

OCTOBER 2026 | PROPERTY & INFRASTRUCTURE

BUSINESS BULLETIN

North-east on track for £46bn investment

Chamber's Investment Tracker
reveals scale of economic
opportunity ahead

Page 10

'Gran Designs'

Retired teacher inspired by
TV show to help others build
dream homes

Page 60

Cover Story: **Bon Accord Baths making a splash**

Film crews dive in at historic
city building

Page 42



**Aberdeen &
Grampian
Chamber of
Commerce**



SURVEY DATA THAT MOVES PROJECTS FORWARD.

Accurate spatial data for infrastructure and property development. From pre-construction through design, construction and asset management.



REDUCE RISK

Accurate data for confident design decisions.



SAVE TIME

Efficient capture, processing and delivery.



ADD VALUE

From site survey to CAD, BIM and digital twin-ready data.

OUR SURVEY SERVICES



Land &
Topographical
Surveys



Measured
Buildings &
Laser Scanning



UAV LIDAR &
Photogrammetry



PAS128
Utility Surveys



Revit & BIM



Mobile
Mapping



Bathymetric
Surveys



CCTV Drainage
Surveys

RICS REGULATED

ABERDEEN-BASED

UK-WIDE

IN-HOUSE PROCESSING

LET'S TALK ABOUT
YOUR NEXT PROJECT.



01224 460009



info@adaptivesurveys.co.uk



adaptivesurveys.co.uk



RICS®

Regulated by RICS

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce

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



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

Affiliated Chambers
Moray

Bulletin Team



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



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



Design & production
Steve Baxter
T 01224 343900
E production@agcc.co.uk



Journalist
Danny McKay
T 01224 343939
E danny.mckay@agcc.co.uk



Editorial
Molly Massie
T 01224 343900
E molly.massie@agcc.co.uk

Not a member yet?
Come join our network!



Contents

OCTOBER 2026

Focus on Property & Infrastructure



40

£150m training centre to be built at Thainstone Business Park



55

Airport unveils next phase of £2.5m retail improvements



67

Entrepreneurs snap up iconic city centre hotel

Regulars

PAGE |

VIEWPOINT

Russell Borthwick, AGCC

4

POLICY UPDATE

Ryan Crighton, AGCC

25

RESEARCH

Samira Heshmatzadeh, AGCC

39

ON THE MOVE

Who is going places in the region?

78

Member news contributions published in this Bulletin are the responsibility of their respective authors. AGCC does not endorse and accepts no liability for the content, accuracy or opinions expressed in such material.

Turning ambition into action

There is a remarkable amount of investment waiting to happen in Aberdeen and the North-east. The latest edition of the Chamber's Investment Tracker tells that story in numbers.

More than £10billion of transformational projects have been completed across the region since 2017, changing how we live, work, travel and do business.

And the pipeline ahead is even bigger.

The latest Tracker highlights £46billion of future projects, from new energy infrastructure and data centres to housing, regeneration and major improvements to our transport network.

That should give us enormous confidence about the future of our region. But a pipeline is not the same thing as delivery.

Every project in that pipeline represents investment that still has to be won, financed, consented and built. And in an increasingly competitive world, we cannot assume that capital will simply wait around while decisions are delayed.

That is why this edition of the *Business Bulletin*, focused on property and infrastructure, comes at such an important moment. If we want the next decade to match the ambition set out in the Investment Tracker, we need to become much better at creating the conditions in which investment can happen.

Planning is an obvious place to start. Businesses need a planning system which is properly resourced, proportionate and capable of making good decisions at pace. Nobody is arguing for poor development or for communities to be cut out of the process. But certainty and speed matter enormously to investors.

The Scottish Government's creation of a Major Projects Office, specifically tasked with removing barriers to strategically important investments in areas including housing and energy, is therefore welcome. Now it needs to make a measurable difference on the ground.

The same urgency must apply to our energy infrastructure. The North-east has perhaps the greatest opportunity of any part of the country to benefit from the transformation of our energy system. Billions are earmarked for electricity transmission, offshore wind, carbon capture, hydrogen and other emerging industries.

But these projects require grid connections, ports, industrial land, skilled people and an efficient consenting system. And critically, we need an energy policy which manages the transition from oil and gas to those new industries in a way that protects the workforce, supply chain and investment capability we will need to build them.

Housing matters too. If we are serious about attracting major employers and thousands of skilled workers to the region, we need the homes and communities for them to live in.

That means unlocking viable housing developments, ensuring infrastructure and developer contributions are proportionate and giving housebuilders the confidence to invest for the long term.

And we cannot talk seriously about economic growth without talking about connectivity. For too long, major transport projects in the North-east have progressed at a pace which would simply not be accepted elsewhere.

There is a compelling case for reconnecting Peterhead and Fraserburgh to the rail network. The Chamber-backed Buchan Sustainable Transport Study has established the evidence base for a new passenger and freight line from Dyce through Ellon and Peterhead to Fraserburgh, connecting two of Scotland's largest towns without a railway.

That case must now translate into a credible programme of delivery, alongside faster rail connections to the Central Belt.

None of this is about asking government to build everything. Much of the investment featured in our Tracker will come from businesses and private investors. What government can do is create the conditions which give those investors the confidence to press the button.

The North-east has proven repeatedly that when infrastructure is delivered, investment follows. The AWPR, Aberdeen South Harbour, TECA, our universities, our energy infrastructure and countless private developments have changed this region over the past decade.

We now have the opportunity to do it again, on an even greater scale. The plans exist. The expertise exists. And, crucially, there is private capital ready to invest. Our challenge is to make sure policy helps turn that ambition into concrete, steel, homes, businesses and jobs.

Because ultimately the success of the next decade will not be measured by the value of projects in our pipeline.

It will be measured by how many of them we actually build.



Russell Borthwick
Chief Executive

“

The North-east has perhaps the greatest opportunity of any part of the country to benefit from the transformation of our energy system.



OUR PREMIER PARTNERS

The Chamber sits at the heart of the North-east business community and one of our core aims is to help create the economic conditions and business environment which will allow this region to flourish.

Our premier partners see the value of a strong regional Chamber and choose to engage with us at this level to reinforce their ongoing commitment to the region and its economy.

Without their support we would not be able to undertake much of the work that we do.
Their engagement is hugely valued and appreciated.

If you are interested in joining them, we'd love to talk to you!





A Property Market of Opportunity in the North-east

The property market in the North-east has remained resilient this year, with both sales and lettings continuing to offer opportunities for buyers, sellers, landlords and investors.

Owner and Director Laura Mearns said that from Northwood's perspective, the local market feels steady, with a healthy pool of buyers who are always looking for well-presented and realistically priced properties.

"We are seeing a surge in the number of investors looking to buy flats at a reduced price as rental yields becoming increasingly attractive. Aberdeen City and Shire are proving to be appealing markets for those looking to build or expand a property portfolio," she added.

The lettings market also remains competitive, with continued demand for good-quality rental properties and limited supply in some areas. So far this year, Northwood has had almost **7,000 tenant enquiries** and almost **3,000 viewings**, highlighting the ongoing imbalance between supply and demand, according to Operations Director Matt Pullinger.

Landlords are, however, facing an increasingly complex regulatory landscape, with around 200 pieces of legislation to be aware of when letting and managing a property. With significant changes to legislation already coming into effect and further changes due later this year and into 2027, keeping on top of responsibilities can feel like a full-time job.

It has never been more important to use a professionally qualified and trained letting agent - from keeping up with changing legislation and compliance requirements to managing tenants, maintenance and the day-to-day running of a property, Northwood are ideally placed to support landlords.

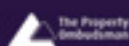
Our local knowledge and experience mean we can help whether you're looking to sell, let, invest or simply understand your options.

At Northwood, we offer a complete range of property services across the region, covering both sales and lettings, alongside our unique **Guaranteed Rent service.**

Considering your next move?
Get a free, no-obligation valuation!

T 01224 218450 E aberdeen@northwooduk.com

Aberdeen | Inverurie | Banchory | Stonehaven



LARN 1811016

northwood
Local knowledge, national reach

Welcome to the Chamber



Enelift Limited

Enelift is a global leader in the manufacturing and supply of patented tubular lifting solutions for the energy sector. Headquartered in Aberdeen, we support operators worldwide with Hinge-Lok® and our Integral Sling System®, delivering safer, lighter, more efficient tubular handling from yard to rig.

T 01224 027567
W www.enelift.com
E sales@enelift.com
C John Morgan, Managing Director



C-Tecnics Ltd

Based in Aberdeen with operations in Norway, C-Tecnics is a subsea engineering and manufacturing company specialising in equipment and systems for underwater and topside operations. C-Tecnics designs and supplies subsea cameras and lighting, diver communications, video systems, personal and recovery equipment, alongside bespoke engineered solutions.

T 01224 608000
W www.c-technics.com
E sales@c-technics.com
C Lee Duncan, Business Development Director



Da Vinci Italian Restaurant

Da Vinci is an independent Italian restaurant tucked away on Alford Lane in the heart of Aberdeen. It serves authentic Italian food made from scratch using fresh, quality ingredients, from homemade bread and pasta to traditional dishes and desserts, all in a warm, cosy and welcoming setting.

T 01224 591810
W www.davincirestaurant.co.uk
E davincirestaurant@hotmail.com
C Elena Ionascu, Director



OES Group

OES Group is a global testing, inspection, certification, and compliance (TICC) specialist. With 1,500 experts working across 15 countries, OES supports critical assets throughout their lifecycle. Proven in energy and delivering across renewables, marine, infrastructure and industrial sectors. OES combines specialist expertise and innovative technology to deliver safer, stronger and more reliable assets worldwide.

T +44 (0) 793 067 8209
W www.oesgroup.com
E paulbrown@oesgroup.com
C Paul Brown,
 EUM Regional Commercial Director



Core29

Core29 helps organisations deliver successful digital transformation through independent systems consulting, custom solutions, and the adoption of AI and emerging technologies. It provides impartial advice across system reviews, operational assessments, business acquisition due diligence, and major technology change programmes. From ERP upgrades and system procurement through to implementation and change management, their vendor-independent approach ensures solutions are selected solely on the basis of client needs and business outcomes.

T +44 7392 090581
W www.core29.co.uk
C Alan Dick, Managing Director



SpinLab ABZ

Aberdeen's first dedicated table tennis facility, housing eight ITTF competition tables on Olympic-grade flooring in a converted city-centre railway arch. Court hire, memberships, coaching for all ages, corporate bookings and team days. Founded by an Olympic Young Leader and operated as a community interest company reinvesting income into youth access.

T 01224 675755
W www.spinlabhq.co.uk
E murhad@spinlabhq.co.uk
C Murhad Hussain,
 Founder/Managing Director



Faithful Spark Electricians

Faithful Spark Electricians provides professional electrical services across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. NICEIC-approved contractors offering domestic and commercial electrical work, rewiring, EICRs, fault finding, EV charger installations, smart home upgrades and electrical safety services, with a focus on high standards, reliability and professional workmanship.

T 07304 027013
W www.faithfulsparkelectricians.co.uk
E info@faithfulsparkelectricians.co.uk
C Steven Watt



SRLK Tech

SRLK Tech is developing practical 3D printing technologies for construction and industrial applications. Its work combines material development, paste extrusion systems, process testing and staged validation, progressing from desktop-scale experimentation towards construction scale additive manufacturing. The company aims to improve quality, efficiency, surface finish and scalability in digitally manufactured structures.

T 07476 223220
W www.srlktech.com
E contact@srlktech.com
C Mohammad Sarlak



SRLK EV Charge

SRLK EV Charge delivers smart, reliable EV charging solutions across the UK for public, commercial and private sectors. We provide AC and DC charging infrastructure, charge point management software, field operations technology, secure payment options and long-term network support, helping businesses, landowners and local authorities accelerate sustainable transport.

T 07476 223220
W www.srlkevcharge.com
E msarlak@srlkevcharge.com
C Mohammad Sarlak



Strawberry Grange

Strawberry Grange is Aberdeen's boutique custom-build development, offering serviced plots in an exclusive setting. Instead of choosing a standard house type, you'll create a bespoke home designed around your lifestyle, supported by an experienced team throughout the journey.

T 07903 055805
W www.strawberry-grange.co.uk
E strawberrygrangedevelopment@gmail.com
C Julie Nair



Shadow Shapes

ShadowShapes manufacture a growing range of silhouette ornaments from recycled plastic. Designed for eye-catching spaces around the home, the silhouettes sit on door tops, picture frames, TVs, monitors and on any small ledge. Starting with dog and cat designs the range has grown to include wildlife, hobbies and city skylines.

T 01224 574758
W www.shadowshapes.co.uk
E info@shadowshapes.co.uk
C Bruce Adam

**DON'T JUST JOIN,
JOIN IN**

Buying & selling in Aberdeen?

**we'll get it
sorted**

Whether it's your very first home or upgrading to somewhere bigger, we've got you covered. With decades of experience working right across the Northeast of Scotland, our team can help advise and guide you every step of the way.

From the for-sale sign to the dotted line...



**Speak to
our team today**





Investment Tracker reveals £46billion of capital flowing into North-east Scotland

By Ryan Crichton

More than £46billion of investment is in the pipeline across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, underlining the extraordinary scale of the economic opportunity facing the region over the next decade.

Details of the £46.3billion pipeline were unveiled by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce at a business breakfast marking the publication of the eighth edition of its Aberdeen City Region Investment Tracker.

The report identifies major future projects spanning energy, digital technology, transport, housing, tourism, city centre regeneration, healthcare and education, while revealing that more than £10.1billion of transformational projects tracked by the Chamber have already been completed since 2017, including the recent £5.5million Skylark Brasserie at The Marcliffe.

Among the biggest investments in the pipeline are SSEN Transmission's £8.6billion programme across

Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and plans for a £6billion AI data centre campus at Blackdog.

SSEN's programme is expected to support 2,700 local jobs and generate an estimated £1.6billion of spending with Aberdeenshire-based businesses, while the proposed Blackdog development could establish the North-east as a major international hub for artificial intelligence infrastructure.

The Tracker also highlights the enormous scale of continuing energy investment, including the £4.4billion Ossian floating offshore wind farm and £3.51billion MarramWind development, alongside the £1.6billion Jackdaw gas project, £800million Peterhead Carbon Capture Power Station and £600million Kintore Hydrogen project.

Away from energy, the pipeline includes the £3billion commitment to dual the A96 between Aberdeen and Inverness, almost £1billion of investment linked to the North

East Scotland Investment Zone, £323million Aberdeen Rapid Transit proposals and the £300million Fraserburgh Harbour masterplan

Major regeneration projects are also planned across the region's towns and city centre, including £53million plans for an international food market at the Green, £43million of improvements to Castlegate and Union Street East and £27million of public realm improvements around Union Street Central.

And the latest Tracker shows that investment is already translating into new infrastructure and facilities across the region.

Projects completed between February 2025 and August 2026 include the £2.5billion Moray West Offshore Wind Farm, the £58million first phase of Aberdeen Beach Park, the £40million Boskalis Remote Operations Centre, £36million Tillydrone Primary School and the £27million ONE SeedPod food and drink innovation hub.





Russell Borthwick, Chief Executive of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, said: "Anyone who thinks the North-east is a region in decline should look at these numbers. A future investment pipeline of more than £46billion demonstrates the scale of the economic opportunity in front of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire."

"What is particularly exciting is the breadth of that investment. We have billions being committed to our energy infrastructure alongside potentially transformational investment in AI and digital technology, transport, housing, tourism and the regeneration of our city centre and towns."

"And this isn't simply a list of ambitions on a page. More than £10billion of projects tracked by the Chamber have already been completed since 2017, transforming our transport infrastructure, ports, energy sector, cultural attractions, education facilities and communities."

"The challenge now is to make sure we create the conditions which allow this £46billion pipeline

to become reality. That means competitive energy policy, better connectivity, faster planning and consenting and governments which recognise that backing Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire is an investment in the future prosperity of the whole country."

"For a decade, our Investment Tracker has helped tell the real story of this region. This latest edition sends perhaps the strongest message yet: the North-east remains one of the most exciting places in the UK to live, work, invest and build a business."

A spokesperson for Invest Aberdeen said: "A £46billion investment pipeline is a powerful statement of confidence in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and demonstrates the scale of the opportunity ahead for our region."

"From major investment in energy and digital infrastructure to transport, housing, tourism and the regeneration of our city centre and towns, these projects have the potential to create thousands of jobs, attract new businesses and

strengthen communities across the North-east."

"Our collective focus must now be on turning that pipeline into delivery and ensuring Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire remain among the most competitive and attractive places in the UK to live, work and invest."

Kevin Binnie, corporate director at Balmoral Group, which supported the publication of the Investment Tracker, said: "Balmoral has been investing in Aberdeen and growing businesses here for more than four decades, so we know first-hand the strengths this region has to offer."

"Our own approach is based on patient capital, sustainable growth and responsible stewardship, and this Tracker demonstrates just how much confidence there continues to be in the long-term future of the North-east, which is why we are delighted to continue sponsoring it."

"With more than £46billion in the pipeline, there is a tremendous opportunity to grow businesses, create jobs and deliver a lasting positive impact for the communities around us."

St Margaret's pupils rank 8th out of 941 teams in Cambridge Biology Challenge



A team of pupils from St Margaret's School for Girls, Aberdeen, has achieved an outstanding result in the Cambridge Biology Challenge, ranking 8th out of 941 teams from across the UK and beyond.

The team, Project Mg, comprising S5 girls Aishah, Clarissa, Dami, Stephanie and Yashila, took part in the Cambridge Biology Challenge, run by Homerton College, University of Cambridge. The competition challenged pupils to explore thought-provoking questions through creative and scientifically informed responses.

Across four rounds, teams were invited to respond to questions such as "What skills are needed for success in biology?", with entries submitted in a variety of formats including posters, essays and animations.

Project Mg impressed throughout the competition, submitting a poster, two essays and a video. Their entries earned three distinctions, a Most Original Runner-Up Award in Round 1, as well as three Badges of Merit, recognising particularly impressive aspects of their work.

Their consistently high performance saw the team invited to attend the prestigious Cambridge Biology Challenge Celebration Event at the University of Cambridge. The day included a science-themed escape game featuring puzzles inspired by Cambridge University interview questions, a tour of the university and a lecture from one of its professors.

The event culminated in an awards ceremony, where the girls discovered that they had achieved an incredible 8th place out of 941 participating teams.

TO LET

A DEVELOPMENT BY



KNIGHT PROPERTY GROUP

THE HUB @ KINGSHILL PARK

A NEW STANDARD FOR COMMERCIAL SPACE IN WESTHILL
UNITS AVAILABLE FROM 2,200-10,000 SQ FT.



