the Commandos to break into Rommel’s headquarters in North

Africa and Hermann Göring’s Carinhall in the Schorfheide, to the 1987 riot, finally ended by the SAS, in which an officer was held hostage and paraded on the roof with a noose round his neck.

If that’s not your cup of tea, with a climate that is warmer than the Scottish average, we have some of the longest summer days – and only half the annual rainfall of Miami, creating plenty of opportunities to get outdoors and explore.

For a more serene experience there are a host of locations of unrivalled beauty listed on TripAdvisor. These include Loch Muick on the Balmoral estate where you can enjoy a 7.5 kilometre stroll around its shore; the Linn O’ Dee, a favourite beauty spot of Queen Victoria; and the striking Bullers of Buchan where the cliffs are the nesting site in spring for colonies of seabirds.

For sporting enthusiasts there are numerous events in the area in which to participate or spectate including the Simply Health Great Aberdeen Run in August, Premier League darts; Highland games; Balmedie’s Beach Ballistic obstacle course racing (OCR) event with 6k, 16k and 32k courses or this month’s inter universities boat race.

Not only are we home to more castles per acre than anywhere else in the British Isles, the area is rich in museums including the Gordon Highlanders, the Aberdeen Maritime, Grampian Transport and Fraserburgh Heritage museums, as well as the Pitmedden Garden and Museum of Farming Life, the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses and the Tolbooth Museum in both Aberdeen and Stonehaven.

The New York Times recently listed the Aberdeen City Region as one of the must-see global destinations for 2019, the only UK region to make the list. If you are lucky enough to call the Aberdeen city region home, you won’t need convincing.

There’s so much on our doorstep, it’s time to get out and enjoy it.

## Did you know?

Aberdeen is the UK’s only entry on the New York Times global list of 52-must-see places in 2019.

A purple flag confirms we are one of Scotland’s safest night time destinations.

There are more castles per acre in Aberdeenshire than anywhere else in the British Isles.

Our coastline was voted one of the 20 most iconic landscapes in the world by National Geographic.

Aberdeenshire is the only place in the world where you can still pick fresh cherries in September.

Aberdeenshire hosts a higher concentration of stone circles and other megalithic remains than any other region in the UK.

# YOUR YEAR OF FEELING THE BURN?

## CHANGE THE WAY YOU WORK OUT

**DAVID Lloyd Aberdeen is a unique gym and health club situated on the banks of the beautiful River Dee. Packed full of the latest equipment and, for families, we really do have everything you could want all under one roof.**

Our gym will change the way you work out. With the very latest equipment, cutting-edge technology and brand new layouts, lighting and colour schemes, we have special zones for cardio and weights, as well as exciting new technology including Wattbikes, Woodway Curve treadmills and our unique SYNRGY360 'playground', complete with monkey bars, ropes and trampolines.

We have four Group Exercise Studios and with 128 classes running each week, there's plenty to try. The classes in our high impact studio focus on getting your body moving and your heart pumping. Give your legs a workout in our Group Cycling Studio that has 33 amazing Stages bikes. Our Mind and Body studio is the perfect tranquil space to enjoy a holistic class like yoga or pilates. Or if you are looking for the ultimate work out a visit to our Blaze Studio is a must.

Tennis is all about our community. We run regular competitions, tournaments and social nights. If you or your children ever need a bit of extra coaching, our expert coaches are on-hand to offer one-to-one sessions, group classes and of course, our very popular All Stars junior tennis coaching programme. Our facilities include five indoor tennis courts, two outdoor tennis courts, badminton courts, table tennis and two tennis bubble courts (September-April).

With its beautiful riverside location, it's no wonder members of David Lloyd Aberdeen love taking a dip in our 25m indoor pool. We also have two indoor pools for children where we hold our super-popular All Stars swim programme. Children can take part in a range of classes to help make sure they develop essential skills and feel confident in the water. Relax in our luxurious spa and take advantage of our sauna, steam room and indoor whirlpool.

Our DLicious cafébar is the heart of our club. It's the perfect spot to enjoy a coffee with friends or a tasty meal. Catch up on some emails in our Business Hub, or let the kids loose on our new soft play climbing frame. Whether you're here as a family in our dedicated family area, couple or individual in our adults only area, we have something for everyone.

We pride ourselves on offering families something that they just can't get anywhere else, DL Kids. We have a really lovely atmosphere in the club and everyone is super-friendly. There's plenty to do, including free DL Kids classes that are carefully timed to match adult classes so you can get a workout in while the kids are entertained and we have crèche for our younger members. For teenagers, we run a Fitness into Teens (F.I.T) programme that after completion allows access to our gym.

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*David Lloyd*  
— CLUBS —  
ABERDEEN



**Jim Milne**, centre, receives his honorary fellowship from RIAS president **Robin Webster**, second right

## Architects honour Balmoral MD

JIM Milne, chairman and managing director of Balmoral Group, has been awarded an honorary fellowship of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) for his contribution to the country's built environment through its manufacturing industry.

The presentation was made in Aberdeen by RIAS president Robin Webster OBE who was joined by members of the Aberdeen Society of Architects for the ceremony.

Robin said: "Beyond his immediate commercial interests Jim has actively supported the Aberdeen Society of Architects in its quest to improve the architectural environment in and around the city and his encouragement in the 2016 and 2017 Architecture Festivals was very much appreciated.

"The RIAS is extremely grateful and is pleased to bestow this honorary fellowship in recognition of his ongoing support."

## Pinsent Masons named Firm of the Year

LAW firm Pinsent Masons has been announced as Scotland's Firm of the Year by global rankings body Legal 500 UK.

The company, which has offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen and employs an estimated 500 lawyers and support staff in Scotland, was recognised for the strength of its individual specialists and practice teams across the full spectrum of commercial law.

The Legal 500 analyses the capabilities of law firms across the world and assesses the strengths of law firms in over 150 jurisdictions. The rankings are based on a series of criteria which highlight the practice area teams who are providing the most cutting edge and innovative advice to clients.



**Richard Masters**, chairman of Scotland and Northern Ireland, Pinsent Masons

## National Decommissioning Centre opens

THE National Decommissioning Centre (NDC), a global technology R&D hub has opened in Newburgh, in North-east Scotland's Energetica Corridor.

Government ministers joined industry and civic leaders to celebrate the launch of this long-term £38m partnership between the Oil & Gas Technology Centre and the University of Aberdeen, part of the Aberdeen City Region Deal.

100 offshore platforms and 5,700km of pipeline are forecast to be decommissioned or reused over the next decade on the UK Continental Shelf. With the Oil and Gas Authority estimating the total cost of oil and gas decommissioning to be £58bn, the NDC will help industry deliver the >35% cost reduction target set by the regulator in 2016.

By combining industry expertise with academic excellence, the Centre aims to work in partnership with companies to become the global leader in research and development focused on reducing costs, extending field and asset life, and transforming the traditional approach to decommissioning.

## Students experience virtual subsea work at OPITO event

STUDENTS from secondary schools across the North-east got the opportunity to take part in an array of subsea focused activities including a virtual tour of the seabed, as part of OPITO's Energise Your Future (EYF) which took place in February.

More than 110 pupils from eight Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire schools were involved in the initiative which was held during the final day of Subsea Expo at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre.

EYF is managed by OPITO, the global, not-for-profit, skills body for the energy industry. It has been part of major oil and gas trade events or delivered through standalone sessions since 2008. The event aims to inspire and encourage more young people in the UK to consider the industry as a career choice by providing a chance to get up close with key companies and people who can help explain their businesses as well as roles and routes into the sector.

John McDonald, OPITO chief executive officer, said: "The Energise Your Future initiative at Subsea Expo is a great opportunity for students to learn about the many innovative technologies being developed for the subsea market by some of the sector's leading businesses. As more and more oil and gas companies embrace new techniques such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence, it is important that young people see and hear first-hand what the future of the industry looks like and the vast and exciting opportunities these developments present to them."

## READ to test new technology

PRODUCTION and integrity evaluation specialist, READ Cased Hole Ltd, has signed an exclusive agreement with Advanced Logic Technology to develop and bring to market its ABI-43 acoustic borehole imaging technology.

Over the coming months, READ will work in close partnership with Luxembourg-based ALT to rigorously test and characterise the ABI-43 tool, which will ultimately offer an innovative and cost-effective solution for downhole casing and cement evaluation to the global oil and gas industry.

## Aberdeen International Airport achieves top security accolade

ABERDEEN International Airport is the first airport in Scotland to receive the Civil Aviation Authority's phase 2 accreditation that promotes a positive security culture.

The CAA visited the airport during a period of 12 months to audit the airport's approach to security among its employees and third parties. The airport security team were presented with the official certification by the chief executive officer of the CAA, Richard Moriarty.

Steve Szalay, Aberdeen International Airport managing director said: "Security and safety go hand in hand here at the airport. It's fantastic that our processes have been externally verified and found to be excellent."

## Norwell EDGE partners in Tanzania

NORWELL EDGE, the global online oil and gas technical training provider, is to partner with the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) in Tanzania, to explore joint working opportunities in both education and the wider oil and gas industry.

The agreement between Norwell EDGE, headquartered in Aberdeen, and UDSM will explore opportunities to work together on joint educational projects, outreach initiatives and to collaborate on oil and gas industry projects.

The UDSM's Petroleum Engineering students will also be given full access to Norwell EDGE's in-depth technical oil and gas awareness course which features 50 modules and certified assessments.



Stonehaven, the largest town in Kincardine and Mearns

## A stone's throw

**STRETCHING from Portlethen in the north to St Cyrus in the south, Kincardine and Mearns is home to a plethora of thriving businesses, breathtaking tourist attractions, vibrant festivals and outstanding natural landscapes.**

From its early days marking the northern limit of the brief Roman penetration of Scotland through to its largest settlement - Stonehaven - marking the modern day southern limit of the AWPR, the area has long played a strategically important role in the North-east's prosperity.

Bill Carr believes that the rich agricultural Howe o' the Mearns, Lewis Grassie Gibbon country, is the ideal location for a company which produces high quality personal care products.

Family-run Body & Face St Cyrus Ltd was established in the 1980s in a former bakery in the Aberdeenshire village of St Cyrus but now operates from a manufacturing unit on Laurencekirk Business Park on the edge of the Grampian mountains.

"We have fresh, clean air and naturally pure, soft water coming from a nearby loch in the hills above Glen Esk," said Bill. "We have a railway line on one side of us and a dual carriageway on the other so access to the UK and all points south has never been a problem.

"From the point of view of image, the fit is ideal - we have access to beautiful quality water locally and we also use water supplied by Deeside Mineral Water from the historic Pannanich wells near Ballater."

Bill was a technologist at Unilever when he was invited by his former boss to join the company to help transform it from a small craft operation to a thriving manufacturing business.

The company was subsequently taken over by a national concern which ran into problems and in the early 1990s Bill led a management buyout to save the jobs and skills of the staff in this area.

The company produces its own range of products from cleansers and conditioners to pampering products which it sells mainly to Europe from its online shop.

However, its core business is manufacturing products which are as natural as possible for niche and specialist private label customers.

It manufactures for customers who export to the EU, the Middle and Far East, with North America and Australia the most recent additions.

"Long term we are looking at building our own brand and the whole ambience of being in this area is good for our business and is what we have tried to reflect on our website," he said.

For many visitors to Dalriada Luxury Lodges they provide an opportunity to recreate their childhood holidays in Stonehaven, albeit in considerably more comfortable surroundings.

This is the first venture into the tourism industry for the McAlpine family who have a background in retail management and oil and gas.

Bob McAlpine, a former oil company boss, and his wife Gina originally bought land for a family home overlooking Stonehaven Bay with spectacular views over the harbour and to the ruins of Dunnottar Castle.

Kelly McAlpine, their daughter and managing director of Dalriada Luxury Lodges, explained that they subsequently decided the land might be better used for commercial purposes than a family home and extensive research revealed a gap in the luxury self-catering market in the North-east.

The research continued, including canvassing the views of scores of family members and friends and resulted in an investment of almost £2m in eight lodges.

"For the last quarter of a century, when the oil and gas industry was booming and Aberdeen was busy supporting that industry, the region didn't really promote itself to tourists but now things have changed," said Kelly.

"With significant investment in new attractions like the convention centre and the harbour, we just felt there was a real buzz about the place that we wanted our family to be part of.

"We officially opened at the end of March 2018, have VisitScotland 5-star accreditation and the lodges offer visitors easy access to some of the region's greatest tourist attractions.

"The investment is paying off and the lodges have been hitting the mark for UK and Scottish holiday makers and family groups. Some people are coming back 50 or 60 years after enjoying a holiday in Stonehaven and are really impressed that it remains the quaint little seaside town they remember. We are also targeting tourist groups interested in active holidays, taking in nearby biking and hiking trails as well as the local golf courses.

"Visitors are attracted to the North-east of Scotland by its landscapes, its heritage and by our warm welcome. With demand to experience Scotland at an all-time high, tourism businesses across our region are well poised to benefit." →



**"With demand to experience Scotland at an all-time high, tourism businesses across our region are well poised to benefit."**

**Kelly McAlpine,  
managing director,  
Dalriada Luxury Lodges**





## What are your favourite hidden gems to visit in Aberdeen City Region?



“A lot has changed in the 10 years I’ve been away from Aberdeen, not least the controversial development of Marischal Square which though different, proves that some at least have their eyes on the future. Further innovation awaits in the hospitality sector: the new Vovem restaurant with its speakeasy reminds me more of Shoreditch than my hometown. At the same time, it’s good to know that institutions like the eco-friendly Maryculter House Hotel continue to go from strength-to-strength.

“Out in the Aberdeenshire, it’s been a delight to revisit hidden gems from my youth, like tucked away Cullykhan Bay near Pennan, the Formartine railway or the gorgeous Falls of Feugh near Banchory. With record-breaking investments in infrastructure, industry and innovation billed and planned, the future is bright for both businesses and visitors to our wee corner of the world. I for one am more proud than ever to be Aberdonian.”

**Adam Bell**, *managing director*, moment agency



“The Cruickshank Botanic Garden, which is situated in Old Aberdeen and part of the University of Aberdeen campus is a real hidden gem in the city. The garden is a beautiful, surprisingly open space and I don’t believe it is known to many. At times, myself and my family are the only visitors. Johnston Gardens in the West end of Aberdeen is another example of a world-class, secret garden in the heart of the city that we frequently visit.

“After a stroll around one of our secret gardens, I would recommend a ‘real’ pizza from Carmine’s on Union Terrace. In another world, Carmine would be picking up Michelin stars for his Italian cuisine.

“I think as a city at times we are guilty of not shouting loud enough about what we have to offer. Aberdeen has more going on than you think.”

**Scott Hunter**, *creative director*, Hampton



“I enjoy exploring and trying to find new places and one amazing one I found recently was the Macduff Marine Aquarium. This was a real hot spot for me and although I didn’t have any children with me, it was very impressive how they looked after children and their families and the children were even able to touch some of the sea creatures.

“I love hiking and Loch Muick on the Balmoral Estate is my favourite place to walk with Newburgh Beach, to watch the seals, a close second. I have also enjoyed climbing Clachanaben, Bennachie and Glen Clova. So far, I have been on three trips with Aberdeen Hidden Tours and they are brilliant and I love the way each different theme is delivered by Dr Fiona-Jane Brown.”

**Emilia Stanczyk**, *business adviser*, Elevator and Business Gateway

Ken Whittaker and his wife Janet launched their business, Whittaker Engineering (pictured top right), 35 years ago in rural surroundings a short distance from Stonehaven, his home town since he was a schoolboy.

It has proved the ideal location to build the business and workforce to almost 200 - 125 employees in Aberdeenshire and 60 in Mexico where they have had a base for 10 years.

“When we started there was just the two of us,” said Ken. “I wanted to buy the land on which we have built the business because I didn’t want to go into rented accommodation on an industrial estate and that has allowed us to expand. That wouldn’t have been possible in Aberdeen because of the cost of land and the rates and it has worked out well. In a city labour can sometimes be easier to find but it is also easier to lose.”

Ken, originally a welder, was joined in the business six years ago by his son Murray, a turbine mechanic to trade, who is director of projects for the company which is now a key employer in the area.

“We operate mostly in the oil industry although we are also involved in renewables. We train our own apprentices and take on four to five

apprentices every year on four-year modern apprenticeships. I still have my first and second apprentices, who joined us in 1985 and 1986 working with us.

“Our staff come from as far north as Aberdeen and as far south as Dundee, most come from the immediate area and it’s a good place to be based. When our customers visit many of them comment on how nice a place it is with a great atmosphere, it must be a good place to work.

“There have never really been any communication problems although the bypass has made a big difference where we are now only 20 minutes from Aberdeen airport which is less time than it takes some people from Aberdeen.”



**“Our staff come from as far north as Aberdeen and as far south as Dundee, most come from the immediate area and it’s a good place to be based.”**

**Ken Whittaker,**  
*founder,*  
**Whittaker Engineering**

# The future of travel and tourism

by David Edwards,  
head of research and insights,  
VisitJersey



**WHEN a little baby boy was born in Glasgow in the spring of 1987 even his nearest and dearest would probably have dismissed suggestions that before he turned 30, he'd be a two-times Wimbledon Champion and have an Olympic Gold medal to his name for good measure.**

But you don't have to search far to find someone willing to predict how the future will pan out, though even if the soothsayer gets it right, this will doubtless be more down to a lucky punt than some remarkable power of prophecy.

Tourism is in many ways very different now to how it was back in the 1980s, for example who would have predicted residents of mainland China would, in aggregate terms, be the world's primary source of international tourism expenditure by a factor of two? Did most people wrongly believe that Concorde heralded a future in which all long-haul travel would be supersonic? Had anyone boldly proclaimed that one of the first things a guest arriving at a hotel reception desk would utter was set to be 'What's the Wi-Fi password?'

This inability to foretell what is to come does not mean we should neglect to think about travel and tourism in the future. It is a vital part of the global economy, with the World Travel and Tourism Council estimating that it accounts for around a tenth of global GDP and a similar share of jobs, so its evolution deserves our attention.

There are different ways to approach this, we could try to play the numbers game of predicting market size each year for the next couple of decades, or we could develop various scenarios that describe how people will book and consume their holidays in a world in which artificial intelligence touches every aspect of our lives.

Both approaches have their merits of course but will they help us plan? Maybe. Another alternative is to try and surface the varied influences on tourism behaviour today, recognise that we can learn from history and devote some quality thinking time to how the stuff that shapes our holiday choices is changing.

The big question then is what shapes the future of tourism? Well, lots. However, we can identify distinct categories of influence, all of which are inter-connected.

There is economics, for most a subject rather drier than the sands of Arizona but critically important. Politics, in the form of politicians and the policies they conjure up. Socio-demographics, changing the size, structure and attitudes of society. Travel and transportation, shaping how easily and affordably we get from A to B. Environmental matters, be that a single-use plastic bandwagon or visitors' appetite to breathe in unpolluted air while fishing in a crystal-clear river. Finally, there is technology, with the many opportunities and conundrums it presents.

Each of these warrant a dedicated blog of their own but that's for another time. Meanwhile, who wants to predict who the next Wimbledon champion from these shores will be?

*David will be among the speakers at the VisitAberdeenshire Tourism Conference which takes place at the Music Hall, Aberdeen, on March 20. For more information or to book your place, visit the Chamber website.*

## Fifth Ring ranked top Scottish Independent agency

FIFTH Ring, the Aberdeen headquartered global marketing communications specialist, has been ranked as the number one Scottish independent agency in the latest Drum Independent Agency audit and the 68th in the UK.

The annual report of the top 100 performing agencies in the UK is based on an analytical survey of two years of accounts and covers all financial metrics. The survey looks right across the spectrum of the marketing mix and compares agencies working in advertising, design, PR, digital and experiential fields. Beyond the financial metrics the survey included client interviews and testimonials focused on the clients' satisfaction and the levels of service received.

Fifth Ring's ranking is based solely on its UK revenue and performance, without including the revenues from Asia and North America.

Ian Ord, Fifth Ring's chief executive officer, said: "I am incredibly proud that Fifth Ring has ranked so highly in the agency census on our first attempt. The rating is especially important, as it not only confirms our commercial success but also how highly we are perceived by our clients."



Ian Ord



## Nothing works better than an **active** workforce

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[www.sportaberdeen.co.uk/active-workforce](http://www.sportaberdeen.co.uk/active-workforce)



## ONE and SDI partner to support internationalisation

PRIVATE sector economic development body Opportunity North East (ONE) and Scottish Development International (SDI) are partnering to help oil, gas and energy supply chain companies internationalise through export knowledge exchange.