AVAILABLE
Q4 2026

8 INDUSTRIAL UNITS

UNITS CAN BE COMBINED TO OFFER A RANGE OF SIZES

CONTACT AGENTS:



CHRIS ION
T: 07717 425298
E: Chris.Ion@g-s.co.uk

SHONA BOYD
T: 07741 314188
E: Shona.Boyd@g-s.co.uk



PAUL RICHARDSON
T: 07789 986141
E: Paul.Richardson@ryden.co.uk

ERIN CHESSOR
T: 07570 382544
E: Erin.Chessor@ryden.co.uk

the MEMBER MEET the



Babatola Dada

*Lead Business Growth Specialist
ActionCOACH Aberdeen*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

At ActionCOACH Aberdeen, we provide business coaching, mentoring, and training services designed to help business owners. Through proven coaching frameworks, we support business owners to work more strategically to increase profit margins, develop effective systems and build stronger teams.

Who are your customers?

We work with ambitious, owner-managed businesses across the services, energy, engineering, and construction sectors.

Our clients are growth-focused, results-driven, and open to investing in improving their businesses.

Typically, they're at a stage where something needs to change: whether that's profitability, team performance, or structure and they're ready to address it.

We support them through:

- One-to-one coaching for business owners who want personalised support
- 12-week Business Management & Leadership Programme for Senior Executives and Managers; with Sales, Marketing & Performance Training for teams.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

Our current focus is increasing visibility within the Aberdeen

business community and building meaningful relationships with growth-minded business owners. The real opportunity lies in partnering with growth-minded business owners who are ready to implement the right systems and turn their enterprises into highly profitable, well-structured assets.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Make the most of the events and connections available within the Chamber. There is real value in building relationships and supporting one another. Let us keep striving for world abundance in Aberdeen, as the rising tide lifts all boats.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The Chamber provides one of the most powerful platforms for connecting with businesses across Aberdeen and the wider Grampian region. AGCC is a valuable community focused on supporting SMEs to navigate challenges, grow, and succeed in a constantly evolving business environment.



Kenny Robertson

*Managing Director
KR Group (Scotland) Ltd*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

KR Group delivers steel, cladding and full building envelope solutions across the UK.

We bring a hands-on, problem-solving approach to complex builds, combining technical expertise with a strong focus on quality, safety and long-term performance.

Who are your customers?

We work with main contractors, developers and directly with clients across sectors including energy, distilling, nuclear and agriculture.

With our own plant, cranes and groundwork capability, we can also take on principal contractor roles where required.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

Skills shortages remain a challenge across the industry, but also an opportunity.

We're investing in young people, apprenticeships and ethical business practices, and have developed our own skills academy to deliver high-quality, industry-led training.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Lead from the front and stay adaptable.

Being hands-on, working collaboratively and open to new ideas makes a real difference when navigating change.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

It's about visibility and connection.

The Chamber gives you a platform to raise your profile, build credibility and form relationships that lead to real opportunities.

MEMBER MEET *the* ME



Jill Butler Rennie

Managing Director
Marvelle Events

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Marvelle Events designs and delivers corporate events, brand activations and private celebrations across Aberdeen, Scotland and the North-east of England. Combining creative direction with professional planning and delivery, we create well-managed, memorable events that run seamlessly from concept to completion for organisations who value quality, creativity and attention to detail.

Who are your customers?

Our clients range from private individuals planning parties and weddings through to large-scale corporate events with more than 1,000 guests at venues such as TECA and other major exhibition spaces. We also work with charities and corporate brands hosting regular celebrations across the city. Each client is looking for something distinctive that makes their event truly memorable.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

With so many corporate events taking place in the city, the challenge is helping clients ensure their event stands out in an increasingly busy calendar. The opportunity lies in using creative event design to transform spaces and create immersive experiences that people genuinely want to attend and remember long after the event has finished.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

If you're planning an event, start by asking what you want it to achieve. Too often we see organisations invest in an event concept that doesn't fully align with their objectives. Taking time to define the purpose first will ensure the experience delivers real value.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The networking opportunities and the positive energy of the city's business community. In challenging times especially, it's important that we support one another and make the most of the expertise, relationships and resources we have here locally.



Jack Swan

Chartered Financial Planner
rockwealth

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

rockwealth Aberdeen is a financial planning business built on trust, understanding and lasting client relationships.

Through evidence-based investing and fairer fixed fees, we provide long-term financial planning that gives clients clarity and the

confidence to make informed decisions about their future.

Who are your customers?

Our clients are individuals, families and business owners looking for clear, transparent financial advice they can trust.

Whether they are building wealth, approaching retirement, considering inheritance tax planning, or navigating another major life stage, we help them make confident, informed decisions about their financial future.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

Our biggest challenge is helping clients navigate an increasingly complex and ever-changing tax landscape.

Our opportunity is to keep offering clear, fair and genuinely personal financial planning that gives people confidence in their future. By building

lasting relationships and long-term plans, we help clients stay on track to achieve their goals.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

To borrow a well-worn phrase, "say what you do, and do what you say". People respond to authenticity, not jargon.

Strong relationships, a good reputation and a willingness to listen go a long way.

Often, the best opportunities come from simply staying visible, engaged and open to conversation.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

Being a Chamber member creates opportunities to connect with other local businesses, build working relationships, and stay close to what is happening in the local business community via The Morning Bulletin.

EST 1930

Fras

amtico *One*

Premium
Partner



Get in touch



01358 720363



frasersoffellon.co.uk



asers

ELLON



Furnishing & Flooring interiors since 1930

As a family run business, we have been
in the area for over 95 years!
In our showroom you will find a vast selection
of quality sofas, dining furniture, beds,
bedroom furniture, mattresses, home
accessories, carpets and flooring; everything
you need to furnish your interior!

Visit us in store, Monday to Saturday, 9.30am - 5pm



Ythan Terrace, Ellon
Aberdeenshire, AB41 9LL



salesdesk@frasersofellon.co.uk
flooring@frasersofellon.co.uk



Wood selected by Serica Energy to support Bruce Platform life extension



Wood, a global leader in consulting, engineering and operations, has secured an engineering, procurement, construction and commissioning (EPCC) framework contract with Serica Energy to support the extension of the life of the Bruce platform in the UK North Sea.

Under the five-year framework contract, Wood will deliver a portfolio of engineering services covering EPCC on the asset which will support the extension of production through to 2030 and beyond, while improving operational efficiency and reliability.

The portfolio will be delivered by a substantial multidisciplinary team of Wood personnel in Aberdeen and offshore, drawing on established asset knowledge to support operational continuity.

Steve Nicol, Chief Operating Officer of Operations at Wood, said: "This contract reflects the trust Serica Energy places in our ability to provide safe, predictable and integrated EPCC services. We will apply our deep asset knowledge and collaborative approach to support Serica's long-term plans for the Bruce platform and help maximise value through reliable execution."

Wood has partnered with Serica Energy since 2018, most recently bringing the Bruce flare gas recovery system into operation. This year, Wood will deliver several projects for Serica Energy, spanning project delivery, offshore construction and commissioning.

EXPERTS IN STEEL, CLADDING AND SHEET METAL

KR Group



KR GROUP
HALF PAGE

Delivering projects across all sectors, regionally and beyond.

- ✓ Fabrication and erection of steel structures
- ✓ Secondary steel products
- ✓ Steel components
- ✓ Cladding design and installation
- ✓ Sheet metal products
- ✓ Project services and solutions

Hydrasun to establish Scotland's first facility for electrolyser assembly and integration in Aberdeen

Scotland's first clean technology manufacturing facility dedicated to electrolyser assembly and integration will be established in Aberdeen following a framework agreement between Hydrasun and Norwegian firm Nel.

Under the terms of the agreement with the Oslo-listed electrolyser manufacturer, Hydrasun will invest in new production lines for the assembly of Nel's MC Series, a containerised and scalable proton exchange membrane (PEM) electrolyser platform currently available in 1.25 MW and 2.5 MW building block configurations.

It will also manage the procurement, assembly and integration of the balance of plant systems that surround the PEM stack, benefitting from Nel's orderbook amid strong commercial development across Europe. The PEM stacks will be produced by Nel from its Wallingford facility in the US.

The Aberdeen facility is being developed with the support of £1.9million from the Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund (JTF).

In support of this, First Minister John Swinney visited Aberdeen to see first-hand how Hydrasun will use the funding to upgrade its facilities to support clean technology manufacturing, creating up to 12 new jobs and safeguarding a further 11.

He said: "The workforce here are among the most skilled and experienced in the world – and the jobs and investment we are announcing will help to ensure that remarkable energy expertise is preserved.

"While we will be continuing to use oil and gas for years to come, I want to ensure that workers here are also the foundation of our clean energy future.

"Scotland is an energy superpower, and the workers, businesses and communities of the North-east will be vital in ensuring we capitalise on our remarkable renewable energy resources."

As well as further cementing Hydrasun's globally renowned reputation as a clean energy solutions provider, this facility also positions Aberdeen at the centre of a growing international supply chain for industrial equipment.



Beyond the factory floor, the initiative is expected to strengthen the wider Scottish and UK hydrogen supply chain, creating opportunities for local suppliers.

A global leader in integrated fluid transfer, power and control solutions, this announcement comes as Hydrasun marks its 50th year in business, having been founded in Aberdeen in 1976.

James Gaskell, Hydrasun CEO, said: "This agreement marks a defining moment in Hydrasun's evolution.

"Establishing Scotland's first electrolyser assembly and integration facility is a proud milestone for the company and an important step forward for Aberdeen's energy sector more broadly, ensuring the city has genuine clean energy manufacturing capability.

"It's a vote of confidence in our talented team, Hydrasun's manufacturing capabilities, our supply chain, and our region's ability to compete on a global stage."

Maggie McGinlay, Chief Executive at ETZ Ltd, said: "This investment is exactly the kind of tangible, industrial-scale project the North-east needs as it diversifies its energy base. "It reinforces Aberdeen and North-east Scotland's position as an internationally recognised hub of energy excellence and the most attractive location in Europe for investment in low carbon technologies, creating high-value jobs and strengthening the supply chain that will underpin the region's next chapter."

Rally Scotland reveals new identity as BBC confirms WRC broadcast deal

Rally Scotland has revealed its new logo and event identity as preparations build for the FIA World Rally Championship's return to the UK in 2027.

The new identity gives Scotland's first full WRC round a clear and distinct look of its own, drawing on the country's colours, symbols and rallying heritage. At its centre is a graphic device that connects the Scottish Saltire with the tread pattern of a World Rally Car tyre, bringing together national identity and the sport's defining surface: gravel.

Rally Scotland will be headquartered at The Event Complex Aberdeen, with Rally HQ and the Service Park based at the venue. The event will run on closed forest gravel roads across North-east Scotland, using a compact route built around proven rally territory, strong regional infrastructure and stages already praised by leading WRC crews.

The identity reveal came as the BBC also announced a



major new three-year agreement to broadcast the FIA World Rally Championship across the UK from 2027 to 2029.

The BBC deal will include coverage of all 14 WRC rounds each season, with five live stages plus the Power Stage from each rally, 14 one-hour highlights programmes, digital clips and additional content across BBC platforms. Additionally, Rally Scotland will receive extensive live coverage across all four days of competition, giving UK audiences live, free-to-air access to the country's first WRC round since 2019.

Just around the corner. Streets ahead.

+26%

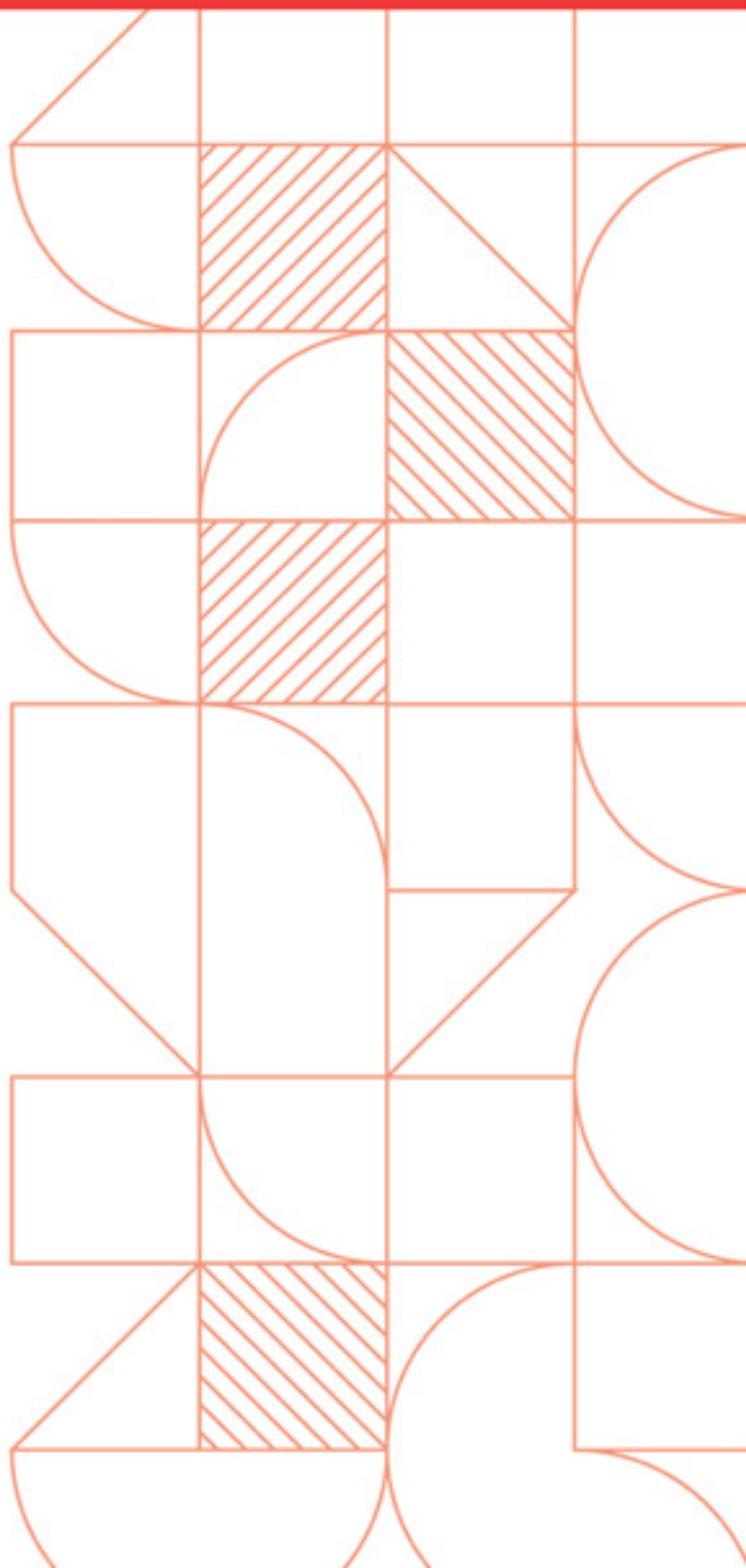
Aberdeen rental growth
over the past five years

Find out what your property
could achieve in today's
rental market with a free,
no-obligation valuation from
our local lettings experts.

With trusted local knowledge
and proven lettings expertise,
we'll help you maximise your
rental potential and find
the right tenants for your
property.

**Book your free valuation with
DJ Alexander today.**

D.J.ALEXANDER
Sales & Lettings



Aberdeen's rental market: A sector finding a new balance

Author: Adrian Sangster,
Head of Property Management & Lettings
– North East Scotland, DJ Alexander



Aberdeen's private rental market is entering a more measured phase. After several years of significant movement in rents and demand, the latest data suggests a market that is stabilising but certainly not standing still.

The key point for landlords, tenants and property professionals is that Aberdeen remains a fundamentally different rental market from Scotland's larger cities. Average rents in Aberdeen and Shire were £846 per month in July 2026, broadly unchanged from a year earlier, compared with £1,016 per month across Scotland (Office for National Statistics). That relative affordability remains an important part of Aberdeen's appeal, particularly for people relocating to the North-east for employment or looking for greater value than they may find elsewhere.

At the same time, stability should not be mistaken for stagnation, Citylets' Q2 2026 figures show average Aberdeen rents at £895 per month across all property sizes, with rents up 1.4% year-on-year and more than 26% over five years. Two and three-bedroom properties were both

showing annual rental growth of 2% (Citylets).

This points towards a market where quality, pricing and presentation increasingly matter.

For landlords, simply putting a property on the market and waiting for demand is no longer necessarily the optimum strategy. Tenants are becoming more discerning, while running costs are an increasingly important consideration. Energy efficiency, condition, location and the overall quality of the rental experience can all influence how quickly a property lets and the level of rent it can command.

There is opportunity for landlords who take a longer-term view. Aberdeen's comparatively accessible property values, alongside sustained rental demand, can make the city attractive to investors, however, successful letting is about much more than the headline yield. Regulatory responsibilities, maintenance, compliance, tenant communication and keeping a property competitive all require professional attention.

For tenants, meanwhile, the market offers a degree of choice that can be

less apparent in some of Scotland's higher-pressure rental markets, however, good properties can still move quickly. Citylets reported that 51% of Aberdeen properties in Q2 2026 let within a month, demonstrating that demand remains active even as the market becomes more balanced.

The Aberdeen rental market therefore feels less like a market of rapid change and more like one of selective opportunity. Landlords who understand their target tenant, price accurately and invest in the quality of their property are well placed to perform. Tenants who understand the market and act decisively can still find good value.

Ultimately, the future of Aberdeen's private rented sector is likely to be defined not simply by rents rising or falling, but by professionalism. In a more mature market, the winners will be those who understand that successful letting is about creating a property and service that works for both sides of the tenancy.

OPINION
OPINI

SeaFest Peterhead to return for 2027



SeaFest Peterhead in 2025

The award-winning SeaFest Peterhead is set to return next year with a bumper line-up of exhibitors celebrating the seafood industry and local fishing communities.

The biennial festival will return for its third edition on Saturday, September 11 2027 at Peterhead Harbour.

Free to attend, the festival has brought around 30,000 visitors to Peterhead since the first event in 2023.

And for next year, more than 150 local businesses are lined up to take part in the celebrations, with seafood industry veteran Michael Bates stepping up to the role of Chairman following Jimmy Buchan MBE's decision to step down while remaining on the committee.

Michael said: "SeaFest Peterhead is an excellent opportunity for all ages to explore and learn more about the seafood industry here in the North-east. Our festival has always supported local businesses, and it allows those in our community to meet the individuals who fish along their shores and help put seafood on their plates."

"There's a huge education element to the festival, but we're also providing a brilliant day out for everyone to enjoy - whether you're a foodie looking for the next new product being developed locally, picking up some freshly caught seafood, or are interested in the different vessels."

"We couldn't organise SeaFest Peterhead without the support of the festival's growing list of sponsors and supporters, which we are truly grateful for. We can't wait to welcome everyone."

CEO of Peterhead Port Authority, Graeme Reid, said:

"SeaFest shines a spotlight on the people, skills and innovation that drive Peterhead's world-renowned seafood sector. It provides an opportunity not only to showcase the quality and sustainability of our produce, but also to inspire future generations to learn more about the industries that are so important to our economy and identity."