ONE and SDI are launching the export knowledge exchange programme to bring seasoned and aspiring exporters together to share experiences, insights and opportunities and increase the volume of supply chain exports to global oil and gas markets.

The ONE and SDI peer to peer knowledge exchange will provide an environment for operators; tier one contractors; experienced, early-stage and aspiring supply chain exporters; and market experts to interact around specific market or sector opportunities to help grow the value and volume of the Scottish supply chain's international activity.

Trevor Garlick, chair of ONE oil, gas and energy said: "The aim is to establish an efficient and effective peer to peer network, with regular interaction and focus on specific market or sector opportunities and export support. Business discussions will explore practical exporting and internationalisation issues, to enable companies to learn from each other and access market insight intelligence."



Trevor Garlick

## DM Hall moves to Union Terrace

DM HALL, chartered surveyors, has moved to high-quality, modern, fully-refurbished premises on the third floor of 4-5 Union Terrace in Aberdeen city centre.

The new offices with an open-plan layout and spectacular views over Union Terrace Gardens and the city centre, will mean that, unlike its former offices, all members of the DM Hall team, both residential and commercial property specialists, will be able to share, more readily, their co-operative approach to client issues.

Shaun Peddie, DM Hall's Aberdeen residential partner, said: "The £25m investment planned for Union Terrace Gardens, including a new walkway, an amphitheatre, a play area and a café, will provide a further boost to our developing city centre and our new premises will provide us with front row seats for this exciting new initiative."

## Office lettings on the up

SAVILLS reports a 40% increase in the number of office lettings in Aberdeen in 2018 last year (94 lettings compared to 68 in 2017) and close to double the number of deals done in 2015, the year immediately following the oil crash.

Availability in Aberdeen stands at 2.7 million sq ft of which 940,000 sq ft (87,326 sq m) is Grade A. The firm believes this number will reduce throughout 2019 as market supply begins to tighten. The top rent in 2018 was £32.50 per sq ft (£350 per sq m) which was achieved in three separate deals at The Silver Fin Building.

Dan Smith, head of Savills Aberdeen and director in the office agency team, said: "An increase in the number of deals demonstrates strengthening levels of stability in Aberdeen's office market with a greater number of smaller deals indicating a market less susceptible to fluctuation from large individual lettings. Despite a divergence of sectors following the oil crash, Aberdeen's economic reliance on oil and gas industries remains and therefore when oil prices increase, take-up and investment volumes also improve. We consequently expect Aberdeen to see significantly higher levels of office take-up during 2019."

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## Marine Scotland contract for Genesis

ONE of the North-east's oldest recruitment companies has secured a contract to supply personnel to the marine sector.

Genesis Personnel, which operates from premises in Aberdeen and Peterhead, has successfully tendered to be the lead supplier in a three-year framework agreement to supply temporary crew for marine patrol and marine research vessels to Marine Scotland.

Marine Scotland, part of the Scottish Government, is responsible for managing Scotland's marine and freshwater environments, with the ultimate aim of environmental and economic sustainability.

The new framework system will be delivered by a dedicated team of Genesis Personnel staff drawn from within the current 15-strong headcount.

Genesis Personnel managing director, Wendy Marr, said: "This contract win underlines our commitment to and understanding of the marine sector and, importantly, secures business here in the North-east of Scotland."



Wendy Marr, Paula Duthie, Genesis Personnel

## New contract and record tonnage for Peterson

INTERNATIONAL energy logistics provider Peterson has been awarded a new long-term integrated logistics contract to service Repsol Sinopec Resources UK. The contract involves Repsol Sinopec transitioning its marine and quayside operations to Aberdeen from Peterhead with integrated supply base, logistics, transport and warehousing operations being provided from Peterson's Aberdeen operations centre.

This latest contract, together with increased activity from existing clients, has led to the company handling record annual tonnage.

This includes 550,000 tonnes across Aberdeen harbour in 2018. The company has continued to invest in, and extend, its Aberdeen harbour footprint and this, together with increased work, has led to the company adding more than 30 people to the team, increasing its transport fleet and taking on operation of additional warehousing.

## Pinsent Masons most inclusive

INTERNATIONAL law firm Pinsent Masons has been named the most inclusive employer in the UK by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality charity Stonewall in its Top 100 Employers list for 2019.

The firm, which employs 500 lawyers and support staff in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, has also been ranked among the UK's top transgender-inclusive employers.

The Top 100 is the UK's leading ranking of employers from across the public, private and third sectors assessing workplace inclusivity. It is intensely competitive, this year receiving a record number of entrants.

Pinsent Masons was the first in the legal sector to engage with Stonewall and feature in the charity's annual review when it launched in 2008.

## Spectrum wins three Open Championships

SPECTRUM Services has won the contract to provide cleaning solutions at the next three Open Championships.

Having proved its ability at other events including the Ryder Cup at Gleneagles, several Scottish Opens, the British Masters, the RICOH British Women's Open Championship and the Senior Open Championship, the company earned an invitation to tender.

It will now tee off at Royal Portrush later this year, Royal St George's next year and at St Andrews in 2021.

'Let's move to the cloud so we can save money'

by Eilidh Clarkson,  
ISS sales manager,  
Absoft



**SOUND familiar? You can't turn around in business today without someone mentioning the 'cloud' and how massive savings in IT infrastructure costs are available. But what does that really mean?**

On a weekly basis we talk to customers who have adopted a 'cloud first' strategy but are unsure how to plan and execute the migration of their systems into the cloud to realise anticipated efficiencies and cost savings. It can be a bit of a minefield to the uninitiated, finding what works for you, provides economies of scale and ensures that you achieve the maximum return on your cloud migration investment is crucial - otherwise, what's the point in undertaking this process?

Absoft's experience is that many companies have successfully moved large parts of their IT infrastructure into the cloud but have, so far, left their SAP system on-premise. Typical reasons why the SAP systems lag in the cloud migration stakes include the perceived risk of migrating a business-critical system, the complexity of the SAP portfolio and a 'where do I start'-based inertia.

Engaging a fresh pair of eyes, from a consultancy with SAP expertise, cloud experience and a track record of successful migration projects is a recommended course of action for any organisation that wants to break out of that inertia.

Such an engagement will typically help you to review your SAP roadmap and provide guidance on whether a 'lift and shift' is the right move for you - or whether you should be breaking your move to the cloud down into smaller, more manageable (and affordable) chunks.

Your cloud migration partner will confirm your specific constraints, whether that be a reduced IT budget, current SAP enhancement pack, the current operating system or database versions supporting your SAP systems, internal resource constraints or choice of cloud partner. Understanding that context will be critical in identifying the optimal way forward for your SAP cloud migration project.

Perhaps you just need to move quickly from ageing hardware which is now a vulnerability. Alternatively, optimising and rationalising your landscape before you move or considering cloud-based benefits such as only

provisioning what you need/when you need it, might be the right option for you to release efficiency and cost savings. Either way, taking a pragmatic approach to what you want to achieve in the future and the short-term benefits available is the best place to start.

Absoft works with its customers to look at their specific situations and landscapes to determine what is possible, what makes sense and what will maximise that return on investment.

Reviewing your SAP system can help you to formulate some next steps when it comes to the cloud. It will often provide clarity as to where attention ought to be spent to optimise your current state whilst shaping your future state. You don't necessarily have to know what your end-goal is but sometimes you must spend money to save money. Having forward looking plans, where that investment today can be a step towards longer term plans.



# A nurturing and stimulating environment offers the very best start



**“Nursery aged children learn best through play, and our dedicated staff help to create an incredible range of activities and experiences for exploration, creativity and fun. There is an emphasis on developing early literacy and early numeracy skills, and this helps to prepare our youngest learners for their next step into school education.”**

**Sally Kinsey,  
nursery teacher,  
Robert Gordon’s College**

**AS A parent you naturally want to provide the very best start for your child when it comes to their education. At Robert Gordon’s College Nursery, we know that the early years of a child’s life are crucial to his or her development and wellbeing. We help our nursery children learn through quality play, exploration, through being active and by thinking creatively and critically.**

Announcing the opening of the new nursery, Sarah Webb, head of Robert Gordon’s College Junior School said: “We are excited to open our new nursery in August 2019. The enhanced nursery will operate year round and offer a high quality curriculum from our dedicated team of early years practitioners and qualified teachers who support our youngest children to offer the very best start to their learning.”

Curiosity, creativity, resilience and independence are encouraged from the start so that each child can learn at their own pace, be challenged to stretch their capabilities and supported by caring staff along the way. The curriculum is enriched by specialist subjects including art, French, music and physical education.

Sally Kinsey, nursery teacher at Robert Gordon’s College, has had a 20 year connection with the school. Having

been a former parent herself and then joining as a teacher in the primary school over 15 years ago, she has had the pleasure and experience of teaching at all different year groups in our Junior School. Sally shares her thoughts on providing our nursery children the very best start to learning.

**What makes Robert Gordon’s College Nursery stand out from the crowd?**

We ensure that all of our activities and programmes are suited to a child’s unique needs. Our three to five year olds receive weekly lessons in art, French, music and physical education with specialist subject teachers. Nursery children also have access to outstanding school facilities including weekly visits to our Junior School library.

**How does Robert Gordon’s College Nursery prepare children for school?**

Nursery aged children learn best through play, and our dedicated staff help to create an incredible range of activities and experiences for exploration, creativity and fun. There is an emphasis on developing early literacy and early numeracy skills, and this helps to prepare our youngest learners for their next step into school education. The nursery is very much part of our wider Gordon’s community. The nursery children regularly use our primary school facilities, learn from the

specialist teachers who continue on as familiar faces when the children start primary one, and work with primary four children through our buddy system. The nursery provides the very best start to effective learning.

**What are you most excited about seeing in the new nursery?**

With new and enhanced, spacious indoor rooms, wonderful outdoor spaces, lots of toys, games and equipment, our children will have the freedom to play and learn. The newly dedicated and enhanced outdoor area for learning and play will give the children an opportunity to take their creativity and fun outdoors.

**How do you encourage outdoor play throughout all seasons?**

Whether it’s exploring local sites, perfecting culinary skills in the outdoor mud-kitchen, or riding trikes amongst a backdrop of historic buildings the children will pop on a cozy waterproof outdoor suit and a pair of wellington boots to ensure that they benefit from year round, outdoor learning and play.

**What type of activities do the children enjoy most in the nursery?**

Being in the city centre we are able to explore the city with easy access to the surrounding areas, and every Friday afternoon you will find our nursery children out exploring the rich and diverse local environment right on our

doorstep. Regular visits include trips to Union Terrace Gardens to look for signs of the changing seasons, taking part in the Big Park Run, going to the Central Library for story-time with books written by our favourite authors, and enjoying supermarket trips to buy fruit and vegetables, benefitting from the valuable learning opportunity to use money. We are within walking distance of a variety of amazing places to see and visit.

**Is the nursery open the same time as school?**

Families can choose to enrol year round or term time. Most children attend Monday to Friday for full day, morning or afternoon sessions. It is really nice to see children enjoying a hot meal together at lunchtime in the school dining hall, when the children in the morning and afternoon sessions cross over for a short period. In August, we will be open from 7.15am to 6.00pm weekdays.

**Is there help with fees?**

Yes, Robert Gordon’s College is an early learning and childcare funded provider with Aberdeen City Council, and funding towards the cost of nursery fees is available. Childcare vouchers are also accepted.

**Being in the city centre how can children be dropped off at nursery?**

Dedicated parking for nursery families will be available at Schoolhill from August 2019 to help with daily drop off and pick up arrangements.

**What is it about Robert Gordon’s College that inspires you?**

I feel privileged to be part of such a unique, caring and aspirational place. We value traditions and are a forward looking school.

**What has been the highlight for the nursery children this session?**

Our children really enjoy engaging in role play - it’s a very important part of a child’s education and a lot of fun. Imagination is a powerful tool which allows children opportunities to grow in confidence, communication skills, physical development, and in problem solving abilities. It allows children to get into character and it’s not too difficult to spot our budding astronauts, scientists, doctors, vets, detectives or thespians of the future.

**When can families apply?**

Applications are open for year round and term time places commencing in August 2019. Families can complete an application form available on the Robert Gordon’s College website and can contact the admissions team for more information. Telephone **+44 (0)1224 646346** or email **admissions@rgc.aberdeen.sch.uk**



Robert Wicks, commercial director, Aberdeen Football Club

# Well thought out



**“We are a people business and if our people don’t function then the business doesn’t function. That’s the fundamental at the heart of it and all the research shows that while some motivation comes from the pay packet it is the intangible things a business offers which will improve retention.”**

**Stuart Mackay, audit manager, Grant Thornton**

**THE benefits of effective leisure time aren’t restricted to what we do outside the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday. Indeed there is a rapidly growing awareness of the importance of wellbeing in the workplace because of the positive impact it can have.**

A happy and healthy workforce is more productive, suffers less from absenteeism and boasts higher staff retention.

Government research shows that there are 11 key factors for wellbeing to boost workplace performance: a degree of autonomy; variety in work; clarity over what is expected; opportunities to use and develop skills; supportive supervision; positive interpersonal contact with managers, co-workers, customers or the general public; a perception of fairness in the workplace; higher pay, although not only on the absolute level of pay but how it compares with other workers; physical security and the pleasantness of the work environment; a sense of job security and clear career prospects; and a perception of significance.

Business and financial advisor Grant Thornton has introduced a series of initiatives to put wellbeing at the heart of its people strategy and equip them with the right support and assistance for their professional and personal life plans.

Stuart Mackay, audit manager, who coordinates the wellbeing programmes, explained that in a profession which can be high stress, managing the work-life balance is vital.

“We have a theme for each quarter and in Scotland we have done a variety of different things throughout the year. We have held local workshops around mental health, financial wellbeing and physical wellbeing.

“We had a wellbeing month in January with a nutrition workshop on the first day back after the festive break. We did an agile working session to clarify who could use agile working and provide some advice on the best ways of using it and we had a personal and career development workshop to get people thinking about longer term wellbeing in terms of goalsetting.

“We had a movie lunch when we put on a film to encourage people to step away from their desks because research shows that working through lunch without a break isn’t always the most beneficial. We have also launched a book club and lunch-time walks.

“We are a people business and if our people don’t function then the business doesn’t function. That’s the fundamental at the heart of it and all the research shows that while some motivation comes from the pay packet, it is the intangible things a business offers which will improve retention.”

Aberdeen Football Club is looking to improve the wellbeing not just of its staff but of the wider community.

Robert Wicks, commercial director, said a health and wellbeing partnership had been launched with wellbeing specialist Health Shield a few months ago with the aim of making a positive difference to the communities the club serves.

“We think it is really important because the club regularly engages with people of all ages and activities and promotes good health and wellbeing from the footballers through to the Youth Development Academy and some of the amazing work carried out by the Aberdeen FC Community Trust.

“If we can start to make a positive difference, even if it’s only a small one, by encouraging fans and others we engage with to live just a slightly healthier lifestyle, then that starts to become a fairly important step in the right direction.

“It is very important that we don’t forget our staff - there are 150 staff at Pittodrie plus additional volunteers - and if we can champion physical activity and wellbeing in the workplace that too is positive step forward.

“We might even go as far as offering a healthy alternative to the pie and pint which is traditional at football grounds across the UK.

“It is early days for the initiative but we have already had a themed match day which gave sponsors and supporters the opportunity to meet the Health Shield staff and we have launched a mental health questionnaire across our social media channels and fan base.

“We are also looking into other areas, including a prostate cancer screening initiative which proved very successful at Burnley with whom we have formed a close relationship following our UEFA Europa League qualifying ties. Often men are reluctant to go to the doctor but are happy to pop by their football club. Health Shield could further assist us by providing some of the screening services needed for an initiative of this nature.

“The partnership is going well and we are delighted to be working with a brand of Health Shield’s calibre. It is also a commercial relationship but at the end of the day it’s beneficial to work with an organisation that can offer insight, experience and is well placed to help us deliver a positive impact across the club and community.”

Robert Gordon University is committed to promoting positive wellbeing for staff and students and it has just opened the world’s first on-campus Jamie’s Deli.

Promoting balanced and healthy nutrition is a key part of the university’s programme for student health but

Filippo Antoniazzi, director of student life at RGU, said several initiatives were in place to improve the students’ health and wellbeing.

“Our NUS Student Mental Health Agreement, signed between RGU and RGU:Union, has a shared aim to make RGU a place where conversations about mental wellbeing are encouraged and supported, with clear signposting to support services. One such service is our Student Counselling and Wellbeing Centre, where students can receive support and talk over issues including anxiety and depression, adjusting to university life, relationships and bereavement.

“Towards the end of 2018, the Student Life team partnered with RGU:Union to host the first Resilience Week on campus. This opened up a series of different activities for students, each highlighting their positive impact on mental wellbeing. The responses from those who took part underlined why the university continues to rank as one of the top Scottish universities for the support we provide, both personally and academically.

“RGU’s commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community also extends to promoting the positive impact of physical activity. RGU SPORT and its sports clubs have a key place in the lives of many of our students and help them maintain and improve their health, fitness and wellbeing.”

# DYW

## Developing the Young Workforce



### Which apprenticeship is right for your business?

There are many advantages of apprenticeships for employers. As well as being a cost-effective way of building your skills base, taking on an apprentice can help develop employees' soft skills, increase motivation and retention, bring in fresh ideas and help meet your corporate social responsibilities.

There are three different types of apprenticeship available, offering a flexible way to meet your organisations' needs best:

Foundation Apprenticeships	Modern Apprenticeships	Graduate Apprenticeships
<b>Apprentice age</b> Senior (S5-S6) school pupil	<b>Apprentice age</b> 16+	<b>Apprentice age</b> 16+
<b>Suitable for</b> School pupils	<b>Suitable for</b> New and existing employees	<b>Suitable for</b> New and existing employees
<b>Qualification level</b> SCQF 6, the same level of learning as a Higher	<b>Qualification level</b> From SCQF level 5 to Professional Apprenticeships at SCQF level 12	<b>Qualification level</b> Available from SCQF level 8 (DipHE) up to SCQF level 11 (Master's degree)
<b>Duration</b> Both one year and two year options are available	<b>Duration</b> Dependent on level of qualification and framework; and prior learning of employee	<b>Duration</b> Up to four years, depending on the level of qualification and programme of study
<b>What happens?</b> Pupils spend time gaining knowledge with a local learning provider and get work experience with you	<b>What happens?</b> Employees spend most of their time with you, learning on the job. Coaching or additional training is supported by a local college or training provider	<b>What happens?</b> Employees spend the majority of time with you in the workplace. Their learning is supported by a university or college
<b>Working with</b> Learning providers, local authorities and schools, linking your business with the emerging pipeline of talent	<b>Working with</b> Learning providers who can help you work out the best way for employees to work towards their qualifications	<b>Working with</b> Universities or colleges, linking your business with further and higher education
<b>Funding</b> Skills Development Scotland supports the cost of training. There's no financial cost to employers	<b>Funding</b> Skills Development Scotland contributes to the costs of training for apprentices aged 16-24, and 25+ for some frameworks	<b>Funding</b> Skills Development Scotland pays the learning costs to the learning provider for the duration of the course
<b>You offer</b> Valuable work-based learning experience and support to achieve a recognised qualification and industry skills.	<b>You offer</b> Employed status and support to achieve a recognised qualification	<b>You offer</b> Full time employment and support to achieve a degree qualification
	<b>You get</b> Well trained, motivated staff with the right level of skills and qualifications to build the right skills for your workplace	<b>You get</b> Industry ready graduates who understand your business

### Contact us:

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www.dyw.org.uk



Ewen Kerr, chief technical officer of Sparrows Group, said: "We were keen to get involved with the **Foundation Apprenticeships** as we thought it would be a great opportunity for us to potentially find candidates for future modern and graduate apprenticeship intakes and start building those relationships. The engineering team saw the benefit for young people and wanted to support them at this early stage as they make their career choices.

"It's also provided an opportunity for our recently qualified apprentices to get involved and help mentor them. This gives our younger staff members the chance to develop their own skills and share experiences of the schemes that they've been through and where they are on their career path.

"Overall, the feedback from the mentors after the apprentices have been in has been positive. The apprentices who have put the most in to it are benefitting the most and it's been rewarding for the mentors to see their progress."

"It's important to us that we provide career pathways for young people at Aberdeen Sports Village and **Modern Apprenticeships** are a key part of that - we have had 25 people come through our scheme since 2012," said operations manager Danny Costello, who has seen the direct benefits of regularly bringing apprentices into the business.

"We have a young workforce as a whole, so we find modern apprentices settle in very quickly, learn fast and flourish in the world class facilities we have here at Aberdeen Sports Village.