"Peterhead Port Authority is committed to supporting initiatives that strengthen our community and promote our harbour on a national stage. We look forward to welcoming thousands of visitors to Peterhead in 2027 and celebrating everything that makes our town, port and seafood industry so special."

SeaFest Peterhead is supported by Peterhead Port Authority, Seafood Scotland, Macduff Shellfish, Seafood Ecosse, Turriff Printing, Quantum Data Supplies and Howard Haulage, alongside a growing network of sponsors, exhibitors, local businesses and volunteers.

Further details about the 2027 programme, exhibitors and sponsors will be announced in the lead-up to the event.

RGU shortlisted for UK University of the Year

RGU has been shortlisted for University of the Year at the prestigious Times Higher Education (THE) Awards 2026.

RGU is the only Scottish university to make this year's University of the Year shortlist, underlining its growing national reputation for delivering education, research and innovation that create real-world impact.

The recognition reflects the university's distinctive work-integrated approach, which connects education, research, innovation and community engagement to create real-world impact.

RGU's University of the Year submission showcased how teaching, research, innovation and civic engagement work together to deliver benefits for students, employers and communities.

Over the past year, the university has strengthened its research environment through the creation of nine new research and innovation centres focused on areas including artificial intelligence, health, sustainability, culture and future skills.

The university also continues to expand opportunities beyond campus. The RGU Hub programme engaged more than 1,000 senior pupils across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, while the RGU Startup Accelerator continues to support entrepreneurship and innovation across Scotland.

Professor Steve Olivier, Principal and Vice-Chancellor of RGU, said: "Being shortlisted for University of the Year is a tremendous achievement and a testament to the talent, dedication and ambition of our students, staff and partners."

"At RGU, we believe higher education should prepare people not just for graduation, but for life and work beyond it. Our work-integrated approach brings together teaching, research, innovation and real-world experience to ensure students develop the skills, confidence and connections they need to thrive."

"This national recognition reflects the impact we are creating together, from widening access to higher education and strengthening our research culture, to supporting innovation, employers and communities across Scotland and beyond."

Chris Havergal, Editor of Times Higher Education, said: "These continue to be challenging times for our higher education sectors, but that makes it only more important to celebrate the contribution of the teams and individuals who continue to transform lives for the better, week in, week out, across the UK and Ireland."

"To have again received more than 500 entries is a sure sign that our sectors' commitment to improving the societies they serve is undimmed, and we offer our sincere congratulations to all the institutions and individuals shortlisted. It is a huge achievement to have reached this stage in another very competitive year."

"Too often the outstanding endeavours of academics and higher education professionals are overlooked in the public narrative about our universities. We hope that our awards ceremony in Birmingham this November will contribute towards changing the conversation about these vital institutions and the people who work in them."

The winners of the Times Higher Education Awards will be announced in November.

Young engineers helping power Scotland's green transition

Author: Scott Geddes, Operations Director, Balfour Beatty



Scotland's push toward a cleaner energy future is creating more than new infrastructure - it's reshaping career opportunities in some of the country's most rural communities.

Balfour Beatty, which three years ago secured a £29billion contract to modernise the country's electricity network in support of the UK and Scottish Governments' 2030 renewable energy targets, has since launched a wave of recruitment, graduate and apprenticeship schemes.

For many young engineers, that has meant moving back to - or settling in - the regions they might once have left behind.

Brooke Stein, 25, from Bathgate, is one of them. A construction engineer, she was well aware of the industry's environmental footprint before choosing the career, which is partly why she values being part of the shift toward renewables.

Her work has taken her across Scotland, from the Argyll substation projects near Lochgilphead to school upgrade projects in Edinburgh and repeated visits to Peterhead. She studied at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, where sustainability was central to her training, and she describes the current programme of works as a fast-moving, heavily front-loaded investment effort.

Donald Fleming, 25, a graduate project engineer from Falkirk, shares that sense of purpose. He points out that the transmission network runs the length of the country, and that rising numbers of electric vehicles alongside the shift to renewables have put growing strain on the grid. Much of Scotland's offshore wind capacity, he notes, currently has no efficient route to the places that need it -

which is where his team's work comes in, helping move that power to where demand actually sits, and reducing reliance on gas-fired generation in the process.

Both engineers relocated from the Central Belt to the North-east for their roles but say it hasn't cost them their social lives. Brooke says the scale of the project means there's no shortage of people to meet, and that the work itself has become a way of building her professional network. Donald - the pull of staying near home and the Central Belt's nightlife, but believes relocating has accelerated his career and personal growth - he describes becoming noticeably more confident since joining the project around 18 months ago.

The wider construction sector continues to face a skills shortage, and Donald notes that some specialist roles are being filled by engineers

relocating from overseas to build long-term careers in the north of Scotland. For Brooke, being based outside the Central Belt doesn't mean being cut off - strong team morale, she says, combined with the ability to get home at weekends, makes the arrangement work well.

The significance of the investment goes well beyond the physical infrastructure being built. I see it as an opportunity to create lasting careers close to home, transferable skills that support energy security, and knock-on benefits for local businesses and communities across the Highlands, Islands and North-east Scotland.

Done well, he adds, the lasting legacy of these projects will be measured not just in substations and cables, but in stronger communities with opportunities that endure for generations to come.





The North Sea transition is running out of time

By Ryan Crichton, Director of Policy

Last year, the North Sea Transition Taskforce warned that the window for delivering a successful energy transition was narrowing. Today, that window remains open, but it is closing fast.

Here in the North-east of Scotland, we can see why.

The fundamental problem is one of timing. Britain's traditional energy economy is declining faster than the new one is being built.

Oil and gas production is falling, investment is weakening and skilled workers are leaving the sector. But offshore wind, carbon capture, hydrogen and other industries are not yet growing quickly enough to absorb the people and industrial capability being lost.

That gap is where a successful transition can become a disorderly decline.

The oil and gas sector still supports 115,000 jobs directly and through its supply chain across the UK. Some 25,000 jobs have been lost since the last election and the impact has been particularly acute in the North-east, where around one in four working people is employed in or supports the offshore energy industry, approximately 80 per cent of which remains oil and gas.

These are not abstract numbers for those of us who live and work here. They are people, families and businesses. And once those people leave the industry, or the country, we cannot assume they will return when we need them to build the next generation of energy infrastructure.

The UK Government's North Sea Future Plan has moved policy in the right direction. It recognises



the need for a managed transition, better co-ordination across the basin and stronger support for workers. But the direction of travel matters little if we move too slowly.

The most urgent issue is tax. The Energy Profits Levy has been changed repeatedly and the headline tax rate on North Sea producers now stands at 78 per cent. Its proposed successor, the Oil and Gas Revenue Levy, is not due to replace the EPL until 2030 unless existing price conditions trigger an earlier end.

That is too late.

The new regime should begin in the 2027-28 tax year. Industry analysis cited in the Taskforce report suggests that could unlock up to £50 billion of additional private investment and more than £13 billion in tax revenues over the following decade.

Fiscal reform alone, however, will not deliver the transition.

Government must give the North Sea Transition Authority a clear mandate to co-ordinate the competing demands on the basin, from oil and gas and offshore wind to carbon storage, electrification and decommissioning. Britain should also strengthen its energy resilience, including through greater gas storage.

Above all, we need to protect people through the transition. Training matters, but telling an offshore worker their skills are transferable is meaningless if the alternative job does not yet exist, is hundreds of miles away or pays substantially less.

The Taskforce recommends practical measures including time-limited wage insurance, re-employment grants and income-bridging support for workers caught between the old and new industries.

The Scottish Government also needs to finalise its long-delayed Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan and align it with a coherent economic and skills plan for the North-east.

None of this requires another institution or years of legislation. Much of the framework already exists. What is missing is pace.

For more than half a century, the North-east has helped build one of the world's great energy industries. The people, businesses and infrastructure created here can help Britain build the next one.

But only if they are still here when we need them.



To read the complete report, scan here.

MOTOR MOUTH

Working across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire means I spend a fair bit of my week behind the wheel. Whether I'm visiting properties, meeting landlords and tenants, or catching up with our branch teams, there's always somewhere to be. It's one of the things I enjoy most about the job, so when I was offered the chance to borrow a Mitsubishi Outlander from Friday to Monday, I was keen to see how it would stack up in the real world.

Friday and Monday were business as usual, with plenty of miles covered travelling between appointments. The weekend was a different story altogether, as the Outlander became the family bus for a trip to Inverness with the kids.

We have four children and, unfortunately, one had to stay behind this time, as the model

FROM PROPERTY VISITS TO FAMILY ROAD TRIPS: TESTING THE MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER

By Matt Pullinger
Operations Director,
Northwood North East



I tested only had three seats across the back. If Mitsubishi offered a seven-seat version, it would make a huge difference for families like ours.

First impressions were very positive. The car feels solid, well-built and comfortable and what struck me most was just how smooth the drive was; whether travelling between appointments across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire or heading up the A96 with the family, the Outlander soaked up the miles. The seats are supportive, the driving position excellent, and the ride quality makes long journeys surprisingly easy.

The boot was another big plus. Whether it was work bags during the week or everything the kids somehow manage to take on a day trip at the weekend, there was more than enough space without feeling like you were playing Tetris every time you loaded it up.

What I liked most was how easy everything was to use and within five minutes I felt completely at home in the car.



The infotainment system is straightforward, and thankfully there are still proper buttons for things like heating and climate control.

That might sound like a small thing, but when you're spending your day jumping between appointments, the last thing you want is to be digging through touchscreen menus just to turn the temperature up.

Safety is clearly a big focus for Mitsubishi, and it shows. The Outlander is packed with driver assistance technology, but importantly it doesn't constantly get in your way. Features like adaptive cruise control and lane assistance work quietly in the background, giving you an extra level of confidence. Living in the North-east, where you can experience four seasons in a single day, that's reassuring. Whether I was navigating country roads, tackling motorway miles, or driving through yet another Scottish rain shower, the car felt capable throughout.

What stood out most over the weekend was just how relaxed it made family travel. Anyone with children will know that a comfortable car can make the difference between arriving refreshed and arriving stressed. The extra space, comfortable seating and smooth ride helped keep everyone happy on the journey to Inverness and back.

The miles seemed to disappear, and even after a full day out, nobody was desperate to get out of the car, which for parents is probably one of the best recommendations you can give.

The refinement also deserves a mention. Road noise was kept to a minimum, motorway cruising felt effortless, and the car always felt settled and composed. If I'd needed to drive much further north or head down the road to Glasgow or Edinburgh, I wouldn't have thought twice about it. It's a vehicle that feels built for long-distance journeys as much as for everyday driving.

By Monday, when it was time to hand back the keys, I was genuinely disappointed to see it go. It's practical, comfortable, packed with useful technology and, most importantly, very easy to live with.

Would I have one? If there was a seven-seat option available, absolutely. For anyone looking for a dependable family SUV that can handle both busy working weeks and family weekends, the Mitsubishi Outlander is well worth considering.

Sometimes the best compliment you can give a car is that it simply fits into your life without any fuss. That's exactly what the Outlander did.



8 YEAR WARRANTY



from £46,995 OTR

The All-New Mitsubishi Outlander Phev available now at

STATION GARAGE TORPHINS
ESTABLISHED 1979



Defence boom drives profits higher at James Fisher

Marine services group James Fisher has reported a sharp rise in profits as booming demand from defence customers helped offset tougher conditions across its traditional energy markets.

The company, which operates across defence, energy and maritime transport, saw underlying operating profit rise 28% to £14.2million in the first half of 2026, while revenues increased 2% to £195.9million.

The standout performance came from defence - a growing trend among North Sea supply chain firms - where revenues surged 43% to £53.8million and underlying operating profit increased to £5.3million.

James Fisher said demand was growing for its specialist underwater warfare, submarine rescue and maritime infrastructure protection capabilities, with its defence order book standing at £295million alongside around £95million of further confirmed awards under framework agreements.

The group has been investing in new products including its Stealth Multi-Role rebreather and next-generation submarine rescue technology, as it targets opportunities where energy security, offshore infrastructure and national security are increasingly converging.



The strong defence performance contrasted with more challenging conditions in energy, where revenues fell 20.6% to £68.1million and underlying operating profit dropped 45.4% to £5.3million.

James Fisher said geopolitical uncertainty had reduced activity across its energy services markets, while delays and cancellations in offshore wind construction projects had also hit activity.

Chief executive Jean Vernet said: "We continue to operate in end markets with positive long-term structural drivers. This is translating into strong growth in defence and good performance in maritime transport, while heightened geopolitical uncertainty has continued to challenge activity levels in the first half across several of our energy markets."

SPECIALIST CLEANING SOLUTIONS.



12+ SECTORS COVERED
20+ SERVICES AVAILABLE
ON/OFF SITE CLEANING SOLUTIONS

Commercial and Industrial cleaning across Scotland, from pressure washing to gutters and high-level access.

Planned maintenance. Specialist equipment. Clear solutions.

BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Dr Soumya Palliyil
*Head of Scottish Biologics Facility,
University of Aberdeen*

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Prof Andy Porter, Professor of Biotechnology, University of Aberdeen and a successful biotech entrepreneur. Andy was my MSc and PhD supervisor and played a pivotal role in shaping my career as an academic entrepreneur. I learned the fundamentals of biotech commercialisation under his guidance, and throughout my career, he has provided guidance and mentorship to pursue a non-traditional academic path with an emphasis on innovation and real-world impact.

What's the most effective piece of training or personal development you have undertaken?

I've attended several impactful business trainings that have shaped my transition into entrepreneurship. The Royal Society of Edinburgh Commercialisation Fellowship, Converge Challenge and Innovate UK ICURe Explore provided the fundamentals of academic spin out creation and the commercial skills for researchers to build viable ventures. Through structured customer discovery, market validation, financial and business modelling I learned how to translate science into products with real world value.

What's the biggest lesson you've learned in business?

The ability to learn and adapt as the science, market and customers evolve. Entrepreneurship begins with validating a problem, and real progress comes from customer discovery - listening to the market, understanding its needs clearly and shaping solutions around real world pain points.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

My proudest achievement is founding Brigid Bio Ltd as a spin-out from the University of Aberdeen. To see the research I initiated evolve into real-world products is incredibly rewarding. Brigid Bio is pioneering novel immunotherapies to fight invasive fungal infections and tackle antifungal drug resistance. Built on the scientific strengths of the Scottish Biologics Facility and Aberdeen Fungal Group, we received vital funding support from the Scottish Enterprise High Growth Spinout Programme and Innovate UK ICURe Exploit. This is a major milestone and I am excited to be leading this venture, advancing our novel therapy into preclinical and clinical development.

What's the best thing about doing business in the North-east of Scotland?

The North-east of Scotland has

an extraordinary combination of world-class expertise and a genuine community spirit. Innovation is part of Aberdeen's culture, and we are fortunate to be part of the Foresterhill Health Campus - one of Europe's largest integrated clinical, research, and commercial health sites where life science companies, the University of Aberdeen, and NHS Grampian collaborate closely. With an international outlook and a talented workforce, the region is an exciting and supportive environment for life sciences businesses like ours.

What was your first job?

Research Assistant at the University of Aberdeen

Who or what inspires you most?

Working with brilliant, passionate people who care about making a difference to the global society

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

'Think outside the box' - as too ambiguous to guide towards a solution

QUICK-FIRE ROUND



Building momentum across North Scotland

Why Barratt and David Wilson Homes is investing in the region now more than ever
By Felipe Ferreira, Sales Director at Barratt and David Wilson Homes North Scotland

A home is more than bricks and mortar. It is where families grow, communities develop and local economies prosper. As housing demand continues across North Scotland, investment in new homes remains vital.

Barratt and David Wilson Homes continues to invest across Aberdeen, Tayside and the Highlands, helping to meet housing demand while supporting jobs and local communities. In Aberdeen, our David Wilson Homes brand has expanded with The Woodlands Collection at Countesswells and Otter Stone Manor in Dyce. In the Highlands, developments at Sandy Shores and The Dunes Reserve in Nairn, alongside our return to Inverness at Milton of Leys, demonstrate our long-term commitment to the region.

In Tayside, Barratt @ Almond Valley marks our return to Perth, while Grayside Meadows and Liff Gardens will bring new homes to Dundee and support local infrastructure and education investment.

The impact is already being felt. In the year to June 2025, our division contributed **£79.9 million** to the Scottish economy, **supported 1,390 jobs** and invested more than **£17.6 million** in projects benefiting local communities. Residents in our developments are also estimated to spend around **£13 million** annually in local shops and services.

Ultimately, we are not just building homes, but helping create communities where people can live, work and thrive for generations to come.



DAVID WILSON HOMES
 WHERE QUALITY LIVES

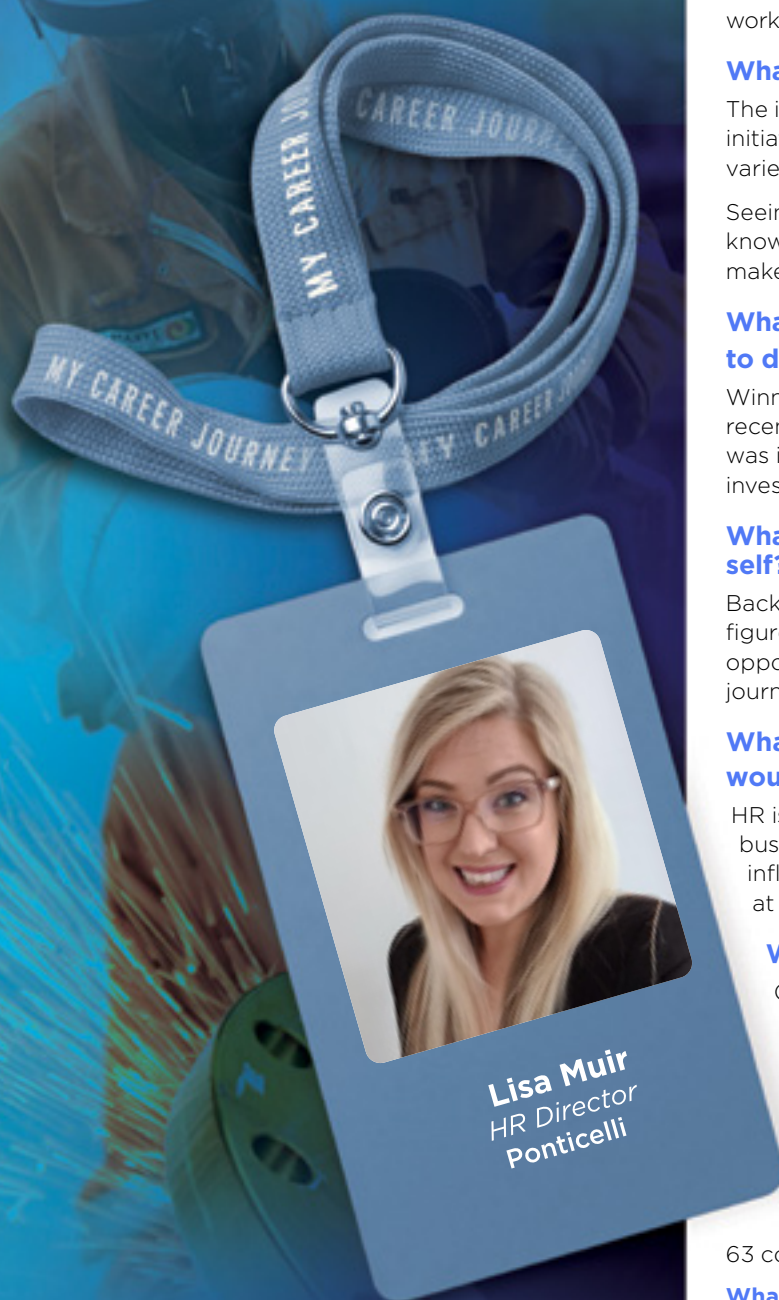
Find out more at:

barratthomes.co.uk

dwh.co.uk

My Career Journey

Lisa Muir
HR Director
Ponticelli



Describe your early career path.