"There's no doubt that our teams work well together because of the mix of skills and experience we bring in. Often we provide opportunities to gain a qualification to people from the local community, who otherwise may not have the opportunity to go into further education. These roles are right across the organisation; from operations to administration, customer service to lifeguards, and many of those involved stay with us for years, which creates a great talent pipeline."

Laura Sangster, manager at Clydesdale Bank's St Nicholas Street branch in Aberdeen, is half-way through her first year **Graduate Apprenticeship** studying business management with financial services: "I knew I wanted to continue learning and develop my skills but wasn't sure how to do it while also working full time," she said.

"The apprenticeship felt really relevant to what I was doing and it has made me look at my job in a totally different way, I'm actively trying to learn more and its helping me be more productive on a day to day basis.

"The first assignment was focused on business ethics, values and behaviours in the workplace and in addition to my learning, it has provided a great discussion point for my team, so the knowledge that comes out of it goes far beyond the individual actually doing the apprenticeship.

"The support I've received from my employer has been fantastic. For anyone considering going down this route, my advice would be - do it."

### Want to know more?

As part of Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2019, DYW North East invites parents and carers to Scotland's Biggest Parents' Evening, a free information event.

Date: **March 6, 2019** Time: **5.30-8pm** Venue: **Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce**

For info visit [dyw.org.uk/events](http://dyw.org.uk/events)

# Are you too busy to make important changes in your company?

by **Gerry Kelly**,  
managing director,  
The Art Department and founder of the digital  
platform Brand Manager



**OVER the years I've been impressed by many business book authors and business event speakers that for brief moments made me think differently about how I ran my own business. Their new and exciting ideas opened up all the possibilities and opportunities that different ways of working could achieve.**

But when back at the office and faced with busy day-to-day decision making, turning these ideas into reality was quickly forgotten. At the time I put that down to being too busy but on reflection that was a poor excuse.

I now believe that being too busy to introduce change is no longer good enough. The business environment is changing faster than ever and in my opinion business leaders need to be very mindful of this.

I recently read a book called Scrum - The Art of Doing Twice the Work in Half the Time and it has changed my view about multi-tasking - a way of working that I used to think was unavoidable. Written by Jeff Sutherland, it promotes a new approach to project management and team building that has been adopted

by some of the most successful companies in the world, including Google and Amazon.

I have also started using a free software tool called Trello that is so simple and effective in planning tasks it doesn't surprise me that more than twenty-five million people have signed up to it.

Jeff Sutherland's book is inspirational and it was brought to my attention by a work colleague. The project management tool was something we had known about for a few years but had not really given it a proper go.

The difference this time around was that I had a real desire to make changes and that's the simple step that is so often overlooked. It's not even that hard to do. You just have to change your mindset and accept that doing things the way you have always done them is not necessarily the best approach to take in business.

A free software tool, a £9 book and a desire for change - that's all it took for me to make significant improvements in my business. For you it doesn't have to be this particular software or book, my point is, that as business owners,

we have to be open to change and new ways of doing things if we are to survive the next wave of change that's coming.

We need to embrace flexible working hours, capitalise on remote working and embrace the use of artificial intelligence and cloud-based services. We also need to work hard at promoting knowledge-sharing in the workplace so that we can finally wave goodbye to out-of-touch departmental silos.

If we don't adapt to the new working landscape that digital technology is shaping then our ability to retain and attract skilled and ambitious employees may become severely compromised.

For more information visit [artdepartment.co.uk](http://artdepartment.co.uk) or [art-brandmanager.com](http://art-brandmanager.com)



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## Marks & Clerk is top of the filers

INTELLECTUAL property practice Marks & Clerk has been named the top filer of Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) applications in the EU, according to figures released by Managing Intellectual Property Magazine.

PCT applications are one of the primary means by which innovators can secure intellectual property protection for novel inventions and are recognised in more than 150 countries worldwide.

Marks & Clerk has offices in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow and five further UK locations, as well as offices in the EU, Canada and Asia, filed a total of 425 PCT applications in the EU in the last 12 months for which data is available - nearly 60 more than its nearest rival. Alongside PCT patent applications, Marks & Clerk has also been named the EU's top filer of EU Trade Marks, having filed 433 during 2017.

## Barclays fund JBS growth

PETERHEAD-based JBS Group has secured funding from Barclays to fuel future growth and diversification ambitions.

With a £2m working capital funding package and a new management team now in place, the engineering firm will continue to drive growth into new sectors and geographical markets, focussing on the USA.

Over the past 12 months the business has successfully expanded into 28 countries, diversified into the renewables and power industries and has secured major contract wins with a US power authority and a US space agency.

Established in 1968 and originally serving the North-east fishing industry, JBS Group provides specialist fabrication services, blast containment systems, screw conveyor systems and mass flow excavators which are used widely in the energy sector.

## Eni contract for Lloyd's Register

ENI has awarded Lloyd's Register's a new tender. The latest contract is for coverage of rigs contracted by Eni globally for the next three years and represents a continuation of the strong relationship between both companies since 2007.



# The power of good design

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



**AT THE time of writing, we've just reached the nail-biting end of the budget process in Scotland. A number of potential powers have been identified for local government, alongside a commitment for a long-term review of council tax.**

Included in these proposals is the Transient Visitor Levy (TVL), colloquially the 'tourist tax', on which the Scottish Government now intends to formally consult with a view to devolve the power to local authorities. This is a significant shift in position for the Scottish Government, which has historically been opposed to the principle of the TVL.

We take a balanced view on the levy. Time and again, we're reminded that the North-east has a distinctly different economic cycle from the wider Scottish economy. Many of our region's challenges around business rates stem from this, with the rates revaluation coming into effect nationally at a challenging time for our regional economy.

Alongside this, our City Region deal has been moving forward at pace but these initiatives should never represent hand-outs from central government. Funding should come alongside local powers, providing regions with the long-term economic levers they need to address their own local challenges.

A well-designed, locally appropriate TVL would act to showcase the ability of our city regions to take greater

control of their own economic affairs, while allowing for consultation to take place directly between affected stakeholders and the policymakers responsible for taxation development, with both parties keenly aware of local economic conditions.

The key wording however is 'well designed'. Any potential negative impacts must be seriously considered.

Pressure on price competitiveness is a major concern of the industry, with the UK already in the minority of EU countries by not offering a reduced rate of VAT for tourism services. There's also ongoing debate around price elasticity, and the potential effects to customer buying behaviour from introducing the tax.

In addition, well-founded concerns persist around fairness. Traditionally, TVLs have taken the form of occupancy taxes. Effectively, this only captures a specific element of the visitor economy, with day visitors removed from the equation. Furthermore, the tourism industry has identified a range of administrative, technical and regulatory questions, all of which must be addressed in detail.

The impact of a TVL, both in terms of regional perception, and effects on customer buying behaviour, would have to be carefully monitored and managed.

Revenue should undoubtedly be ring-fenced for specific tourism activity. Activity should be geared at providing an ROI which significantly

outstrips any revenue impacts on hospitality firms, or others, who have joint responsibility for administering or collecting the tax. In the Aberdeen City Region, this should focus on providing sustainable, ideally additional, funding for our destination management organisation, Visit Aberdeenshire, to provide a joined-up marketing offer for the region. Consideration should be given as to whether any revenue could also be accessed by local hospitality firms, to augment their existing offers.

So, if we're to see a tourism tax at the end of this consultation process, we need to see a tax that's:

- Locally devolved and accountable
- Able to be reactive to the local economic environment
- Cognisant of the multiple elements of the visitor economy
- Structured to minimise impact on the businesses involved in its roll out
- Ring-fenced to support high ROI activity centred around supporting tourism activity in our region

No business likes to see additional bureaucracy or cost for their customers but there's an opportunity here to ensure our taxation system truly reflects our local circumstances while supporting a joined-up destination marketing offer for our tourism industry. The Chamber will be engaging actively with this process to make sure we get the balance right.

# Where do you stand on CCO?

by **Andrew Shaw**,  
tax senior manager,  
Anderson Anderson & Brown LLP



**HAS your business undertaken a review of the Corporate Criminal Offences (CCO) legislation? If not, you could be exposed to one or more of the following:**

- Criminal prosecution
- Unlimited penalty
- Loss of revenues
- Adverse publicity

CCO has been included within UK Legislation since September 2017, however many businesses are yet to take the necessary action.

As it stands, it is deemed to be a criminal offence should any business fail to prevent a person associated with it from facilitating tax evasion. Anyone performing services for or on behalf of the business is an associated person, such as an agent, intermediary, subcontractor or employee.

In order for a business to be found to 'facilitate tax evasion,' three conditions must be met:

1. Criminal tax evasion must have been committed by a taxpayer, in the UK or overseas

2. Criminal facilitation of this offence is committed by an associated person of the business

3. The business failed to prevent the associated person from committing that criminal act.

The illustration below demonstrates how simple it could be for a company to be unwittingly liable:

- ABC Ltd contracts services from Contractor X;
- Employees of Contractor X deliberately fail to declare all of their income and thus commit tax evasion;
- If Contractor X is aware their employees are doing this, for example where an employee or subcontractor mentions a comment about paying less or no tax in an overseas jurisdiction, ABC Ltd's defence against such facilitation would be for them to demonstrate they had reasonable procedures in place to prevent such an evasion from happening. If ABC Ltd cannot show this, then they could be liable under CCO legislation.

In order to have 'reasonable procedures' in place, it is firstly imperative for companies to conduct detailed internal risk assessments to identify any potential weaknesses under the legislation. It is then essential to act on the results of their risk assessment by implementing safe guards and defences to ensure that internal controls are deemed sufficiently robust to detect a potential tax evasion.

We are seeing more and more businesses being asked by their customers what procedures they have in place in order to comply with CCO legislation, and thus all businesses (regardless of size) are starting to take action. This legislation is now being enforced by larger businesses and if their associated persons (e.g. subcontractors) are not able to demonstrate or confirm their position with regards to tax evasion and CCO, they risk future business with their customer.

The scope of the legislation is very wide reaching and businesses should act if they have not already done so. Businesses which require additional guidance or support should seek this from a suitably qualified advisor.



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## Registration opens for Celebrate Aberdeen 2019

GRANITE City third sector organisations, voluntary groups, social enterprises, sports groups and musicians have been urged to sign up for this year's Celebrate Aberdeen Union Street parade on Saturday, August 24.

More than 170 organisations took part last year. The parade was first held in 2011 and has brought together more than 3,500 people each year that it has been held.

Morven Mackenzie, the leading force behind Celebrate Aberdeen, said: "Preparations have begun for this year's event which we hope will build on the success of previous years. The city has so many third sector organisations, which provide first-rate services and it's important that we recognise them."