I studied International Tourism Management at RGU while working at Tesco, where I completed a Management Programme specialising in HR. After graduating, I took a year to travel solo across Asia and Australasia - an experience that built confidence and independence. Returning to Aberdeen, I began my HR career in the oil and gas sector and progressed from Administrator to Director. Alongside this, I continued to invest in my development, completing an MSc in Human Resource Management, and I am now a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD.

How did you arrive in your current industry?

Growing up in Aberdeen, oil and gas felt like a natural choice. I knew I wanted a structured career with variety and impact, and HR offered the perfect mix of both.

The industry has provided fantastic opportunities to grow, work with diverse teams, and build a long-term career.

What's the best thing about your job?

The impact. Whether it's shaping strategy or delivering initiatives that genuinely support people, there's real variety in the role.

Seeing individuals develop, progress and succeed - and knowing you've played a small part in that - is what makes it all worthwhile.

What has been your proudest achievement to date?

Winning HR Leader of the Year at the cHeRries Awards recently. Being recognised by peers across the industry was incredibly rewarding and reinforced the value of investing in people, culture and leadership.

What advice would you give your 18-year-old self?

Back yourself sooner. You don't need to have everything figured out - confidence comes from doing. Say yes to opportunities, take a few risks, and don't compare your journey to anyone else's.

What's something surprising that most people wouldn't know about your job?

HR isn't just about people - it's a key part of driving business performance. A lot of the role is about influencing decisions, using data, and shaping culture at a leadership level.

What does the future look like for you?

Continuing to grow as a leader while supporting others to do the same. I'm particularly interested in transformational HR - embracing AI, driving continuous improvement, and building inclusive workplaces where people can really thrive.

Quick fire questions

How do you unwind in your time off?

Walking my dog Milo and travelling - I've visited 63 countries and counting.

What did you want to be when you were little?

An air hostess - until I realised I get travel sickness!

What was your first job?

Hosting children's parties at the Foam Factory at Aberdeen Beach.

In partnership with

DYW

NORTH EAST
Developing the
Young Workforce


NoWrongPath

Just Transition Fund award to NESCol underpins £850,000 investment in the Scottish Maritime Academy

North East Scotland College has been awarded £600,000 by the Scottish Government to create a cutting-edge simulator suite at the Scottish Maritime Academy in Peterhead.

The successful bid for backing from the Just Transition Fund for the North-east and Moray will cover the majority of the costs of the ambitious project, with a further £250,000 of investment to come from the college's capital budget.

The creation of the £850,000 facility will involve the reconfiguration of part of the SMA's well-established centre, overlooking Peterhead port.

New immersive technology from international specialists Wartsila will be installed – providing maritime students with opportunity to hone their skills on the bridge in a setting that replicates some of the world's busiest shipping environments.

The suite will provide new functionality aligned with modern vessels, including dynamic positioning, and will incorporate three simulators that can be used independently or collectively – allowing for vessel interactions between individual users and providing a safe learning environment to experience the type



of challenging and high-risk scenarios that seafarers experience on a daily basis.

Duncan Abernethy, Assistant Principal Curriculum and Commercial Development at NESCol, said: "The Scottish Maritime Academy has a central role to play in training new entrants to the workforce. We also continue work closely with our industry partners to ensure the ongoing development of those already experienced at sea, ensuring proficiency and safety.

"This investment in the latest simulator technology will enable us to build on the strong foundations in place at the SMA and future-proof a centre that has such a proud and strong track record."



Unlock your business potential with our flexible office spaces and full suite of support services. Whether you're a startup, established, or ready to scale, BlueSky Business Space at Westhill provides the expertise and resources to help you succeed.

UNMISSABLE OPPORTUNITY!

The Penthouse Suite is now available in our fully serviced, modern building. Flexible leases available.



Elevate Your Business with BlueSky Business Space



Serviced Office Space

From two to forty people, we offer tailored office spaces to fit your needs.

Co-working and Hot Desking Space

Enjoy self-employment with the community of a traditional workplace.



Virtual Office Services

Establish a professional business presence with mail-handling options.

Meeting Rooms & Event Spaces

Book fully equipped, modern spaces for your next business event.

Visit us at blueskybs.com or call us on 01224 766900 to learn more about how we can support your business.

Investing in Aberdeen's future

Author: James MacKay,
Regional Managing Director
for North-east Scotland,
Persimmon Homes



At a time when economic headlines are often dominated by uncertainty, there can be a temptation for businesses to pause, wait and see, or scale back their ambitions. My view is that these periods of turbulence are precisely when long-term commitments matter most.

That is why Persimmon remains firmly committed to Aberdeen and the North-east of Scotland. We see this region not only as a place of immense heritage and resilience, but as one of Scotland's most exciting areas for future growth. The fundamentals that have made Aberdeen successful over generations remain strong: a highly skilled workforce, a culture of innovation, world-class infrastructure and communities that continue to attract people who want to live, work and build their futures here.

As a housebuilder, we have a unique perspective on confidence. Homes are a long-term investment. The decisions we make today shape communities for decades to come. When we choose to invest in a location, we do so because we believe in its future.

The city and wider region are undergoing a period of significant transition. While challenges undoubtedly exist, Aberdeen has repeatedly demonstrated its ability to adapt and evolve. We are seeing growing opportunities across energy transition, technology, life sciences and a range of emerging industries that are helping to diversify the local economy. Combined with the region's exceptional quality of life, this creates a strong platform for sustainable growth.

For Persimmon, Aberdeen represents an important part of our long-term strategy in Scotland. We continue to see strong demand for high-quality, energy-efficient homes and recognise the vital role new housing plays in supporting economic development. Homes are not simply buildings; they create the foundations for thriving communities, help attract talent, support local services and provide opportunities for families to put down roots.

Our commitment to the region extends beyond the homes we are currently building. We are actively exploring opportunities for further investment across Aberdeen and the North-east, ensuring we can continue to deliver the homes that local people need. Homes that will support the area's growth ambitions, create well-paid jobs and apprenticeship opportunities, and support local organisations that are the lifeblood of our communities.

Central to that commitment is our determination to strengthen relationships with the local supply chain. The success of any development depends on the expertise and dedication of a wide

network of contractors, suppliers and specialist businesses. We want more of that value to remain within the local economy.

This approach delivers mutual benefits. It creates greater resilience within our own operations while helping local firms invest, recruit and grow. In an uncertain economic environment, those partnerships are more important than ever.

While others may focus on short-term market fluctuations, our perspective is longer term. We see opportunity where others see uncertainty. We see potential where others see challenge. Most importantly, we see Aberdeen as a region with the talent, ambition and economic foundations to thrive in the years ahead.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to growing our presence, deepening our partnerships and playing our part in supporting a vibrant and prosperous local economy.

The confidence we have in Aberdeen is not simply about today's market. It is about the opportunities that lie ahead, and our determination to help unlock them.



Homes built for belonging



Aberdeen is a place unlike any other

It's where the day begins before sun rises over the harbour. Where muddy boots are left by the door after adventures outdoors. Where friends gather, milestones are celebrated and futures take shape.

Whether you're stepping onto the property ladder, finding space for the next chapter, or settling somewhere that simply feels right, a home is about more than where you live.

That's why we're creating thoughtfully designed and energy-efficient new two, three and four bedroom homes across Aberdeenshire, with excellent schemes available to help you make your move.



**Whatever home means
to you, you'll find a place
to belong with us.**

Scan to discover
Persimmon Homes
in Aberdeen.

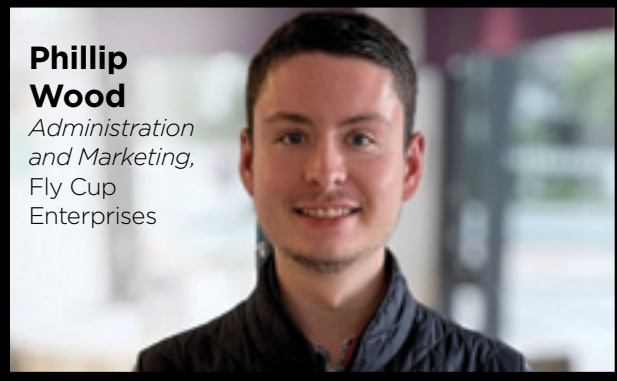


Visit persimmonhomes.co.uk

WORDS OF ADVICE

Phillip Wood

Administration
and Marketing,
Fly Cup
Enterprises



Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Fly Cup Enterprises is an Inverurie-based charity and social enterprise that has been supporting adults and young people with learning disabilities, autism and ADHD from across the North-east of Scotland for over 25 years. From the organisation's Inverurie base, it provides training and the opportunity to gain hospitality skills, hands-on experience and recognised qualifications.

Tell us about your management style and how it has worked for you.

I would describe my management style as collaborative and participative, involving team members in the decision-making process. When it comes to working on a project, for example, I will have an idea in my head but I will be open

to bouncing it around with other people in order to develop and refine the initial idea. As the saying goes, there is no 'I' in 'team'. Knowledge and accepting that constant change is part of running a modern IT business.

What is the biggest barrier you overcame in the workplace and how did you tackle it?

Even though Fly Cup Enterprises (colloquially known as Fly Cup) has been a cornerstone in the North-east community for over 25 years, many people are only familiar with the coffee shop and café element of the organisation and the large role that it plays in supporting local individuals. People are sometimes surprised to hear that there are many other services provided, such as meeting spaces and catering, all from the same Inverurie location. Communicating the charity and social enterprises' range of services and the work that it does is important, both to greater inform those who have known about Fly Cup for years and also to attract new supporters, helping the organisation continue its mission of making a difference and creating opportunities.

What's the best bit of business or life advice you've ever received?

Being only a 25-year-old, I'm sure there's still lots to come for me in terms of business and life advice. When I was thinking about what I wanted to do in the world of work, the best bit of advice I received was: "Go for it. Even if you don't know what you want to do, you can always try different roles to see what you ultimately enjoy."

Scott Duncan

Director
Trust Boilers
& Renewables



Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Trust Boilers & Renewables helps homeowners make the move to efficient, low-carbon heating solutions with confidence. We design, install and maintain heat pump and oil and gas heating systems across the North-east of Scotland, taking responsibility from the initial conversation and system design right through to installation, servicing and long-term aftercare.

Tell us about your management style and how it has worked for you.

We've built the business around trust, accountability and doing things properly. We invest heavily in our team's training and encourage everyone to understand why

we do something, not simply how. That creates better engineers, better installations and ultimately a much better experience for our customers.

What is the biggest barrier you overcame in the workplace and how did you tackle it?

One challenge in renewables is overcoming poor experiences caused by badly designed or installed heat pumps. A heat pump isn't simply a boiler replacement. Correct heat-loss calculations, system design, radiator sizing, controls and commissioning all matter. We tackle this through training, careful design and refusing to cut corners.

What's the best bit of business or life advice you've ever received?

Do it right the first time. Price matters, but value matters more. This is especially true with renewables. Choosing an installer on price alone can become expensive if the system is poorly designed, inefficient or unsupported. Choose a company that will still be there when you need them afterwards.

What's your top tip for someone joining your organisation today?

Never stop learning. Heating technology is changing quickly and good engineers need to change with it. Ask questions, understand the whole system and take pride in the details. Our job doesn't finish when a heat pump is switched on - through our Care Plans, we look after customers and their systems long-term.

Denis Law Legacy Trust opens a new youth hub in Torry

Denis Law Legacy Trust (DLLT) has officially opened a new youth hub in Torry, creating another welcoming and inclusive space for local young people to come together, build friendships and have access to positive opportunities.

The hub has been named in memory of much-loved Torry youngster Kacey Seivwright, who sadly passed away in 2021, ensuring her legacy lives on by bringing young people together in a safe and welcoming space. Located next to Cruyff Court Neale Cooper, "Kacey's Legacy Youth Hub" will provide free, sport and creative activities for young people, further strengthening the support and provision available within the community.

The hub has been developed by DLLT as part of its ongoing commitment to creating safe spaces where young people can connect, develop new skills and reach their full potential.

Kacey's older sister, Kelsey Seivwright, officially opened the hub by cutting the ceremonial ribbon.

Kelsey's journey with the Denis Law Legacy Trust reflects the impact youth opportunities can have on young people. Having attended DLLT Streetsport sessions from the age of eight, she became a volunteer at 14 before progressing into a coaching role.



Chief Operating Officer of DLLT Mark Williams with Kelsey and some of the DLLT team

Now aged 20, Kelsey works full-time with the trust as a Streetsport Operations Assistant, helping to create opportunities for the next generation of young people across the city.

WE DO OFFICES!



Oh... and Co-Working and Meeting Rooms and It's All Fully Serviced!
Bold, flexible workspace in the heart of Aberdeen city centre

STACK.
Office

Interested?
www.stackoffice.co.uk
abz@stackoffice.co.uk

STACK.
Office

UK trade: July 2026

EU sales drive upswing in exports



The value of goods imports rose by £1.3billion (2.4%) in July 2026, with a rise in imports from non-EU countries partially offset by a fall in imports from the EU.

The value of goods exports rose by £0.9billion (2.8%) in July 2026, with increases in exports to both EU and non-EU countries.

The total goods and services trade deficit narrowed by £1.1billion to £9.0billion in the three months to July 2026, compared with the three months to April 2026.

The trade in goods deficit narrowed by £0.4billion to £61.6billion in the three months to July 2026, while the trade in services surplus is estimated to have widened by £0.7billion to £52.6billion.

Commenting on the latest trade data released by the Office for National Statistics, William Bain, Head of Trade Policy at the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "Sustained growth

in wider UK economic activity was reflected in July's trade figures.

"The rise in exports across goods and services was broad based, particularly in trade with the EU. Although, goods imports from the rest of the world were also strong. This was led by increases in car orders from China and aircraft from the USA.

"Whilst this was an encouraging performance, it is vital that we see this momentum sustained into the next quarter.

"The government must focus on reducing the cost of trade with the EU, expanding new trade deal opportunities, and taking targeted action on export support."

Detailed Analysis: July 2026

The volume of goods exports increased by 3.5%. This was driven by a 7.2% increase to EU sales, led by broad-ranging increases in vehicles, chemicals, fuels and

manufactured goods. Exports to the rest of the world were unchanged.

Imports increased by 2.1% in volume. There was a 4.2% rise in non-EU purchases, whereas the flow of goods from the EU remained unchanged, despite notable falls in aircraft and cars.

Services exports rose by 0.5% in volume terms while imports went up by 0.7% for the month.

The last three months

Goods exports rose by 4.8% in value terms. This was split between a 2.8% increase to the EU, and a 6.9% rise to the rest of the world.

The value of goods imports rose by 2.7%. There was a 0.9% increase in orders from the EU, and a 4.7% rise from the rest of the world.

Services exports were estimated to have risen in value by 1%.

Meanwhile imports of services were estimated to have gone up by 0.8%.

The next ONS publication on trade data is expected on October 15.

Place matters: What the data tells us about building a competitive region

In previous Research Chamber articles, we explored how evidence helps maximise the value of tourism and how data can inform a successful energy transition. The same principle applies to property and infrastructure.

The places where businesses choose to invest, grow and employ people do not emerge by accident. They are shaped by decisions about transport, housing, digital connectivity, commercial property, public spaces and energy infrastructure. Increasingly, they are also shaped by the quality of evidence used to inform those decisions. As the OECD notes, evidence-based planning and investment appraisal are essential to delivering infrastructure that supports long-term economic growth and regional competitiveness (OECD, 2025).

Infrastructure is often viewed as a physical asset: a road, a building, a rail connection or a broadband network. In reality, its value lies in the outcomes it enables. Well-planned infrastructure improves productivity, attracts investment, supports talent retention and strengthens regional competitiveness.

This is increasingly recognised in national policy. The Scottish Government's draft Infrastructure Strategy highlights the role of infrastructure in delivering inclusive economic growth, supporting net zero ambitions and creating resilient sustainable places (Scottish Government, 2026). Similarly, Scotland's infrastructure investment programme continues to position infrastructure as a key driver of economic growth and long-term prosperity (Scottish Government, 2025).

For regions such as Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, this is particularly relevant

As the North-east continues to diversify its economy while competing for investment, talent and major projects, the quality of its infrastructure and places will

become an increasingly important differentiator. The region's long-standing strengths in energy, engineering and innovation provide strong foundations, but future competitiveness will also depend on how effectively we create places where people and businesses want to locate, invest and grow.

This is where data becomes essential

Too often, infrastructure discussions focus on inputs rather than outcomes. The important question is not simply how much has been invested, but what difference that investment has made. Has it improved business confidence? Has it increased footfall and economic activity? Has it supported job creation, inward investment or workforce attraction? Has it enhanced the experience of residents, visitors and businesses?

These are questions that cannot be answered through assumptions alone

Evidence-led evaluation helps policymakers prioritise investment, gives investors greater confidence in market opportunities and enables businesses to make more informed growth decisions. It also provides greater accountability, ensuring that projects deliver value long after their construction phase has ended.

This approach underpins much of the Research Chamber's work

Whether evaluating the economic impact of Aberdeen's Christmas Village, measuring visitor outcomes from the Tall Ships Races, tracking business sentiment through the Quarterly Economic Survey or assessing the opportunities and challenges of energy transition, the objective remains the same: providing robust insight that helps organisations understand impact, identify opportunities and plan with greater confidence.

The same principles apply to property and infrastructure

As public finances become increasingly constrained and investment decisions face greater scrutiny, understanding economic and social impact is no longer a desirable addition to a project; it is an essential part of its success. The strongest projects are those that can demonstrate how they contribute to economic growth, productivity, community outcomes and long-term regional resilience.

Place matters because competitiveness matters

For the North-east, future success will depend not only on the infrastructure we build, but on how effectively we understand its impact. Because the most successful places are not simply those that invest, but those that understand their strengths, measure their impact and build on what works.

References

OECD (2025) Infrastructure Governance. Paris: OECD. Available at: www.oecd.org/en/topics/infrastructure-governance.html

Scottish Government (2025) *Infrastructure Investment Plan 2021-22 to 2025-26: Progress Report 2024-25*.

Scottish Government (2026) *Draft Infrastructure Strategy 2027-2037*.



Samira Heshmatzadeh,
Senior Research Executive,
Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber
of Commerce

samira.heshmatzadeh@agcc.co.uk

Thainstone confirmed as home of SSEN Transmission's new £150m training centre

SSEN Transmission has confirmed that its new £150million state-of-the-art training centre will be built at Thainstone Business Park near Inverurie in Aberdeenshire, marking a major investment in skills, jobs and the future of Scotland's electricity network.

The project will establish a dedicated training hub for the company's workforce and contractor partners, supporting the operation, maintenance and development of the high-voltage transmission network across the north of Scotland.

The purpose-built facility will become the latest addition to Thainstone Business Park, owned by ANM Group, and forms part of SSEN Transmission's wider £29billion investment programme to upgrade and strengthen the electricity transmission network that will enable the delivery of the UK's clean energy ambitions.

Once operational, the training centre will support hundreds of trainees each year, helping meet growing demand for skilled workers by providing hands-on experience across a range of realistic operational scenarios. The facility will feature specialist training equipment and capabilities designed to prepare the next generation of engineers and technical specialists responsible for developing, operating and maintaining the transmission network.

When first announced in June, the new training centre was welcomed by the First Minister, John Swinney; Aberdeenshire Council Co-Leaders, Cllr Stewart Adams and Cllr Anne Stirling; and the CEO of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Russell Borthwick.

Around 10 permanent roles are expected to be based at the facility, including training, operational and support staff. These will be supported by experienced local engineers and external tutors, helping to deliver a high-quality training programme and create opportunities for people entering the energy sector or transitioning into new careers.

The Thainstone training centre near Inverurie will complement and enhance existing training provision at



SSEN Transmission's Faskally Training Centre in Perth. Purpose-built for the needs of a modern transmission network operator, the new site will combine classroom-based learning with practical training environments featuring both existing and emerging technologies. It will also provide dedicated space for innovation and the testing of new approaches before they are deployed on the live network.

The investment further reflects SSEN Transmission's continued growth as it delivers an unprecedented programme of network upgrades across the north of Scotland. Having recently welcomed its 3,000th employee and in the process of recruitment for 500 new jobs by the end of March 2027, the company continues to expand its workforce and develop the skills needed to support a secure, affordable and low-carbon energy future.

Dave McKay, Network Director at SSEN Transmission, said: "As we continue to invest in the electricity network needed for the future, having a dedicated facility where colleagues and contractor partners can develop practical skills in a safe, modern and realistic environment will be invaluable.

"Aberdeenshire has a proud engineering heritage and a highly skilled workforce, making Thainstone an ideal location for this new facility. As well as supporting hundreds of trainees each year, the centre will bring wider benefits to local businesses and communities while helping ensure we have the talent and expertise required to maintain and develop the network for decades to come."

Outgoing Barratt Redrow Chief Executive thanks colleagues in final FY results

David Thomas, the outgoing Chief Executive of Barratt Redrow has thanked colleagues and said it has been an "enormous privilege" to lead the property giant for over a decade.

Thomas is set to retire after 11 years at the helm, making way for Dean Banks - who had been CEO of the Australia and New Zealand infrastructure company Ventia since 2021 - to take over in Q4 this year.

Although Thomas will remain with the company into next year to ensure a smooth transition, he took the publication of Barrat Redrow's full year 2026 results as an opportunity to thank his team and wish them "every success" for the future.

Commenting on the full year results, Thomas said: "In a tough market, we have driven a strong operational and financial performance, delivering 17,667 homes, ahead of last year, and adjusted profit before tax in line with market expectations."

He went on: "It has been an enormous privilege to lead Barratt Redrow over the past decade.

"I would like to thank our talented and dedicated colleagues across the business whose hard work, commitment and professionalism have helped build the successful and resilient company we are today. I wish them every success for the future."

Chair Caroline Silver said: "David was appointed Group CEO in July 2015 and has made a huge contribution throughout his tenure, which has seen Barratt Redrow build an exceptionally strong business with an industry-leading reputation for customer service and build quality and the creation of tens of thousands of high-quality sustainable homes and developments across the country.

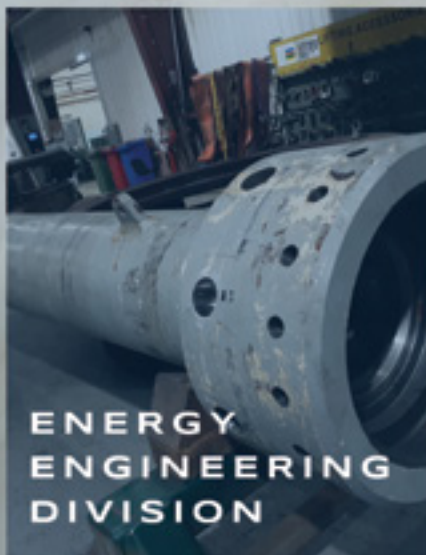
"The board and everyone at Barratt Redrow wish David a long and happy retirement."

AJT

ENGINEERING LIMITED

SPECIALIST ENGINEERING
SERVICE PROVIDER

High-quality engineering, fabrication and site services for traditional and renewable energy sectors, delivered with technical expertise, safety and sustainable innovation.



SECTORS WE SERVE



HYDRO



WIND



MOORINGS



HYDROGEN



OIL & GAS



WATER

EXPLORE OUR CAPABILITIES AT
ajt-engineering.co.uk

Follow us on LinkedIn: AJT Engineering Ltd

Film crews diving into Bon Accord Baths as historic building to star on TV

By Danny McKay



It may still be some time before we see water in the pool again at Bon Accord Baths, but that hasn't stopped the city centre building making a splash in the art world and on screen.

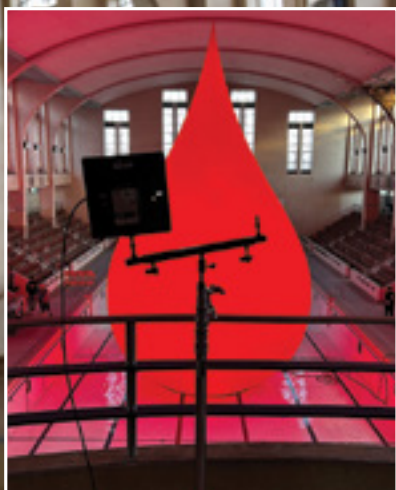
After starring in an advert last year, the iconic Art Deco building drew crowds this summer by hosting an eye-catching Nuart exhibit, before camera crews rolled in to film for the smash hit Netflix police drama Dept. Q.

No sooner had crews left to head onwards to their next filming location, London artist Tod Hanson arrived to set up another spectacular art display, wallpapering the pool itself.

And word travels fast among location scouts it seems, as Paramount+ was the next big name to enquire about shooting at Bon Accord Baths for a brand new series.

At the time of writing, that latest deal was still to be finalised, but Bruce Strachan, Chair of the Bon Accord Heritage charity, was thrilled at the prospect and about the extra attention – and funding – the Dept. Q crews had created for the historic building.

Bruce said: "It was absolutely fascinating. We had an advert being filmed in there last year, which was really interesting, and Dept. Q sort of built on that. It was a much larger production over a much longer period.



Bruce Strachan
*Chair of the Bon Accord
Heritage charity*

‘It was a really good boost to our charity’

“For people that are not involved in that industry it’s just really fascinating to watch and see the attention to detail that’s involved.

“There was about 120 people in the baths on the days they were filming with all the stunt people, health and safety, makeup people, camera people, sound people, etc.

“They were all staying in the Park Inn and were out in the restaurants and in the karaoke bars and so on. It must be a bit of an economic boost for the city as well.”

Asked how Dept. Q came across the Baths, Bruce explained: “The location scout just loved the feel of the city, Union Terrace Gardens and the architecture.

“They approached us and we had about a dozen visits making sure the director was happy with it and the health and safety people were happy with the diving boards and all that sort of stuff.

“They absolutely loved filming in the building and found us quite easy to work with which is nice – we just sort of let them take over. Apparently the end results look stunning!

“We got a boost to the coffers from the advert last year, and for Dept. Q we applied a similar sort of day rate. It was a really good boost to our charity.”

Following on from the success of the advert and Dept. Q filming, Bruce revealed the group was already in talks with streaming giant Paramount+ about using the Baths for a brand new production.

He said: “They’ve been discussing it with a few people. It’s a new Paramount+ feature, so again another big streaming company involved.

“It’s a new series they’re looking at doing based in Scotland.

“We’re just happy to be considered. Whether it’s a few hours or a few days, we’re happy to accommodate them if we can.”

‘We’ve got so much space in that building that was being underutilised previously’

Bruce described the Baths as a “key heritage building” which had been a “massive civic project” when it was built and finally opened in 1940.

He said: “If you look at some of the press cuttings during its construction and when it opened and the early years of the war, it’s massive. Those memories and that affection and nostalgia, we still hear that from people today.

“But you can only go so far on nostalgia, you need to give a reason for people to come and it needs to be financially stable.

“When we can get that building open, we want it to be open again from six

in the morning until 11 at night, we want people swimming in it, we want people to come and enjoy a nice warm place, have a coffee, meet friends, have lunch.

“We’ve got so much space in that building that was being underutilised previously. We envisage community spaces and youth clubs, gyms, saunas, sports halls, activity spaces, treatment rooms and all the jazzy stuff that goes on.

“Ultimately we just want to see the building brought back to life and max out the opportunity that comes from the use of that space.

‘We see this as a sort of anchor for the west end of the city’

“I think it could just lift the whole feel and the whole character and appearance of that area and make it feel a lot more loved than it does at the moment.”

In his day job, Bruce is a local authority planner, while the heritage group’s board of volunteers also boasts architects, quantity surveyors and health and safety professionals.

Bruce continued: “Fundamentally we’re all in it because we just love the building and we love the stories that people tell us and we just want to do our best to try and bring it back for people.

“The city centre needs that footfall, it needs experiences, it needs people to come in. It needs to think beyond retail so we really see this as a sort of anchor for the west end of the city.

“There’s no one employed in this, we’re doing it in our spare time. There’s a lot of chatting and raising awareness of the project that goes on, but we need to move into the next phase of actually delivering some tangible stuff once we have the funding for that.”

The goal remains to reopen the pool by 2031, but that target is heavily dependent on receiving crucial funding.

To learn more about the **Bon Accord Heritage group**



and how you and your business can support the project, **scan here.**



Designed to escape the ordinary.

Creating beautifully crafted architecture
that connects people with place, purpose
and exceptional design.

For over a decade, we have been designing beautifully crafted homes and architectural spaces throughout the North East of Scotland.

Working with a diverse portfolio of local and international clients, we approach every project with the client's vision at its heart. Our passion is to create architecture that is both distinctive and timeless—enhancing the surrounding built environment while enriching the lives of those who live, work and interact within it.

Whether you are planning a bespoke home, residential development, commercial workplace, educational facility, community building, city centre conversion, private extension or interior design project, our experienced team has the knowledge and creativity to bring your vision to life.

From the initial consultation through to completion, we work alongside our clients every step of the way. We believe successful architecture is built on collaboration, trust and strong relationships. We are people, working with people.

Together, we create residential and commercial projects that are functional, inspiring and built to stand the test of time.

Based in our purpose-built architectural studio in Cults, Aberdeen, we are ideally located to serve clients across Scotland and beyond, delivering thoughtful, innovative design solutions tailored to every project.

ETZ Ltd invests £150,000 to deliver South Aberdeen stretch of 'The Doric Way' coastal trail



Trail improvement works have been completed on a 3.5 kilometre (km) stretch of Aberdeen's coastline to help integrate it into what is aiming to become one of Scotland's most ambitious new long-distance coastal trails.

ETZ Ltd has invested £150,000 to enhance the coastal path, including with new wayfinding and interpretation boards, between Aberdeen South Harbour and Altens, improving access to local heritage, biodiversity and the natural environment.

The upgraded route will form part of the South Aberdeen section of 'The Doric Way', a proposed long-distance coastal trail being developed by North East Scotland Coastal Trust (NESCAT). The organisation's vision is for the continuous walking route to stretch the roughly 150 miles (225km) of the region's coastline between Montrose in the south and Cullen in the north.

Connecting more than 40 coastal towns and communities, plans for the coastal trail link together cliff tops, beaches, existing paths and quiet roads, creating one of Scotland's most stunning coastal walking experiences.

Delivered in partnership with NESCAT through ETZ's Community & Coast programme, the 3.5km stretch of Aberdeen improvements include resurfaced sections, enhanced accessibility, new wayfinding and a series of interpretation boards celebrating the area's rich history and culture.

Maggie McGinlay, CEO at ETZ Ltd, said: "This investment is about creating a lasting asset for local communities while celebrating the coastline that has shaped Aberdeen's history and identity.

"The path improvements, wayfinding and interpretation boards will help more people enjoy this remarkable stretch of coast, learn about its natural environment and discover the industries and communities that have developed here over generations.

"We're proud to support NESCAT's vision for The Doric Way. As the route develops, it will connect communities along the North-east coast, encourage more people to experience the region's outstanding natural environment and heritage, and deliver lasting social and economic benefits for the area.

"By investing in an important section within Aberdeen that is now complete and available to the public, we're supporting NESCAT's work to develop the wider route."

Chris Foy, CEO VisitAberdeenshire, commented: "The long-term vision for The Doric Way - to strengthen connections between communities, support local people into the outdoors and enhance the region's visitor economy by making the North-east's coastline more accessible - is a welcome and valuable addition to the region's visitor offer. We know that many of our visitors enjoy spending time in the outdoors, so exploring our coastal path will provide a good reason to stay longer and explore deeper."

Luke Robertson, Project Manager at NESCAT, added: "The Doric Way is about joining up our incredible coastline and making it easier for people to explore it on foot. Importantly, we don't have to wait until the whole route is in place to see the benefits. Each section we improve can make a difference now, helping more people enjoy the coast, connecting communities and supporting local businesses."

WORDS OF ADVICE

Sue Blow

*Director,
Thought
Support 25*



Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

I help people to think. How? Through individual business and performance coaching, and facilitating bespoke development workshops for groups and teams.

The output? New ideas, better decision-making and measurable results.

Tell us about your learning and development style, and how it has worked for you.

'I hate being taught... but I am always willing to learn.' (Winston Churchill). Wise advice. Successful bespoke learning and development workshops result from solid research and design, and participative, engaging delivery. The key: active listening and flexible responses. No lecturing, no 'snake-oil' false promises: just great results.

What's the best bit of life advice you've ever received?

Forty years ago, a pupil whose academic light shone dimly offered to teach me chess. After 10 minutes, he gave up the chess lesson but gave me my best life lesson.

'Mrs Blow, you're not very bright, are you?' Academic prowess is but one aspect of gifts differing.

What's your top tip for someone joining the learning and development profession today?

No matter how often you have facilitated any event, from boardroom to storeroom, every single one is unique. The context is new, the people are different, the chemistry, the energy will be unlike any other. Never assume; take nothing for granted. Prepare. Your reputation depends on it.

David McCready

*Managing
Director,
iO IT
Services Ltd*



Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Technology should move your business forward, not slow it down. We help organisations simplify IT, strengthen cyber security and make smarter use of Microsoft 365 and AI. No jargon or unnecessary complexity, just practical advice, proactive support and technology that delivers real business value.

Tell us about your management style and how it has worked for you.

I believe in giving people ownership, not just tasks. Clear expectations, trust and accountability create confident teams. I want people to understand

why we're doing something, not just how. When people feel empowered to make decisions and keep learning, both they and the business grow.

What is the biggest barrier you overcame in the workplace and how did you tackle it?

One of the biggest challenges has been changing the perception of IT from a reactive support function into a strategic business partner. We achieved that by focusing on relationships, long-term planning and measurable outcomes rather than just resolving tickets. The conversations with clients are now about business goals, not just technology.

What's the best bit of business or life advice you've ever received?

Listen to everyone's advice, but don't follow any of it blindly. Take it on board, challenge it, learn from it and then make your own decision. Every business is different, and the best choices come from combining good advice with your own judgement.

What's your top tip for someone joining your organisation today?

Stay curious, and never be afraid to challenge your peers. Technology changes constantly, so a willingness to learn is more valuable than knowing everything already. Ask questions, share ideas, and always remember that behind every technical issue is a person relying on us to make their day easier.

1 QUEEN'S TERRACE · ABERDEEN AB10 1XL

CHRISTMUSE

BY KEVIN DALGLEISH

JOIN US FOR A CRACKING FESTIVE SEASON

PRIVATE DINING & EXCLUSIVE HIRE

22

PRIVATE DINING ROOM

your own room, your own table

75

FULL VENUE HIRE

the whole of Amuse, exclusively yours

Parties of 22 to 75 – and every size in between



THE SEASON OPENS

Thursday 26th November
through to 23rd December

Three courses · £53 per person

AVAILABLE TUESDAY TO FRIDAY

Gift vouchers available

AMUSE

BY KEVIN DALGLEISH

AA 2 ROSETTES · MICHELIN GUIDE · THE HOME OF GOOD FOOD

AMUSE-RESTAURANT.COM

01224 611909 · INFO@AMUSE-RESTAURANT.COM

Core29 moves into ONE TechHub, Schoolhill



Core29, a Peterson Solutions company specialising in business intelligence and digital transformation, has relocated to ONE TechHub on Schoolhill, Aberdeen.

The move places Core29 within Aberdeen's growing technology and innovation community with a natural fit for a team focused on helping businesses turn data into clear, actionable insights.

Alan Dick, Managing Director at Core29, said: "We see moving to ONE Tech Hub as the perfect alignment with our proven capabilities in digital systems consulting,

plus data and analytics, with the goal of ONE Tech Hub to grow Aberdeen's digital technology sector.

"Locating within this technology-rich environment connects us with an ecosystem of innovators and technology experts.

"We are seeing immediate gains through team networking opportunities and collaboration conversations from the get-go and look forward to those continuing in the weeks ahead."

For more information, Visit core29.co.uk



- Volumetric Concrete
- ✕ Building Materials
- Power Tools
- ✕ Landscaping
- Aggregates
- ✕ Bulk Bags
- Windows
- ✕ PPE & More



FOR AFFORDABLE, QUALITY & RELIABLE PRODUCTS EVERYTIME



VISIT OUR BRANCH FOR THE BEST PRICES IN THE NORTH EAST!

Mon to Fri: 7am to 5pm Sat: 7am to 12:30pm

WESTHILL
01224 748313

STONEHAVEN
01569 763806

INVERURIE
01467 621926

ELLON
01358 280184

GPH.UK.COM



A HOME FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

CIRRUS
WORKSPACES

A prestigious destination for professionals seeking flexible, ultra-sleek workspace solutions.

Serviced Offices - Fully managed offices from 6m² to customisable suites.

Coworking - Day passes and meeting rooms designed to inspire creativity and collaboration.

Virtual Offices - A credible business address without the overheads.

Therapy Rooms - Calm, professional spaces for wellness practitioners with flexible terms.