"Celebrate Aberdeen is a great opportunity to shine a light on the work they do and we need as many third sector and sports groups as possible to sign up to take part in the parade."

Organisations which wish to take part in the Celebrate Aberdeen celebratory parade can sign-up online at: [www.celebrateaberdeenshire.org](http://www.celebrateaberdeenshire.org)



## Swapping performance for recording

YOUNG and emerging musicians can now get themselves heard through the Recording Bank, an initiative from Live Life Aberdeenshire offering access to professional recording studios.

Based on a simple exchange system, the Recording Bank offers Aberdeenshire musicians time at recording studios in Macduff and Mintlaw in return for performance at local events. The initiative is open to committed musicians who create work in any genre of music.

Councillor Anne Stirling, chair of Aberdeenshire Council's communities committee, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to support the wealth of musical talent in Aberdeenshire and an exciting example of Live Life Aberdeenshire's new and innovative way of delivering quality cultural services in our communities."

## ANM Group goes electric

ANM Group has installed electric vehicle charging facilities at Thainstone Centre, Inverurie as part of its green strategy and wide-ranging customer service offering. Charging an electric vehicle at the site will be free to all users for the next 12 months.

ANM Group received funding from Transport Scotland, through a programme managed by the Energy Saving Trust. Private organisations can apply for grant support to install publicly-available charging points through Transport Scotland's ChargePlace Scotland project. Home-owners who own or use an electric or plug-in car can also apply for grant support towards the installation of a home charging unit.

## Petrasco win UAE contract extension

INTERNATIONAL logistics solutions provider to the energy industry, Petrasco, has signed a contract extension with Flowline Specialists in Dubai.

The renewed agreement, worth a six-figure sum, will involve Petrasco providing warehousing, yard support and freight forwarding services to equipment manufacturer and service provider Flowline Specialists at its United Arab Emirates operation, which was established in 2015.

The two firms have been working together since 2010 and over the past three years Petrasco has offered transport, mobilisation and customs assistance to Flowline Specialists in the Middle East.

# Massive support towards market-leading investment



**AFTER many months of hard work, Control Valve Solutions has completed its property project. The project involved the acquisition and renovation of its new premises at Unit 7, Minto Place, Altens, in Aberdeen.**

Employing 32 contractors, following huge investment in state-of-the-art facilities, the Control Valve Solutions (CVS) project ensures enhanced customer service and new services in the valve testing, maintenance and repair market.

Managing director Mick Beavers said: "You have to invest and show your continued support to an industry that is looking for ways to reduce costs and become more efficient at bringing in new technologies."

CVS' growth ambitions have been supported by a number of organisations. Aberdeen-based property agents Savills worked with Mick to undertake an extensive search for a facility that would accommodate the company's growth plans. With a property identified, Savills provided recommendations and negotiated with the outgoing tenant and the landlord to ensure CVS received the most favourable terms.

"It was a pleasure to work with Mick and the team at CVS," said Dan Smith, director at Savills. "It's encouraging in a challenging market to see a local business go from strength to strength. This is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the dynamic team at CVS."

Scottish Enterprise were also involved in the ambitious project, supporting CVS with a grant. Phil Hendry, account manager at Scottish Enterprise, said "We have worked with CVS for a number of years to support its business growth ambitions. As part of this support, Scottish Enterprise awarded a Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) grant of £375,000 as a contribution towards CVS' investment in a project to move to larger premises in Altens, which also included the purchase of additional plant and machinery.

"This project will allow CVS to operate more efficiently by increasing capacity and boosting its client service offering whilst creating 16 new jobs in Aberdeen."

Clydesdale Bank provided funding to assist CVS with the creation of a brand new facility that will help transform its valve service operations in Aberdeen.

Steven Robertson, commercial manager said: "We're absolutely thrilled to be supporting the growth strategy of a market-leading business which plays a crucial role in the oil and gas sector supply chain, and one which is helping to cement the city's globally renowned reputation within the industry.

"Control Valve Solutions has proven to be a highly effective operator over the past 10 years and we're confident that our support will help the directors to future-proof the business and scale up further. We look forward to working closely alongside Mick and his management team in what is a very exciting period for the company."

Six months on from the start of the project, CVS staff are moving in. It has been an incredible project for the company. The new facility will officially open in March, coinciding with the 10th anniversary of Control Valve Solutions.

## March

- 27-28**  
2 days  
**Advanced Management Skills**  
Grow as a manager and improve the performance of your team
- 27 Wed**  
1 day  
**Performance Management**  
Get it right for the bottom line or service delivery
- 27 Wed**  
1 day  
**Coaching Conversations** **NEW**  
How to coach others to improve and be their best
- 28 Thu**  
1 day  
**Essential Supervisory Skills**  
Bridge the gap between doing and supervising

## April


- 17 Wed**  
1 day  
**Time Management**  
Identify time wasting activities and manage time more effectively
- 24 Wed**  
1 day  
**Train the Trainer**  
Feel confident whilst developing and presenting different types of training
- 25 Thu**  
1 day  
**Essential Supervisory Skills**  
Bridge the gap between doing and supervising in order to motivate staff
- 25 Thu**  
1/2 day  
**Taking Notes and Minutes**  
Record meetings effectively and accurately with high quality minutes
- 25 Thu**  
1/2 day  
**Resilience Survive and Thrive**  
Explore the benefits of managing stress
- 30 Tue**  
1 day  
**Finance - The Basics**  
Develop a broad understanding of business finance

## May

- 2 Thu**  
1 day  
**Report Writing**  
Produce clear, concise and effective reports that achieve objectives
- 7 Tue**  
1/2 day  
**Digital Transformation for Business** **NEW**  
Learn how to future proof your business
- 7 Tue**  
1/2 day  
**Blockchain & Cryptocurrency 101** **NEW**  
Learn the basics about blockchain tech, cryptocurrencies and decentralisation
- 7 Tue**  
1 day  
**GDPR Essentials**  
Demystify the new regulation and principals 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 and 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**  
Improve self-management
- 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

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**Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce**



A) DYW North East marked the new flagship partnership between Hazlehead Academy and Malmaison last month at a special careers taster event at the Aberdeen hotel.

B) The Chamber has launched a new Ambassadors Programme, bringing influential business leaders from across the North-east together to help support ongoing development of the regional economy.

C) Chamber members got the chance to network with senior figures from the Petroleum Commission and the Upstream Petroleum Service Providers Association of Ghana on February 6.

D) The Dynamic Digital business breakfast saw around 100 business leaders gather at the Millennium & Copthorne Hotel to hear from David Glenwright of JC Social Media and David Dwyer of Inspire.



**Kevin Bonarius,**  
chief operating officer, Garioch Sports Centre

**What does your company do that others don't?**

We pride ourselves on being a fully inclusive facility. We make sure we are accessible to all ages and abilities and we strive to remove restrictions and barriers to exercise, including offering classes for people with disabilities.

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

In the leisure industry there is a constant cycle of new trends and new facilities popping up. Our biggest challenge is remaining successful and continuing to cater for the ever-growing area we provide for. Our competition increases year on year and reviewing and adapting our service offering ensures we remain market leader in Aberdeenshire for sports and leisure provision.

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

That unfortunately not everyone is on your team. There will be people who will criticise you and want to see you fail. Having got my first managerial role at 21 years old I was relatively young, this was difficult for me to understand. I found it difficult to receive criticism for some of the business decisions I was making and changes I was implementing, particularly when I knew the decisions would benefit the business longer term.

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

I've been extremely fortunate to have been mentored by some fantastic and successful local business people who

I admire. Some of the great advice I've received is to always look for the positives in any situation, take the emotion out of any business decision, that your team are everything; and that without customers you don't have a business. Two of my personal favourites however are to under promise and over deliver; and that sometimes less is more.

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

Having left school at 17 with no clear career path, I started working at Garioch Sports Centre coaching children's football classes on a Friday afternoon. Since then, I've worked in almost every function before my proudest achievement to date, becoming chief operating officer in January 2019. A decade on, I'm the driver of one of the most successful social enterprises in Scotland.

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

To increase the amount of exercise and sport delivered within our education system, along with increasing sports and leisure provision in the area. I'm concerned that we are not where we should be and we are below par in comparison to other areas of the country. Many of the skills I have developed, both in business and in my personal life, have come from participating in sport and exercise. They are a fantastic foundation for developing valuable life skills and the benefit of exercise on our mental health and wellbeing should never be underestimated.



# Quick fire round

**What was your first job?**

Children's football coach.

**When would you like to retire?**

I enjoy having a purpose in life so once my body starts to tell me to slow down. Hopefully 80+.

**What did you have for breakfast?**

Large coffee and a pot of cinnamon oats. Lovely!

**Who, or what, inspires you?**

My parents are my biggest inspiration. They have achieved things that I can only dream of at the moment.

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

I watched the Marvel film 'Venom' last week and it was great. Go and see something else.

# A vision for a better managed print service

by **Russell Lawrie**,  
*business consultant team leader,*  
*Xeretec*



**WHEN I mention Managed Print Service (MPS) to C-Level executives or IT teams, I'm never surprised to get mixed responses as many MPS offerings have failed to achieve the promised costs savings or respond to a businesses' evolving needs.**

This has created a major challenge for companies that do offer an exceptional MPS service.

Many MPS offerings fail because they only manage the 'service' part: the ordering and delivery of consumables or the provision of a support number. Very few successfully manage 'print'. That's where tangible cost savings can be made and where measureable increases in efficiency and productivity lie.

The foundation of a successful MPS plan lies in the detail an assessment uncovers about a company's print behaviour, right down to the individual user. That, combined with predicting future print requirements, creates a powerful MPS strategy which can be monitored regularly.

Even a comprehensive MPS strategy can have holes however, which Xeretec has worked hard to plug with Vision,

an analytical platform to analyse user and document dynamics. In addition to bringing print assessment solutions in line with digital transformation, Vision combines analytics with powerful 'what if?' scenarios to identify inefficiencies and provide solutions.

The need for print assessment solutions to evolve has been driven by Multi-Function Printers' (MFP) new role as the heart of digital and document workflows. Given MFP's prominence, the need to define and monitor their use to control costs and energy consumption has become more important. To provide the level of detail organisations now require, print assessments need to be compatible with both the digital economy and digital businesses.

Today's businesses need dynamic data for digital transformation and while MFPs have evolved to become the backbone of a company's physical and electronic workflows, many print assessment solutions have fallen short. The latest version of Vision gives businesses a print assessment solution that's fit for purpose for businesses that need deeper insights into their print environment.

An assessment conducted through Vision can reveal in real time instances where print can be better managed, and the resulting saving. Can you use mono rather than colour for select pages in a brochure? Do you need physical copies of a document or can you create PDFs and share electronically? While those may seem like obvious solutions, many companies have a 'we've always done it like that' mindset, and that is costing companies money. Vision assesses both print and the process in detail, resulting in true MPS cost savings.

Cost savings will vary hugely as some companies are more disciplined with print than others but it's not unusual for a Vision assessment to show companies how and where they can save up to 30% on print costs.

Businesses starting on their path to digital transformation should look at MPS again, using Vision to scrutinise the print element as closely as they scrutinise the service element.

## Jasmine acquires D2 Marketing

ABERDEEN communications company Jasmine has acquired D2 Marketing, a design, event planning and advertising agency.

D2 Marketing has agreed a contract with new exhibition venue TECA, to deliver three large-scale consumer exhibitions over the next 12 months.

Jasmine, which employs 35 people, is engaged in marketing, advertising, PR, print, digital media, emergency media response and document management solutions.

As part of the acquisition, D2 Marketing's five members of staff will move to Jasmine's headquarters at New Jasmine House, East Tullos. D2 Marketing's managing director, Allan Smith, will become head of business development at Jasmine and Julie Murray will become the company's creative director.



The Jasmine team

## VLA offers apprentice recruitment assistance

THE Virtual Learning Academy (VLA) is offering a specialist recruitment service to help employers recruit apprentices. The free service is available to organisations willing to invest in young people (aged between 16-19) and give them an opportunity to work, learn and progress within their organisation. The VLA will support the apprenticeship training with a fully funded formal qualification relevant to their job role.

They will advertise, screen and conduct a preselection interview and will then present the company with candidates for final stage interview after which they will give constructive feedback to the candidates.

## Food waste to power TECA

A CONTRACTOR has been appointed to build an anaerobic digestion gas to grid plant to power the multi-million-pound new TECA arena, conference centre and exhibition building. Austrian-based specialist company Thöni Industriebetriebe GmbH is to construct the Anaerobic Digestion Gas to Grid (AD G2G) plant which will produce green gas and inject it into the national grid.

The plant will take the city's food waste alongside crop fuels and waste products from agriculture, to produce biogas which will be upgraded to biomethane and injected into the natural gas grid and piped to the onsite Energy Centre at TECA.

## Aberdeen Harbour activity increases

ABERDEEN Harbour increased activity levels in 2018 across vessel and cargo tonnage, arrivals and passengers.

The growing port saw a 5% rise in vessel tonnage compared to 2017 and cargo tonnage and offshore supply vessel tonnage increased by 3% and 6% respectively. The port also reported an increase in larger project vessels numbers, associated with offshore construction and decommissioning. These vessels increased, in terms of vessel tonnage, by 26% in 2018.

Matt North, commercial director at Aberdeen Harbour Board, said: "We embarked on our 'bring it back home' initiative at the start of last year, with the intention of bringing the larger project vessels and other core oil and gas activity back into Aberdeen and this has proved to be very successful.

"We enjoy the added benefit of having an incredibly collaborative relationship with the extensive network of specialist service providers which support harbour operations in Aberdeen and this has allowed us to deliver repeat subsea-enabling and decommissioning campaigns with real efficiency and an 'on time every time' service. We believe that this has generated meaningful savings and value for our customers."

## Official BHGE 10K charities take to the starting blocks

SPORT Aberdeen, organisers of the North-east's longest running charity road race and title sponsor, Baker Hughes, a GE company, are calling on participants to take on the challenge and raise money for a worthy cause as they announced the ten affiliated charities for the 2019 BHGE 10K Running Festival.

The 10 worthy causes - including new charities for 2019, The Archie Foundation and ABSAFE - will join existing BHGE 10K affiliate charities Friends of Anchor, Charlie House, Inspire, Cash for Kids, Aberdeen Cyrenians, Children 1st, CLAN, and Befriend a Child in the charity line up for the 2019 event.

Commenting on the ARCHIE Foundation's selection for the 2019 BHGE 10K Running Festival, regional fundraising manager Jamie Smith, said: "We are thrilled to be chosen as one of the affiliated charities for the 2019 BHGE 10K. This is a fantastic opportunity for us to raise awareness of the incredible impact ARCHIE has on children and their families across the north of Scotland."

Keith Gerrard, Sport Aberdeen's director of healthy and active communities, said: "We are thrilled to announce the affiliated race charities for 2019 and look forward to welcoming new faces of all ages to the event."



Sport Aberdeen's mascot McMurtle with charity representatives

## An alternative to food banks

SCOTLAND'S first pantry-style food poverty scheme, the 'Woodside Pantry', has opened in the Woodside Community Centre, Aberdeen.

It aims to reduce dependency on food banks among vulnerable families within the priority catchment area of the project.

Two third-sector organisations are working in partnership to deliver the service: Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE), which operates FareShare Grampian; and Fersands and Fountain Community Project.

Food bank providers report that the requirement for emergency food parcels increased greatly in the past five years in Aberdeen. Partners of the project believe although food banks address an immediate need, they are not helpful in the long term as they create dependency and erode dignity.

The project approaches poverty in a holistic way by trying to understand why beneficiaries fall into food poverty and making affordable food available to them.

## Oil industry mentors and mentees honoured

THE successes and achievements of a group of mentors and their mentees working in the oil and gas industry have been celebrated at an awards ceremony in Aberdeen. 18 project managers from a number of Aberdeen-based companies successfully completed the Oil and Gas Industry Project Management Mentoring Programme, which is co-ordinated by the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB).

Now in its fourth year, the six-month scheme allows qualified and experienced project practitioners to 'mentor-forward', imparting wisdom and providing guidance to less experienced project professionals with the aim of accelerating their performance and careers. To date, almost 50 participants have benefited, many of whom are working towards chartered status with professional bodies such as the Association for Project Management.

## Stagecoach invest £3.5m in 15 brand new electric hybrid double deck buses


STAGECOACH North Scotland has announced plans to introduce 15 brand new smart hybrid double deck buses to their fleet in the North-east of Scotland.

The buses mark a £3.5m investment from Stagecoach North Scotland and will be based at the Macduff depot. The fleet of electric-hybrids will operate on service 35 between Aberdeen, Banff and Elgin. The brand new buses are low floor easy-access and are fully equipped with leather seats, seatbelts, free wi-fi, USB charging points and contactless payment facilities.


The new vehicles are also equipped with the most up to date vehicle tracking system which means passengers will be able to track exactly when their bus will arrive by looking up their bus stop in the 'bus stops nearby' section of the Stagecoach mobile app or by visiting stagecoachbus.com.


All 15 of the electric hybrid double deck buses are expected to be on the road by April 2019.







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43.

## Aberdeen Harbour Board announces £30,000 fund to support local charities



ABERDEEN Harbour Board has announced a £30,000 fund to support local charities and community groups in 2019.

The sponsorship awards will see the 50th group supported by the harbour. The total amount will be shared between three groups which support either health and wellbeing, skills and talent, or environmental improvement. Sponsorship awards have been increased up to £10,000 per organisation for one year.

Michelle Handforth, chief executive of Aberdeen Harbour Board, said: "At one of the most historically important periods in the harbour's history, we would like to build on the existing funding programme to, by providing projects with larger funds. We are excited to be supporting our 50th charity and want to continue embracing our Trust Port status by providing for the local, hard-working third-sector community."

Applications for sponsorship are open until Sunday, March 31. Application forms and guidance documents are available on the harbour website.

## Top Tweets

— A month in social media —



**R2S**  
@R2S\_VAM  
Great starting the day with some learning and networking! Our communications and business development support assistant, Marine Derambure, attended @chambertalk's #BusinessBreakfast, "Dynamic Digital", this morning; an enriching event offering significant #DigitalMarketing tips.



**AFC Community Trust**  
@AFCCT  
Check out @StevenSweeney85's @chambertalk blog on the true value of football to Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire #Economy #Society #Health @AberdeenFC



**chambertalk**  
@chambertalk  
Great to have our first Chamber champions officially sign our Ambassador's Charter today.

Watch out for them being active in the business community at events near you in the months ahead!



Join the conversation  
@chambertalk

## Guyana: future oil producer

by **Brett Jackson**,  
regional manager,  
Granite PR and creator  
of the Gateway series

### AN EVENT aimed at forging links between the North-east of Scotland and Guyana has been hailed a resounding success.

During a three-day trade mission to the area in late 2018, 12 representatives of Guyanese government, industry, academia and commerce met with local businesses and organisations in a bid to strengthen relationships between the locations.

The trip was hosted by Granite PR, ABIS Energy and Aberdeen City Council and supported by other companies and industry bodies interested in exploring or expanding opportunities in Guyana.

One highlight of the itinerary was the inaugural Aberdeen-Guyana Gateway lunch at Macdonald Norwood Hall Hotel, Aberdeen, which drew an audience of 90. An update in the form of a breakfast briefing is planned for September 5, 2019.

Leading the visiting delegation was Nicholas Deygoo, senior vice president, Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry; supported by His Excellency Frederick Hamley Case, High Commissioner of The Co-operative Republic of Guyana in London; and Greg Quinn, Her Majesty's British High Commissioner to The Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Event participant and economist, G. Bobby Gossai Jr. explored some of the opportunities which exist for the Scottish and UK supply chain in this important emerging market. In his words:

Guyana is the new economic and financial investment destination of South America. This small country with a population of less than one million and a Gross Domestic Product of below US\$4 bn is set to become an oil and gas producer for the world economy. It is the only English-speaking country on the continent and has to-date an estimate of over five billion barrels of oil in its reservoir, with first oil to be produced before the end of 2020.

The development of this new and emerging energy sector for Guyana has already seen investments by globally-recognised services and affiliated companies. However there are more opportunities for doing business in Guyana, as the local economy prepares for the newly-found resource wealth. The country needs investment in infrastructure, supply bases, manufacturing facilities and training institutions for the local population to service the offshore sector. There are good prospects for companies and institutions capable of providing these products and services to explore Guyana as a future destination for growth and development.

Guyana has been building a sound macroeconomic foundation over the last decade and the economy is set to thrive with the development of its offshore potential; that is already proven with the discoveries and the commitments by the oil majors to enter, explore, develop and produce in that country.