Storage - Practical space for growing businesses that need a little extra room.

With flexible terms and a prime ABZ Business Park location, just 5 minutes to Aberdeen International Airport, 10 to Westhill and 15 to Aberdeen city centre, Cirrus Workspaces keeps your focus on what matters most: your business.

Find your space today at cirrusworkspaces.co.uk

the MEMBER MEET the



Rachel Clark

*Valuation Associate
Ryden*

How would you describe your job?

Commercial property is often one of the largest assets owned or leased by a company. Knowing the current market value of your property is important for your financial reporting. It can help you with lease negotiations and future planning for a relocation, expansion or downsizing.

Working for Ryden Property Consultants as part of the valuation team, I deliver valuations and reports for secured lending, internal accounting, pension, acquisition and disposal purposes throughout the North-east of Scotland.

In simple terms, a commercial property valuation assesses the market worth of a property. We look at factors such as location, size, condition and rental income when relevant and then we apply our professional judgement and expertise to the specific purpose of the asset.

What types of companies are your clients, and which industries do you typically do business with?

Our client base is wide and diverse, from major organisations to local authorities and private individuals. We regularly provide Red Book valuations for secured lending purposes on behalf of banks, currently through the LSH Group which Ryden has been part of since

last year, and pension vehicles like SIPPs. We've also acted for public bodies such as Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

What is the biggest challenge you're facing at the moment?

Aberdeen and the North-east have been experiencing a lot of market uncertainty in recent years and that's particularly challenging when providing property valuations. Evidence and sentiment can change very quickly.

That's when organisations most need a trusted advisor they can rely on, not just numbers and statistics, and that's exactly what our clients value most. We give them straightforward, trusted, independent advice delivered by people who know the local market inside out.

Additionally, the RICS Red Book reporting requirements have become more onerous. Every report must now meet a higher bar for transparency and auditability. It's the right way to provide advice, of course, but at the same time it does demand rigour and extra time.



Kate Kenyon

*Owner
SOBR Bar*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

SOBR exists because choosing not to drink shouldn't mean choosing to stay home. SOBR is Scotland's first (and only) dedicated alcohol-free bar; a proper bar experience, minus the alcohol. We serve a full menu of premium no and low-alcohol cocktails, wines, beers and functional drinks in a genuinely welcoming space. There's no mocktail menu tucked at the back, no apology. We're tapping into a fast-

growing market of sober-curious, health-conscious and alcohol-free customers who've had nowhere to go... until now!

Who are your customers?

The target audience was Gen Zs and Millennials, however, we've been getting a great deal of Gen Xs and Baby Boomers – something we didn't expect but we're very happy to have! Our customer base is predominantly women and the LGBTQI+ community. One of our key goals when we started was to create a welcoming place for everyone, and I'm delighted people feel we've created that. And more recently, we have had groups of men coming in for pints, which is brilliant! I love seeing the mix of people who enjoy SOBR and all we offer.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

Aside from the obvious cost of living crisis and the rising cost of pretty much everything (sometimes it feels like even air), the biggest challenge is definitely convincing people that alcohol-free drinks (and nights out)

are just as fun and lively as non-sober ones.

I think many feel that alcohol-free drinks don't pack the same punch, aren't worth the money and don't give you the same impact. We're trying really hard at SOBR to make drinks as incredible as any alcoholic one and use quality ingredients that do make them worth the money. The time and effort that goes into creating them also adds to the quality. And as for not having the same impact, I keep saying that you don't feel the effects of drink till three or four in. The fun that you're having, the connection you're feeling, and the enjoyment all comes from the people you surround yourself with. Not the alcohol you drink!

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The access to courses and the connections you can make. The courses are a great resource; there's a great variety and they're so in-depth. I have also been to a few events the Chamber has held and the connections you can make there are invaluable.

MEMBER MEET *the* ME



Steve Petrie
UK Managing Director
WTA Energy Ltd

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

WTA Energy specialises in time critical logistics for the global energy sector, combining deep operational expertise with a people first approach. We manage complex airfreight, project cargo, and multimodal movements with precision, transparency, and a relentless focus on safety and service. Our role is to keep energy

supply chains moving - efficiently, compliantly, and with absolute accountability.

Who are your customers?

We support organisations across the energy and industrial sectors that move specialist, high-value or time-critical equipment - from power generation and grid infrastructure to oil and gas, renewables and industrial systems. We also handle oversized, hazardous and critical components. Our customers keep essential infrastructure running, and rely on us for safe, precise delivery.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

Challenge: Energy logistics is shifting fast - volatile capacity, geopolitical pressures and rising compliance demands are reshaping expectations. Customers now need greater visibility, resilience and value.

Opportunity: By strengthening planning, partnerships and accountability, we can help clients navigate uncertainty, control costs and support growth across infrastructure, lower carbon projects and emerging technologies.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Relationships last when they're built on openness and integrity. Being honest about challenges as well as strengths helps people know they can rely on you. At WTA Energy we aim to be that kind of partner - transparent, clear in our communication, and committed to doing the right thing, even when it's difficult.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The Chamber gives businesses a place to connect with purpose, bringing together organisations that care about the region, its people and its future. It's a chance to share expertise, learn from one another and play a part in building a stronger, more resilient North-east business community.



Frazer Norrie
Technical Manager
Tool Tec Ltd

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Tool Tec Ltd is an award-winning subsea engineering company based in Inverurie, Aberdeenshire.

We specialise in the design, manufacture, and operation of remote intervention and tooling for offshore energy projects worldwide.

Our in-house engineering and technical teams provide everything from bespoke tooling solutions to equipment rental, maintenance, and rapid-response problem solving.

Who are your customers?

At Tool Tec, we pride ourselves on our ability to support a wide range of companies within the energy sector.

Always ready to assist and provide guidance promptly whenever needed.

What is the biggest challenge and opportunity your organisation is facing right now?

One of the ongoing challenges for a small organisation like Tool Tec is finding the right people who truly fit our culture and values.

When we do, it creates a valuable opportunity to invest in their development and support their growth as part of the business.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

In my experience, no strategy or shortcut can replace the power of consistency, hard work and dedication.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

Being a member gives Tool Tec the opportunity to connect with other Chamber members across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire while opening the door to new business opportunities.

The Chamber's training courses have also allowed us to invest in our team, advancing their skills, knowledge & confidence in the workplace.

Sky's the limit as CHAS children take flight with Loganair



Children with life-shortening conditions from across Scotland and their families enjoyed a day to remember, taking to the skies for a spectacular scenic

flight over Scotland's west coast, courtesy of the UK's leading regional airline, Loganair, and its charity partner, Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS).

Six families received VIP treatment onboard one of Loganair's ATR 72-600s, which flew under flight number LM1996, marking the year CHAS's children's hospice, Rachel House, opened its doors.

Before take-off, families enjoyed a morning of fun in Glasgow Airport's Campsie Lounge, with character meet-and-greets, singalongs and soft play.

There was plenty of magic on board too. With support from Wish Upon a Star Kingdom, Princess Merida and Spider-Gwen joined the families for the round trip across the Highlands and Islands to the delight of the young flyers, before the aircraft returned to Glasgow Airport.

Construction win further bolsters Goldstar's growth

Aberdeen-based cleaning specialists Goldstar Services is further developing its footprint in Tayside with the award of contracts with Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes, covering more than 300 properties around Dundee.

This sees Goldstar now delivering services on all of Barratt North Scotland's sites.

Goldstar is an award-winning family business, supporting commercial and domestic clients with their cleaning and maintenance needs, across Aberdeen and the North-east of Scotland.

Director Scott Willox said: "We are delighted to be further developing our partnership with major house builder Barratt Homes - and David Wilson Homes - while growing our presence around Angus and Tayside.

"It's really heartening in today's market to see Goldstar's specialist construction division achieve such growth in support of clients across a record number of live sites.

"Combined with impressive continued growth across our commercial and domestic businesses, and we are pleased that the hard work, reliability and professionalism of our teams continue to shine for our clients."

Shepherd Chartered Surveyors

Hardies Chartered Surveyors

All Angles Covered

We are Scotland largest firm of Chartered Surveyors with over 35 offices throughout Scotland including Aberdeen.

Our wide ranging services span Residential, Commercial and Property & Construction – including **Home Reports, Valuation Reports, Commercial Valuations, Commercial Agency, Quantity & Building Surveying, Project Management and Energy Services.**

For a **full list** of all our services visit:
www.shepherd.co.uk | www.hardies.co.uk

aberdeen@shepherd.co.uk
01224 202800 | shepherd.co.uk

aberdeen@hardies.co.uk
01224 202800 | hardies.co.uk



BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Julie Wood
Director,
Greenwell

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Without question, my father. Around Greenwell we affectionately call him "The Grafter", and for good reason. He left school young and has worked hard every day since. Growing up, I watched him build relationships based on honesty, hard work and genuinely caring about customers. Those values shaped the way I approach business and still guide every decision I make today.

What's the most effective piece of training or personal development you have undertaken?

The greatest lessons I've learned haven't come from a classroom – they've come from nearly 30 years of building a business.

One of the biggest lessons has been understanding that every stage of business brings different pressures. You can't control every situation or every person around you, but you can control how you respond. Learning to stay resilient, adapt and find ways of managing those pressures has been one of the most valuable skills I've developed.

If there's one thing I've learned, it's that you should never stop learning. Businesses have to evolve. Diversifying our services and becoming a genuine one-stop shop for office and warehouse solutions

has been key to Greenwell's success, and I'm still learning something new every day..

What's the biggest lesson you've learned in business?

Never stand still.

Markets change, technology changes and customer expectations change. Businesses that refuse to evolve risk being left behind. We've always believed in adapting, whether that's expanding into new divisions, embracing sustainable refurbishment, investing in technology or finding better ways to support our customers.

Being willing to change has probably been one of the biggest reasons Greenwell is still growing almost 30 years after we first opened our doors.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

Building Greenwell alongside my family.

I was just 21 when we started the business, and watching it grow from four people into a respected company serving customers across Scotland and beyond has been incredibly rewarding.

I'm also immensely proud of the difference we've made through sustainability. By refurbishing and reusing office furniture we've prevented more than 600,000 items from going to landfill. Knowing we've

helped businesses save money while reducing environmental impact is something I'll always be proud of.

What's the best thing about doing business in the North-east of Scotland?

The people.

Business here is still built on trust, reputation and relationships. People value honesty and hard work, and those qualities have helped Greenwell build partnerships that have lasted for decades. In a world that's becoming increasingly digital, I still believe nothing replaces sitting down over a cup of coffee and getting to know your customers.

What was your first job?

Serving Horlicks in Hawkhill House care home. I loved chatting to the residents and listening to their stories.

Who or what inspires you most?

My father, and people who quietly work hard without looking for recognition.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

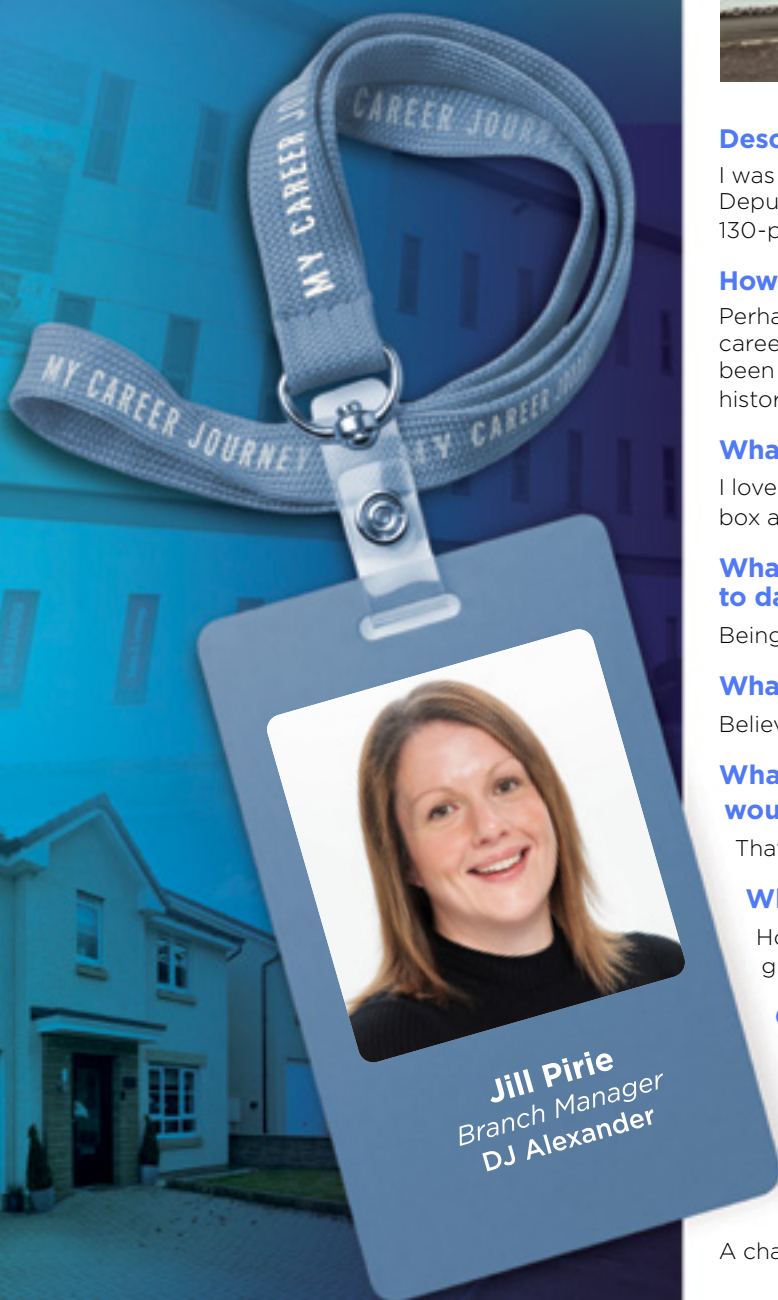
Talking about sustainability without considering the power of reuse.

QUICK-FIRE ROUND

My Career Journey

Jill Pirie

Branch Manager,
DJ Alexander



Describe your early career path.

I was a Nursery Nurse for over 10 years. Latterly I was the Deputy Manger assisting in the day-to-day running of a 130-place pre-school nursery.

How did you arrive in your current industry?

Perhaps during a mid-life crisis, but I decided that I needed a career change and a job as a Trainee Property Assistant had been advertised in one of the local estate agents. The rest is history.

What's the best thing about your job?

I love that the job is fast-paced and makes you think out of the box at all times. No two days are ever the same.

What has been your proudest achievement to date?

Being promoted to Branch Manger within the team.

What advice would you give your 18-year-old self?

Believe in yourself and trust the process!

What's something surprising that most people wouldn't know about your job?

That the job is not like Selling Sunset!

What does the future look like for you?

Hopefully to remain within the team and assist with the growth of the company across the North-east.

Quick fire questions

How do you unwind in your time off?

Taking my four Chihuahuas out for walks whilst listening to a good audiobook.

What did you want to be when you were little?

A chef.

What was your first job?

A chambermaid at a local hotel.

In partnership with

DYW

NORTH EAST
Developing the
Young Workforce



NoWrongPath

Next phase of major £2.5m retail improvements revealed at Aberdeen International Airport

Aberdeen International Airport has unveiled the next phase of its £2.5million ABZ Reimagined programme, with significant enhancements to its retail and food and beverage offering set to be delivered ahead of summer 2027.

The improvements represent the latest milestone in the airport's wider transformation plans and will create a more spacious, modern and passenger-focused terminal experience.

Passengers will benefit from expanded retail facilities, increased restaurant seating and an enhanced coffee offering, providing greater choice and improved comfort before travel.

As part of the programme, the airport's WHSmith and InMotion post-security stores will be combined into one extended unit, creating additional retail space and an improved shopping environment. Restaurant facilities will also be expanded, offering more seating capacity and greater flexibility for passengers looking to dine and relax before their flight.

The enhancements form part of a wider investment programme designed to transform the customer experience at Aberdeen International Airport and



support the evolving needs of passengers travelling through the terminal.

The next phase follows the appointment of strategic design consultancy Portland Design earlier this year to help shape the future of the airport's retail proposition. Working in partnership with the airport, Portland developed a comprehensive set of Retail Design Guidelines which are now helping to inform the transformation of commercial spaces across the terminal.

TO LET

PRIME NEW-BUILD COMMERCIAL SPACE
WITH EXCEPTIONAL ROADSIDE PRESENCE

A DEVELOPMENT BY



KNIGHT PROPERTY GROUP

UNIT 9

KINGSHILL COMMERCIAL PARK
WESTHILL

AVAILABLE
Q4 2026



WORKSHOP – 1,004.4 SQ.M (10,811 SQ.FT.) OFFICE – 485.6 SQ.M (5,011 SQ.FT.) YARD – 1,110 SQ.M (1,327 SQ YDS)

CONTACT AGENTS:



CLAIRE HERRIOT
T: 07967 762286
E: Claire.Herriot@savills.co.uk

BEN CLARK
T: 07890 909447
E: Ben.Clark@savills.co.uk



PAUL RICHARDSON
T: 07789 986141
E: Paul.Richardson@ryden.co.uk

ERIN CHESSOR
T: 07570 382544
E: Erin.Cessor@ryden.co.uk

The sea never stands still - neither do we



MacGregor UK

craig.watson@macgregor.com / abn.service@macgregor.com

MACGREGOR

Designed to perform with the sea



Service
port



Port Access
Solutions



Research
Solutions



Access
tions



Side Loading
Systems



Self-unloading
Solutions



Fishery
Solutions



Access
tions



Naval Access
Solutions



Steering Gears &
Compressors

MANAGING PROPERTY? WE MAKE IT EASIER.

Supporting agents, investors,
self managed landlords and
solicitors across the North East.

Home Staging

Property
Compliance

Inventories,
Inspections &
Tenancy Checks

Cleaning

Maintenance
& Renovations

From compliance and tenancy checks to cleaning,
maintenance and home staging, EPIC takes the hassle
out of managing property.

Let's chat and see if we can help with your next project.



01224 645500



epicpropertyservicesaberdeen.co.uk



info@epicpropertyservicesaberdeen.co.uk

WORDS OF ADVICE

Neil Johnston

Partner, Burnett & Reid LLP



Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Burnett & Reid has been guiding the North-east since 1754 and following our merger we are one of Aberdeen's largest all-service firms. Whether you need advice on property, wills, executries, family law, litigation or business matters, our specialists are all under one roof, providing seamless support throughout life's key moments. For example, if you're moving home, your estate agent and solicitor can work side by side from the same building.

Tell us about your management style and how it has worked for you.

My management style is built around support, accessibility, and shared responsibility. Property transactions can be demanding, so I ensure my team always has someone to turn to for advice or a second

opinion. Nearly 30 years on, I still enjoy the work, and I strive to create a positive, supportive environment.

What is the biggest barrier you overcame in the workplace and how did you tackle it?