In 2020, Guyana will be producing an estimated 120,000 barrels of oil per day and by 2022, a second FPSO will be added to produce approximately 190,000 to 220,000 barrels of oil per day. It is expected that there will be several FPSOs offshore Guyana by 2025.

Guyana has the comparative advantage of being positioned in an offshore basin with an overall estimate of 13.2 billion barrels of oil and an encouraging high rate of return for capital inflows. Investors, financiers, industrialists and producers should be paying close attention to the Guyanese market since this will be the investment hub for Latin America and the Caribbean.





See how leaders inspire even in times of uncertainty

# March

7

**5 Tue** **IR35 - How to navigate the changes**  
8.30am-10.30am The Budget 2018 proposed changes to the IR35 regime, shifting the risk and tax cost of engaging contractors through personal service companies onto clients and employment businesses by 2020. While this date may seem far off, there is a lot to be done between now and then to understand the impact on your business.  
AGCC

**6 Wed** **Scotland's Biggest Parents Evening**  
5.30pm-8pm Developing the Young Workforce North East (DYWNE) is hosting the biggest parents evening in Scotland on March 6, 2019. The event is aimed at parents and carers, as key influencers of young people, to highlight the types and benefits of apprenticeships.  
AGCC

**7 Thu** **Business Breakfast - Leadership in disruptive times**  
7am-9am In times of uncertainty how do leaders maintain their vision for the business and continue to inspire others whilst constantly planning and adapting in today's business world?  
Ardoe Hotel & Spa

**20 Wed** **VisitAberdeenshire Tourism Conference 2019**  
9am-4pm We are delighted to deliver VisitAberdeenshire's third annual tourism conference. Book your place at this full day conference and gain insight into key movements and the future of our budding tourism industry.  
Music Hall Aberdeen

**22 Wed** **Brexit preparations: A safe and cost effective route via AEO and CDS**  
11.45am-2pm Our focus at the Chamber remains firmly on assessing the implications for business, seeking clarity and providing practical guidance on the key issues you need to be aware of after March 29, 2019. Any company involved in international trade should be exploring Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) certification. This event will provide an introduction to the potential benefits of AEO, business compliance and estimate the investment required in time and resource.  
AGCC

**26 Tue** **Shire Connections**  
11.45am-2pm Come along to our Shire Connections event looking at food and drink and specifically zero plastic. We will be discovering ways the food and drink industry can take this forward.  
Barra Barn

**28 Thu** **We Mean Business**  
11.45am-2pm Carrying on the workplace diversity theme from 2018 we will focus on black and minority ethnic issues in the workplace looking at the elimination of discrimination and prejudice, building stronger communities and celebrating diversity.  
The Aberdeen Altens Hotel

Do you want to receive details of our upcoming events directly to your inbox?  
  
Let us know at [events@agcc.co.uk](mailto:events@agcc.co.uk)

# April

18

**18 Thu** **Business Breakfast: Spring into Sustainability**  
7am-9am We are delighted to announce that Michaela Strachan, BAFTA award-winning wildlife presenter will be speaking at the Spring into Sustainability breakfast. 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.  
The Aberdeen Altens Hotel

**24 Wed** **Premier Partner Informal Networking Event**  
10am-1pm Our premier partners are invited to attend this event in one of Aberdeen's iconic venues, His Majesty's Theatre, with a tour behind the scenes of this 113 year old Edwardian Theatre stepping in the footsteps of historical and famously renowned characters.  
His Majesty's Theatre

**26 Fri** **Maximise Your Membership**  
8.30am-10am 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.  
AGCC



Michaela Strachan speaks at the Spring into Sustainability breakfast  
Photo by Caroline McClelland



Get onboard VisitAberdeenshire's Tourism Conference

20

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**Lynne McPherson**

VT Wealth Management Ltd has welcomed Lynne McPherson as mortgage adviser to strengthen its client proposition as the business continues to grow in Aberdeen and Fraserburgh. Lynne brings a wealth of experience to the team having enjoyed an 18 year career with RBS most recently as private banking manager.



**Christine O'Neill**

Brodies LLP chairman, Christine O'Neill, has been re-elected to serve a third consecutive term in the role. Christine was first elected chairman in 2013 and partners voted unanimously for her to continue to guide the firm through the next three years. She will continue to represent the partnership in upholding the firm's professional standards.



**Martin Ewan**

Martin Ewan has been appointed president of the Society of Advocates in Aberdeen. A partner in global law firm Pinsent Masons, he specialises in advising national and international oil companies on corporate, commercial and technology exploitation issues; and is a contributing author to the University of Aberdeen's Oil & Gas Law textbook.



**Dan Smith**

Savills has announced the appointment of director Dan Smith as head of its Aberdeen office working alongside Nick Penny, head of Scotland at Savills. Dan takes over the role from Simpson Buglass who has been at the helm of the Aberdeen business since January 2016 and fundamental in successfully establishing Savills in the Granite City.



**Wael Sawan**

Shell has appointed Wael Sawan as upstream director from July 1. In his new role, Wael will become a member of the executive committee and will take over from Andy Brown. Andy will remain available to Wael and the executive committee to assist with transition until September 30.



**Gordon Milne**

Robertson, one of the UK's leading infrastructure companies, has appointed Gordon Milne as managing director of its eastern construction business. He will lead operations in the Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen city and Angus region, where he will drive strategic growth as well as overseeing projects including several for the University of Aberdeen.



**Warren Wells**

Scottish food ingredient manufacturer Macphie has announced the appointment of Warren Wells as commercial director. He joins the family-owned business from international food business Aryzta. With nearly 30 years' experience in the food industry, Warren has worked for a number of global brands, including Nestlé, Danone and McCormick.



**Leigh-Ann Reid**

Energy and marine specialist travel and logistics provider, Wings Travel Management, has appointed Leigh-Ann Reid as sales manager for oil, gas and corporate sales in Aberdeen. Her career has focussed solely on sales and recruitment in the energy, marine and industrial sectors, latterly as offshore marine manager at Aberdeen-based Genesis Personnel.



**Steve Hunt**

Stork UK has appointed Steve Hunt as regional director UK to lead the evolving business within a range of sectors, both on and offshore. Steve is based in Aberdeen and will be responsible for overseeing the company's strategic business growth into new and existing markets, technology-led operational excellence and outstanding HSEQ performance.



**Trisha Pirie**

Blaze Manufacturing Solutions has appointed Trisha Pirie as commercial director. Trisha has experience in leadership roles in oil and gas, education, transport, smart technologies and healthcare sectors. She joins from Scottish Enterprise where she specialised in growth strategies and will be working with the team at Blaze to deliver on the five-year business strategy.



**Ron Liddell**

CHAP Group has strengthened its senior team with the appointment of Ron Liddell as construction director. Ron has 35 years of experience in both the private and public sector and will oversee all aspects of the construction division. He takes over from Jim Young who has taken semi-retirement.



**Carol Benzie**

The board of trustees of Citymoves has appointed Carol Benzie as its new chief executive officer. Carol, who has been Citymoves interim director since October, was formerly the managing director of Aberdeen International Airport. Citymoves is the regional dance agency for North-east Scotland and has been in operation for more than 25 years.



**Chris Smith**

Chris Smith has joined Form Digital as a digital designer. With several years' experience, he previously worked with companies including The Art Department and UAC Studios, specialising in digital design and development. Chris, working alongside managing director Cameron Fraser, will be heading up the company's digital design side of the business.



**Lawson Brackpool**

activpayroll, the global payroll and tax compliance specialist headquartered in Aberdeen, has appointed Lawson Brackpool to its board of directors. He joins as group financial director and has more than 25 years' experience working in variety of roles and sectors, including energy, mining, media and publishing.



**Matthew Moran**

ITWORX has strengthened its services team by appointing Matthew Moran as a systems technician. Now part of the 1st line support team and one of the first to deal with customer support requests, daily validation of backups and customer equipment and asset processing, he has a background of managing communication systems and IT support.



**Mitch Crichton**

A senior oil and gas executive with more than 25 years' experience in both upstream and downstream delivery has been elected regional chair of the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB). Mitch Crichton, who is project delivery director for WorleyParsons, in Aberdeen, will take up the honorary position.

## Welcome to the Chamber

### Add Energy

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E ryan.pirie@aberdeencoolingsolutions.co.uk  
W www.aberdeencoolingsolutions.co.uk  
C Ryan Pirie, managing director

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W azzurro-blu.com/  
C Carol Wright, account manager

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E caroline@cwpropertyleasing.com  
W www.cwpropertyleasing.com  
C Caroline Walker, owner

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E jason.penn@checksix.com  
W www.checksix.com  
C Jason Penn, European business development director

### Geolink (UK) Ltd

Rent and sale of measurement-while-drilling tools to the oil and gas sector.

T 01224 465240  
E iain.macinnes@geolink.co.uk  
C Iain MacInnes, logistics & shipping coordinator

### Global Design Innovation Ltd (GDI)

GDI provides repair management and engineering services to the oil and gas sector.

T 01224 050061  
E enquiries@globaldi.co.uk  
W www.globaldi.co.uk  
C Gareth McIntyre, director

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E claire@landmark-press.com  
W www.landmark-press.com  
C Claire Conaghan, sales executive

### Mindset Coach Scotland

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T 07515 900020  
E steveh@mindsetcoachscotland.co.uk  
W www.mindsetcoachscotland.co.uk  
C Steve Harvey, growth mindset practitioner

### Portable Ecosystems

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T 07834 774991  
E andrew.sage@portableecosystems.co.uk  
W www.portableecosystems.co.uk  
C Andrew Sage, director

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W www.re-imagineadmin.com  
C Zoe Hubbard, virtual assistant

To see the full member directory visit [www.agcc.co.uk/directory](http://www.agcc.co.uk/directory)

# Feel like taking us on?

After a sterling performance in the 2018 Simplyhealth Great Aberdeen Run which saw us bring home the silverware in the 10k Business Challenge – small business category, Team Chamber is throwing down the gauntlet to all other businesses across the city region.

Think you've got what it takes to beat us when the Run returns on Sunday, August 25?

Organisations of all shapes and sizes are being encouraged to get fit, raise money for charity and enjoy a bit of friendly competition by signing up and taking part in either the 10k or half marathon.

Let the incredible atmosphere on the Union Street start line get you going, before running from city to sea, experiencing the best Aberdeen has to offer from a different perspective.

Visit [www.greatrun.org/aberdeen](http://www.greatrun.org/aberdeen) for more information. We'll see you at the start line.



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