Overcoming experience becoming habit has been my biggest challenge. Property markets and client expectations continually evolve, so advice that worked for years can become outdated. I tackle this by staying curious, treating every transaction on its own facts, and ensuring my experience informs decisions without limiting fresh thinking.

What's the best bit of business or life advice you've ever received?

Treat people as people, not as clients. It is the best advice I was given and the easiest to forget when you are busy. Behind every file is someone dealing with one of the bigger moments in their life. Being trusted to guide them through it is a privilege.

What's your top tip for someone joining your organisation today?

Ask about the client, not just the file. Behind every transaction is someone moving house, winding up an estate or starting a business. Understanding what matters to them leads to better advice. And never stop learning, markets and client expectations can change faster than you think.

Every kind of property, under one roof.

Residential, commercial and rural property, all handled in one firm. Whatever the transaction, work with people who know both the local market and the legal detail behind it.

- Guidance through every step of buying and selling your home
- Trusted advice on rural land, agricultural property, and access rights
- Support throughout commercial property acquisitions, disposals, and leasing

Burnett & Reid



Aberdeen & Deeside solicitors and estate agents, guiding generations since 1754.

Grand Designs fan helping people build their dream homes in Aberdeen

Retired teacher Julie Nairn is helping people design and build their dream homes in Aberdeen in an exciting new business model inspired by Grand Designs

By Danny McKay



Julie Nairn and Kevin McCloud from Grand Designs

When Julie and her family decided to relocate and move away from their family farm near Culter, they weren't sure what to do with the land.

Too small to sell to big developers and too big for the small developers, it was while she was sitting watching Kevin McCloud on Grand Designs on TV that the idea hit her – and Strawberry Grange was born.

Taking its name from the strawberry fruit farm that used to occupy the site, Strawberry Grange offers buyers the chance to purchase one of 19 plots of land and work with architects and property experts to design and then build their dream home.

The first of its kind in Aberdeen, the model is popular in the Netherlands and has been a growing trend in England.

Julie explained: “Strawberry Grange is a custom build development so it's a little bit different from what else is out there.

“Custom build means that, within the parameters of what's allowed, we sell the plots, the architect designs a house for them and the contractor will build it. So a lot of it's been massively de-risked.

“When you're doing DIY it's a bit of a minefield.

“With a custom build, you can design your house for your lifestyle. If you want a particular style of home office or you want a little gym or a family member needs special access or equipment you can design what you need.”

Julie and the team have done almost all the leg work to remove red tape around planning and other potential pitfalls that come with self-builds. Buyers will be able to select from a



sizable palate of features, materials and colours which the council has indicated will be approved.

Having a head-start in terms of planning permissions and knowledge of what will and won't be allowed straight off the bat provides a significant advantage over starting from scratch on your own.

Julie, a grandmother of two, said: "You can save an awful lot of time, effort and emotional investment."

Explaining where the idea came from, Julie said: "Graven Hill down in England was featured on *Grand Designs*. It was a street where they had all these different types of houses - a mock Tudor was next to an ultra-modern, and things you wouldn't normally see but it was an experiment to do with a more structured self-build model.

"Since then, policy all over the UK

has been moving towards this being more of a norm than it has been.

"It was really from these TV programmes that I started to think 'if it can be done there, maybe it can be done here as well'. That was the inspiration.

"There's nobody living in caravans with two children under five and twins on the way so they have to be in by Christmas and you run out of money half way through. That's TV, that's not really reality. The mortgage guys and the lending people and so on don't let you do that!

"We've got a team of people around us who will be able to advise in all sorts of situations and with the planning."

Coming from a teaching background, Julie was largely new to the property industry, but has a keen interest in the field.

She said: "I've always been interested in property and I love all the TV programmes and I did property styling for a while, like interior design, but I've not been in a career with property."

Julie said the project has been a "rollercoaster" but she's excited to see people's designs and watch them become reality. She will remain involved organising the infrastructure and roads, as well as landscaping for the development.

Strawberry Grange was due to officially launch at the beginning of October, but was already receiving lots of interest before that, both from potential buyers and in the form of industry awards.

In June, Julie and *Strawberry Grange* were named winners of the *Real Estate Category* at the Female Founder Awards.

My Career Journey

Jay Smith

Recruitment Manager
ETPM Limited



Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Several people have influenced me throughout my career. I've always believed you can learn from the bad as well as the good ones. If I had to choose one person, it would be a colleague called Jeff Mountain. I've worked with Jeff for nearly a quarter of a century across two different companies. He took a chance on me early in my career and probably had more belief in my abilities than I had in myself at the time. We haven't always seen eye to eye on everything, but he's always backed my decisions and supported me, even during some very challenging periods in the industry. Having someone place that level of trust in you can make a huge difference.

What's the most effective piece of training or personal development you have undertaken?

Right at the start of lockdown, I worked with business coach Zia Savel, and it proved invaluable. It changed the way I looked at leadership and management. Previously, I felt I needed to be involved in every detail of the business because that's what I thought a manager should do. In reality, I was probably smothering the team. Learning to step back and come away from the tools was hard, but it was absolutely the right thing to do for the long-term success of the business.

What's the biggest lesson you've learned in business?

You can't do everything yourself. It took me a long time to learn that. Trusting the people around you is essential. I've also learned the importance of surrounding yourself with people who are prepared to challenge you and question your decisions. It can be uncomfortable at times, but listening is key.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

With ETPM approaching its 20th year in business, that has to be my proudest achievement. Being at the forefront of helping to build and drive a recruitment business for two decades is something I'm immensely proud of. Equally important is the fact that I've been on this ETPM journey with people who have been in it for the long haul. We must be doing something right at the company if we're able to retain great people and keep them engaged for that length of time.

What's the best thing about doing business in the North-east of Scotland?

The network / community around you is incredibly important, not just for your own personal development / wellbeing but also for the growth of your business. There's a strong sense of community and support. And, of course, within half an hour of leaving the city you're surrounded by some of the most stunning countryside anywhere in the world.

Quick fire questions

What was your first job?

My father ran a landscaping business, and I started working weekends and school holidays when I was 14.

Who or what inspires you most?

Without sounding too corny, I'd say my wife, Libs.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

"Zero-error culture" – the belief that mistakes should never happen. Mistakes are part of learning, developing and improving.

How do you relax?

A long walk with my three Boxer dogs – Milo, Eska and Woody – followed by an evening at home listening to vinyl records.

In partnership with

DYW

NORTH EAST
Developing the
Young Workforce



NoWrongPath

LAURIE & COMPANY

Solicitors · Notaries Public · Estate Agents

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

We are here for You, your Family and your Business.



Founded in 1955, Laurie & Company are a long-established law firm offering a full range of legal services, such as property, family law, dispute resolution, and private client services. Together with a dedicated estate agency department who are here to assist with all of your property matters.

Our partners and staff are dedicated to forming constructive professional relationships with clients.

Property Services

Our experienced property department specialises in conveyancing and property law, predominately acting for clients in the sale, purchase and remortgage of residential property.

Legal Services

- Contractual Disputes
- Corporate and Business disputes
- Insolvency
- Debt Recovery
- Divorce & Separation
- Employment Law
- Dispute Resolution
- Insolvency
- Property Disputes
- Private Client Services

Main Office, Aberdeen

01224 645085
info@laurieandco.co.uk
17 Victoria Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1PU

Aboyne Office

01339 886732
info@laurieandco.co.uk
The Hall, Charleston Road
Aboyne
Aberdeenshire AB34 5EJ

Ballater Office

01339 755535
ballater@laurieandco.co.uk
4 Bridge Street
Ballater
Aberdeenshire AB35 5QP

Laurie & Co is a trading name of Laurie & Co Solicitors LLP. Registered office: 17 Victoria Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1PU. Registered in Scotland No. SO301217. VAT Registration No. 26645444



laurieandco.co.uk



Dron & Dickson

GROUP

Wholesale / Engineering / Cable Solutions

One Partner. Three Specialist Solutions.

From trusted products and rapid stock availability, to expert engineering support and specialist cable solutions. We deliver end-to-end electrical solutions for the most complex environments.



WHOLESALE

Leading products.
Trusted manufacturers.
Rapid delivery.



ENGINEERING SERVICES

Expert support.
Turnkey solutions.
Lifecycle value.



CABLE SOLUTIONS

Specialist cables.
Harsh environments.
Global supply.

Supporting industries across



OIL & GAS



RENEWABLES



MARINE

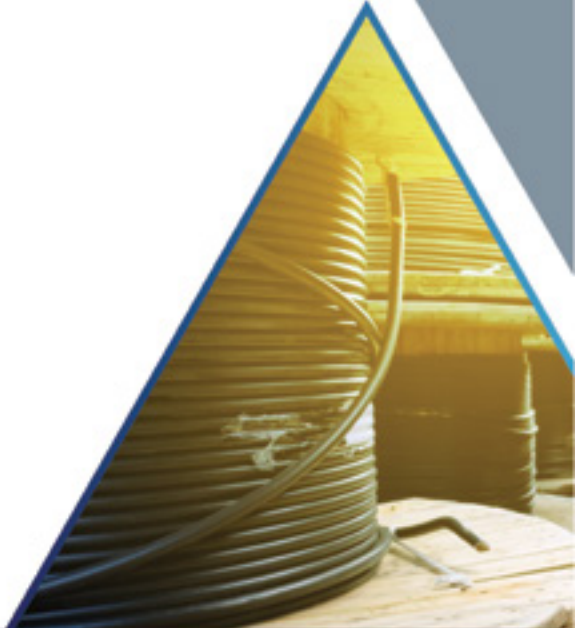


PORTS & HARBOURS



UTILITIES

Everyone Home Safe



OES Group returns to private ownership following management buyout



*Richard Upshall,
Chairman*

OES Group, a leading provider of Testing, Inspection, Certification and Compliance (TICC), engineering, asset integrity and specialist industrial services, has announced its return to private ownership following the successful completion of a management buyout.

The transaction marks a significant milestone in the group's evolution, restoring independent ownership and returning the business to the leadership of its Founder, Richard Upshall, 30 years after establishing the company in 1996.

The move signals the beginning of a new chapter for OES Group, reinforcing its commitment to delivering integrated Testing, Inspection, Certification and Compliance services while accelerating growth across its specialist operating companies.

Today, OES Group comprises six specialist businesses: OES Asset Integrity, Life Cycle Asset Management (LCAM), Derrick Services Limited (DSL), JVS Manufacturing, Arcus Software and OES Training Academy. Together, these

businesses provide customers with end-to-end support across the complete asset lifecycle, helping critical industries operate safely, efficiently and compliantly.

Richard Upshall, original Founder and Chairman of OES Group, commented: "Bringing OES Group back into private ownership is an incredibly proud moment for everyone involved. This business was founded on a simple principle: helping customers operate critical assets safely, efficiently and with confidence.

"The management buyout allows us to return to our entrepreneurial roots, make decisions faster, invest in our people and capabilities, and focus entirely on creating long-term value for our customers, employees and partners. In every sense, 'find it and fix it' is the lifeblood of our business, from the way we serve our customers to the way we create long-term careers for our people."

Abdou Djendou, OES Group CEO, added: "With 30 years' experience in the industry, never have I been as excited by the way ahead for our group subsequent to our management buyout.

"We have built a strong global platform of specialist businesses, exceptional technical expertise and trusted customer relationships. As an independent TICC organisation, we are now ideally positioned to accelerate our growth strategy, expand our capabilities and strengthen our position as a leading integrated TICC provider serving the global energy and industrial sectors."

The transition to private ownership reflects OES Group's long-term vision of creating a fully integrated TICC platform that combines technical assurance, operational reliability, digital visibility and workforce capability under one unified organisation.

With three decades of experience supporting the energy, oil and gas, marine, renewables, infrastructure and industrial sectors, OES Group remains focused on helping customers improve safety, compliance, asset performance and operational resilience in increasingly complex operating environments.

£2m transformation of landmark Aberdeen office completed

A landmark Aberdeen office building was launched to the market in September following a £2million refurbishment.

Esson Properties completed the overhaul of 9 Queen's Road, a 20,279 sq ft Category B-listed building dating back to 1878.

The granite villa has been restored while adding modern facilities including a co-working lounge, coffee bar, locker rooms and showers. Investment in an all-electric energy system, EV parking and LED lighting has also made the building net zero operational ready.

Local firm MTM Construction delivered the refurbishment, with Landed Real Estate and Ryden appointed as marketing agents.

Hunter Esson, Director of Esson Properties, said: "The aim at 9 Queen's Road is to showcase a sustainable, net zero working environment to satisfy today's most dynamic businesses. We are delighted that this project has been so



well received by those that have already enjoyed a sneak peek!"

Derren McRae, of Landed Real Estate, said: "9 Queen's Road has certainly brought the 'wow factor' to the Aberdeen commercial property market, and the amazing quality of the refurbishment really has to be seen to be believed."

City eateries hail Aberdeen Restaurant Weeks as 'best yet'

An estimated 35,000 customers spent more than £1million during Aberdeen Restaurant Weeks, delivering a major boost to the city economy as restaurants, bars and cafes hailed the latest Foodie Fortnight as one of the best yet.

A total of 83 venues joined in the celebration of the Granite City's outstanding food and drink sector, offering specially priced dinner and lunch menus as well as curated a la carte and tasting menus.

Shona Byrne, Aberdeen Inspired's project manager who oversees Aberdeen Restaurant Weeks, said figures collated by the city centre Business Improvement District showed an estimated 35,000 diners had tucked into the Foodie Fortnight, contributing more than £1million to the city economy over the two-week period.

She said the figures underlined the scale of the impact Aberdeen Restaurant Weeks can have, not only for participating hospitality businesses but for the wider city centre economy.

And Shona said the feedback from participating businesses had been positively glowing.

"I think this is the best reaction we have had yet, with so many venues telling us of being flat out busy or even fully booked as people seek out the specially-curated



and unique menus on offer for Aberdeen Restaurant Weeks," said Shona.

"They have been delighted at the way the public have been supporting the festival and the businesses taking part, with that enthusiasm translating into increased footfall and trade.

"During the two weeks of Aberdeen Restaurant Weeks, the city has certainly felt busier and bustling – which is one of the driving forces for Aberdeen Inspired staging the Foodie Fortnight."

Public reaction has also been overwhelmingly positive, with many people going online to post about some of the outstanding meals they have enjoyed and sharing top tips and suggestions about where to eat.



NEW BUILDS

COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

EXTENSIONS

CONVERSIONS

info@rbkarchitecture.com

07785 374794

www.RBKArchitecture.com



Mercure Aberdeen Caledonian Hotel sold



The hotel and leisure division of UK property firm Graham + Sibbald has announced the Mercure Aberdeen Caledonian Hotel has been sold.

The striking 83-bedroom Mercure Aberdeen Caledonian Hotel overlooks the Union Terrace Gardens in the heart of Aberdeen, and has now been purchased by local hospitality entrepreneurs Keith Martin and Robert Keane for an undisclosed sum.

An elegant Victorian property originally designed to reflect the local vernacular, it is one of the most historic hotels in Aberdeen and features a Renaissance style of architecture in white Kemnay granite with stained glass windows that convey Aberdeen's rich and varied heritage, including the harbour, beach and many castles.

The availability of the Mercure Aberdeen Caledonian Hotel presented a wonderful opportunity to the market, the chance to purchase a historic, well-known hotel in a city centre location with scope to evolve the business.

Katie Tait, Associate in Graham + Sibbald's Edinburgh office, commented: "I was delighted to have worked on the sale of the Mercure Aberdeen Caledonian Hotel, alongside my colleague James Williamson in our London office, acting on behalf of our client. It was a pleasure to bring our combined expertise and market knowledge to the transaction and achieve a successful outcome for our client."

"The transaction generated significant interest from the market, reflecting the quality and prominence of the asset. We are extremely pleased with the outcome achieved and grateful to have supported our client through a successful sale process. We wish the new owners every success with the hotel going forward."

Guy Rowles of Millemont commented: "We are pleased to have completed the sale of this landmark Aberdeen hotel and would like to wish the purchaser every success with their ownership. The property has been an important part of the local hospitality market, and we are confident it has a bright future ahead under new stewardship."



Transforming the grid to secure our energy future

Scotland is at a pivotal moment, and the decisions taken now will shape our economy, communities and energy security for decades to come. As electricity demand grows and more renewable energy comes online, upgrading Scotland's transmission network is essential to carry power from where it's generated to where it's needed.

SSEN Transmission's £29bn investment to upgrade our electricity grid, enabling clean, homegrown power, provides a once in a generation opportunity to secure a future that delivers prosperity for people and places across the country.

This is about more than energy security and more affordable bills. It is about unlocking sustained economic growth, creating high-value jobs and driving real opportunities for people and businesses. Our investment will support around 10,000 jobs in the north of Scotland, 24,000 across Scotland and up to 50,000 across the UK. Crucially, it provides the long-term certainty businesses need to invest, grow and retain skilled workers across a range of sectors, from engineering and construction to forestry and professional services.

Communities will benefit directly. Alongside jobs and supply chain opportunities, SSEN Transmission will support the development of 1,000 new homes in the north of Scotland, with housing investment supporting hundreds of jobs and generating £100m in economic value, while helping to ease local housing pressures. Areas hosting new infrastructure will also benefit from community funding of over £100m, with decisions shaped by local people to reflect what matters most. Investment in biodiversity net gain and peatland restoration will further strengthen rural economies, supporting hundreds of green jobs throughout the north of Scotland.

Put simply, this is an investment in Scotland's future – one that strengthens energy security, supports local economies, creates high-value jobs and helps build resilient communities for generations to come.

The infrastructure investment that can power the North-east

Author: Claire Mack,
Director Corporate Affairs (Transmission),
SSEN Transmission



The North-east of Scotland has long been at the heart of the UK's energy industry. For decades, the region's businesses, workforce and communities have helped power the country, developing world-class expertise and driving economic growth.

Today, as the transition to clean power accelerates, the region has an opportunity to play a leading role in delivering the modern energy system needed to support Scotland and the UK's clean power needs and strengthen energy security.

A modern, resilient electricity network will be central to that aim. As transport, heating and industry increasingly electrify, electricity demand is expected to double by 2050. Scotland is well placed to meet that challenge, with some of Europe's richest renewable energy resources. But unlocking that potential depends on the infrastructure needed to connect new renewable generation and transport clean electricity from where it is produced to the homes, businesses and industries that rely on it.

For the North-east, SSEN Transmission's £29bn programme to upgrade the high-voltage electricity network across the north of Scotland presents a significant opportunity to attract investment, create skilled jobs and support long-term economic growth.

While the programme's primary purpose is to transport clean electricity efficiently and reliably, its impact will extend far beyond the energy sector.

Our recent report, Re-energising the North: Transforming Scotland, estimates that up to £8.56bn could be invested across Aberdeen



City and Aberdeenshire alone. This investment could support around 2,800 jobs, generate more than £1billion in economic value and create around £1.64billion of opportunities for local businesses and supply chains.

Importantly, these benefits are already starting to be realised.

Local businesses in the North-east are helping to deliver nationally significant infrastructure projects, including the Netherton Hub and Eastern Green Link 2 developments near Peterhead. Companies across a range of sectors are securing work that will help sustain employment, develop expertise and strengthen Scotland's energy supply chain for decades to come.

The region's long history as an energy powerhouse gives it a unique advantage. The skills, innovation and experience developed through generations of offshore oil and gas activity can play a critical role in delivering the infrastructure needed for a secure, low-carbon energy system.

Investment in people will be just as important. Recently, SSEN Transmission announced plans for an operations training centre at Thainstone Business Park near Inverurie. The new £150m facility will help equip current and future employees with the skills needed to build, operate and maintain the electricity network of the future, while supporting long-term, high-quality careers in the region.

Just as ports, transport links and digital connectivity underpin economic development, a modern electricity network is now critical to future competitiveness. Investment in transmission infrastructure should therefore be viewed not simply as an energy requirement, but as an investment in our economic future.

To realise this opportunity in full, Scotland also needs a planning and consenting system capable of delivering nationally important infrastructure at pace. Timely decisions provide certainty for investors and help ensure communities and businesses can benefit sooner from the jobs, supply chain opportunities and wider economic activity these projects create.

The North-east has long been synonymous with energy. As Scotland's energy system evolves, the region has an opportunity not just to participate in that transition, but to help lead it. By investing in the grid and enabling the timely delivery of critical infrastructure, we can create jobs, strengthen businesses and ensure the North-east remains at the centre of Scotland's energy story for generations to come.

OPINION
OPINION

Grouse Lettings celebrates new office with further acquisition



Ross Watt, Managing Director of Grouse Lettings

Aberdeen-based Grouse Lettings has marked its move into newly refurbished West End offices with the acquisition of Duo Lettings, taking the company's annual rent roll to just over £4million.

Grouse Lettings has relocated to recently refurbished office accommodation at 52 Carden Place, Aberdeen, as the business continues its growth with the acquisition of fellow Aberdeen-based lettings business Duo Lettings for an undisclosed sum.

The acquisition represents another significant milestone for Grouse Lettings, and means that the company now manages annual rental income of around £4million. The move further strengthens Grouse's position within the North-east's residential lettings market but also facilitates an extension to their market presence with the company managing properties nationally for the first time.

The purchase of the Duo Lettings portfolio comes after Grouse has already taken on the management assets of Babs Buglass Leasing and the lettings divisions of both Benefactors Property Management and PMC Property Management in the past three years.

The move to Carden Place provides Grouse Lettings with a modernised base from which to support its expanding

portfolio and team, while the acquisition of Duo Lettings brings additional properties, landlords and opportunity into the Grouse business.

Ross Watt, Managing Director of Grouse Lettings, said: "This is an exciting period for Grouse Lettings. Moving into our new office at 52 Carden Place gives us a fantastic base for the next stage of our growth, while the acquisition of Duo Lettings is another important step forward for the business.

"Reaching a rent roll of around £4million is a significant achievement and reflects the continued confidence of landlords in our team and the service we provide. We're delighted to welcome the Duo Lettings portfolio and look forward to building on the strong foundations that Jade, Stef and her team have established."

Jade Flannigan, speaking on behalf of Duo Lettings, said: "We are delighted to have concluded this deal with Ross and the team at Grouse Lettings. When we decided to leave the lettings market and move into other industries, Grouse were the standout choice in making sure our customers would be well looked after. Having worked so hard to build the business, we are pleased to see it go into good hands."

The acquisition forms part of Grouse Lettings' wider growth strategy, with the company continuing to look for opportunities to expand its portfolio and strengthen its presence across the North-east and beyond.



Expert property letting & management services across Aberdeen City & Shire.

Whether you're looking to let your property, renting, or just need advice, we're here to help.

Let's Talk Property

01224 607 007 / info@grouselettings.co.uk

Visit grouselettings.co.uk



Northwood Banchory celebrates second anniversary

Northwood Banchory is celebrating its second anniversary, marking another successful year of growth, strengthening its reputation as a trusted estate and lettings agent across Deeside.

Since opening its doors on Banchory High Street two years ago, Northwood has continued to expand its presence in the local property market, welcoming an increasing number of sales and lettings instructions while becoming even more embedded within the local community.

Building on the strong foundations laid during its first year, the team has enjoyed significant success in residential property sales, with more local homeowners placing their trust in Northwood to market and sell their properties.

This growing confidence has been driven by the team's local knowledge, personalised approach and the strength of its national marketing reach across major property portals, including Rightmove, Zoopla and OnTheMarket, which attract purchasers from across Scotland and further afield.

Owner and Director Laura Mearns said: "We're incredibly proud of what we've achieved over the past two years. The support we've received from the local community has been fantastic and it's been particularly rewarding to see more people choosing Northwood to sell and let their properties.

"We know that selling a property is one of the biggest decisions people make, so it means a great deal that local homeowners are putting their trust in us. Our focus has

always been on providing a personal, honest service backed by expert local knowledge and national marketing exposure, and we're delighted that this approach is resonating with so many people."

Alongside its growing property portfolio, Northwood Banchory has continued to strengthen its ties with the wider community through a range of local partnerships, sponsorships and charitable initiatives.

Aberdeen strip clubs could be phased out

Strip clubs could disappear from Aberdeen after councillors agreed a new licensing policy aimed at reducing the number of venues to zero.

The city's five existing clubs can continue operating and seek renewals, but new premises or replacement operators could be refused.

Licensing committee convener Gill Al-Samarai said: "The committee made the decision after careful consideration of all the factors involved with the prime consideration of public safety."

Private Eyes owner warned: "If they are looking to close sexual entertainment venues (SEVs) down, all they are doing is pushing the industry underground."

TECA unveils new premium brand and partners with Luxe Scot to launch exclusive lounge experience

The Event Complex Aberdeen (TECA), Aberdeen's flagship arena and international conference centre, has launched a new premium brand, redefining the live event experience with elevated hospitality, a fresh look, new menus and an exciting new partnership with luxury concierge and event specialists, Luxe Scot.

As part of the launch, TECA has partnered with Luxe Scot to create the Luxe Scot Lounge — a dedicated premium lounge partner experience offering guests an unrivalled level of comfort, service, and indulgence before, during and after events.

The premium customer experience has been transformed with new decor and striking new signage throughout the venue, creating a sophisticated, contemporary environment designed for those seeking a more exclusive way to enjoy live entertainment at the venue.

Guests in the Luxe Scot Lounge can now order from a brand-new menu of hot dishes, with vegan options available across the range.

A new range of premium cocktails has also been launched in the lounge, with guests able to enjoy expertly-crafted drinks including Mojitos, Aperol Spritz, Whisky Sour, and Bramble — the perfect accompaniment to the elevated dining and hospitality on offer.

Rob Wicks, Managing Director at TECA, said: "The launch of our new premium brand marks a significant step forward for the venue. We are committed to delivering outstanding experiences for guests, and the partnership with Luxe Scot allows us to offer something truly special.

"There is no doubt that the Luxe Scot Lounge, with its new menu, premium cocktails, and new ambiance, sets a new standard for hospitality at live events in the North-east of Scotland."

The Luxe Scot Lounge also serves as an elevated space to support a range of corporate events at the venue, providing the perfect location for networking, drinks receptions.

Luxe Scot will also be offering a range of concierge services to elevate the premium experience at TECA. This includes seamless chauffeur transfers to the venue in one of the luxury travel company's fleet of vehicles.

Alan Findlater of Luxe Scot said: "We are thrilled to partner with TECA to bring the Luxe Scot Lounge to life. Our shared commitment to quality, service, and creating memorable experiences makes this a natural fit. We can't wait to welcome guests and show them what premium hospitality looks like at TECA."



BoConcept®

SCOTLAND

DANISH DESIGN FOR MODERN BUSINESS

Great spaces build stronger businesses

Thoughtful design isn't just about how a workplace looks – it's about how it works. The right environment can boost productivity, support wellbeing, attract talent and leave a lasting impression on clients and visitors.

Your workplace is part of your business. Make it count.



PEOPLE

Design spaces that help your team collaborate, focus and feel valued.



PRODUCTIVITY

Create environments that inspire, energise and support performance.



BRAND

Make a strong first impression and showcase your company's values.



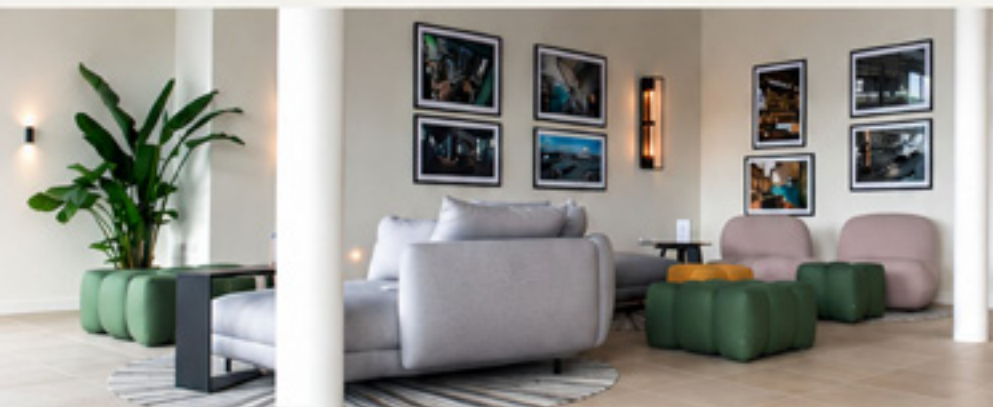
WELLBEING

Thoughtful design supports mental and physical wellbeing.



TALENT

Attract and retain the best people with spaces they want to be part of.



Beautiful spaces. Better business.

Our expert interior design service helps businesses across the North of Scotland create workplaces that work harder – for you and your people.



BoConcept Scotland



Alana Colville
Design Manager North



07563 028610



alcv@boconcept.co.uk



DISCOVER
OUR INTERIOR
DESIGN SERVICE

Great spaces build stronger businesses: why your workplace deserves more thought

Author: Alana Colville, Design Manager North, BoConcept Scotland



When we think about the impact of interior design, we tend to think about our homes. We understand instinctively that the right furniture, lighting, colour, and layout can make a room feel more comfortable, welcoming, and enjoyable.

Yet, when it comes to our workplaces, design is often treated as a secondary consideration: something to address after priority business decisions have been made.

I would argue that this is a priority business decision.

Our working environments have a powerful influence on how people experience a company. They can affect how employees collaborate, concentrate, and communicate; how clients perceive an organisation; and how successfully a business creates a sense of identity and culture.

For businesses across Aberdeen and the wider Grampian region, this matters.

Consider the different functions that the spaces within a business have to perform. A reception area creates a first impression. A boardroom needs to project confidence while facilitating effective decision-making. A breakout space can encourage informal conversations and collaboration. A quiet area can provide somewhere for focused work or simply allow employees to step away from the intensity of a busy working day.

Spaces like these need to work hard, and good, thought-out, planned design can help them do exactly that.

The workplace has also changed significantly. Hybrid working has altered what employees expect from an office. If people have the



flexibility to work from home, businesses increasingly need to give them compelling reasons to come into the workplace.

This doesn't necessarily mean bigger offices or more expensive furniture. It means creating environments that offer something employees value: opportunities to collaborate, connect, exchange ideas, and feel part of a team.

There is also a wider commercial consideration. Your workplace communicates something about your business, whether you intend it to or not.

Clients, candidates, partners, and employees all form impressions from the environments they encounter. A thoughtfully designed space can reinforce a company's brand, values, and ambitions. It can demonstrate that an organisation cares about its people and takes pride in how it presents itself.

This is where I believe businesses have an opportunity to learn from residential interiors. At home, we rarely design a room simply by asking, 'How many people can we fit in here?' We think about how we want to live, how we want to feel, and what we need the space to enable us to do.

The same thinking can transform a workplace.

Rather than starting with furniture, start with people. Who will use the space? What do they need to accomplish? Where and how do they naturally collaborate? Where do they need privacy? How should a visitor feel when they walk through the door?

These questions can lead to much more effective – and often more creative – solutions.

At BoConcept Scotland, this is central to our approach. Our interior design service works collaboratively with businesses to understand their requirements and create spaces that balance aesthetics with functionality.

For me, great workplace design isn't about creating an office that simply looks impressive. It is about creating an environment that supports the ambitions of the business and the people within it.

Because ultimately, your workplace is part of your business and it deserves to be designed with the same thought and purpose as every other aspect of that business.



BUILD THE CAPABILITY YOUR BUSINESS NEEDS FOR 2027

Your biggest challenge could be your next opportunity.

People. Leadership. Communication. Collaboration. Customers. Change.

Whatever challenge your organisation is facing, having the right skills and capability in place can make the difference between simply managing change and **using it as an opportunity to improve.**

OVER 50 SOFT-SKILLS COURSES. ONE FLEXIBLE TRAINING SOLUTION.

Our extensive training programme covers the skills people need to work more effectively, collaborate successfully and perform with confidence in today's changing business environment.

From leadership and management to communication, personal effectiveness, teamwork, customer relationships and commercial skills, we can help you develop capability at every level of your organisation.

PLAN YOUR 2027 TRAINING NOW

BOOK AT 2026 PRICES BEFORE 24 DECEMBER.

TALK TO US ABOUT YOUR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

WWW.AGCC.CO.UK/TRAINING

TRAINING@AGCC.CO.UK

OPEN COURSES OR TAILORED FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Choose from our programme of open courses or talk to us about creating a solution around your organisation's specific needs.

AGILE. FLEXIBLE. AFFORDABLE.

And when an off-the-shelf course isn't quite right, we can **tailor the content, delivery and focus to your people and your business.**

DON'T JUST TRAIN. BUILD CAPABILITY

Our delegate feedback speaks for itself:

4.9 / 5

AVERAGE DELEGATE FEEDBACK SCORE

Whether you're looking to develop your leaders, improve communication, break down silos, strengthen customer relationships or prepare your people for a changing workplace, we're here to help.

What is your biggest challenge at work?

At a recent conference, we asked delegates a simple question: “What is your biggest challenge at work?”

We received a wide range of responses, however some clear themes emerged.

From leadership and communication to technology and market uncertainty, many organisations are facing the same underlying question: How do we get our people, processes, technology and strategy working together more effectively?

Five key challenges stood out from the responses.

1. PEOPLE

Delegates identified that finding and retaining the right people, developing managers and leaders, keeping employees engaged and creating a positive culture are ongoing challenges.

2. ALIGNMENT

It was raised that siloed teams, inconsistent standards and competing priorities can make collaboration difficult. The result? People are working hard, but not always in the same direction.

3. EFFICIENCY

One response perfectly summed this challenge up by saying there are “not enough hours in

the day”. Administration, outdated systems, bureaucracy and inefficient processes can consume valuable employee time.

4. GROWTH

Delegates highlighted customer engagement, brand visibility, lead generation, finding new opportunities and adapting to changing sectors and markets has presented a new challenge of continuing to grow in an ever-changing market.

5. UNCERTAINTY

Economic pressures, geopolitical change, the transition within oil and gas, changing markets and the rapid development of AI are all affecting business confidence and decision-making.

What’s the bigger picture?

The feedback suggests that rather than being standalone issues, these challenges are all interconnected.

A communication problem can become a performance problem, in the same way a lack of leadership capability can affect retention, and uncertainty can make all these challenges harder to manage.

The common thread intertwining each of these challenges is capability.

Organisations need people who can communicate effectively, lead through change, collaborate across boundaries, solve problems, manage relationships and make better use of technology. Recent UK skills research similarly highlights communication, critical thinking, adaptability and resilience alongside AI capability as important skills for the evolving workplace.

Turning challenges into capabilities

Our conference feedback reinforced the fact that training should be about more than simply ticking a box, it should help people perform better in real world scenarios.

That means developing the skills that help people perform at their best, in turn making your organisation perform at its best.

Organisations that invest in these key skills and capabilities are not just investing in their people, they are investing in their ability to adapt, perform and grow.

My Career Journey

Martin Kerrigan
Services Director
ITWORX UK



Describe your early career path

I left school to work in fish yards in Peterhead, dotting around a few yards, but most of the time labouring at Alexander Buchans. I then went into retail for a while with Lidl, Safeway, Lidl again and then Maplin. I was a Duty Manager at Lidl and then an Assistant Manager at Maplin.

How did you arrive in your current industry?

My first IT role was with a company called TOREX which, at the time, maintained EPOS systems for the majority of retailers on the high street. I got the job partly because of my work with Lidl, who were one of their customers, and also because I had been studying and working on my IT certifications, like A+ and Network+, in my spare time.

What's the best thing about your job?

The constantly changing technology that we work with. There is always something new to learn, and the landscape is totally different from how it was 10 years ago and will change again in the next 10 years. I don't do a lot of engineering work nowadays, but I am working to mould our current set of engineers and help them to develop their skills.

What has been your proudest achievement to date?

My proudest achievement was going back and finishing my degree in my mid-30s. I had done quite a lot of IT certifications in my spare time during my early career, so I thought, why can't I go and self-study and get my degree too?

What advice would you give your 18-year-old self?

See things through to the end. I had a habit of starting things and not finishing them. I finished my degree with the Open University because I never stuck in at college.

What's something surprising that most people wouldn't know about your job?

I am very bad at using a PC, especially Office applications. I was always more interested in all the stuff in the background, like servers and cloud systems that make things work.

I am not one of these computer whizzes who can remember loads of commands and shortcuts, but I am good at figuring things out by taking a logical approach to problem-solving and knowing enough to get me started. Taking notes and using Google is also a big help.

What does the future look like for you?

Who knows? The beauty of the IT industry is the unpredictability of what will come next, especially with the explosion of AI. Hopefully, we can keep ITWORX UK at the forefront and continue growing.

Quick fire questions

How do you unwind in your time off?

Chilling by watching movies and box sets, out running, cycling or Karate with my youngest daughter.

What did you want to be when you were little?

I always wanted to work with computers or some sort of engineering discipline.

What was your first job?

Paper round - I delivered the Evening Express in Peterhead when I was 13.

In partnership with

DYW

NORTH EAST
Developing the
Young Workforce



NoWrongPath

Robertson Granite celebrates 150 years at the heart of Scotland's granite industry

Robertson Granite, one of the north-east's last remaining granite manufacturers, is celebrating 150 years in business after being founded in Aberdeen in 1876.

Today, the family-run company is one of the largest producers of granite products in Great Britain and one of the UK's leading retailers of granite memorials.

The milestone marks a significant achievement for a business that has grown from its roots in Aberdeen's historic granite industry to operate 14 Robertson Memorials outlets across Scotland and six in England. The company also operates a stove and fireplace showroom in Montrose.

The anniversary comes at a time when only a handful of granite manufacturers remain in a region that was once home to around 90 granite firms. Over the past century and a half, Robertson Granite has adapted to advances in technology and manufacturing while maintaining its commitment

to traditional craftsmanship and investing in the next generation of skilled workers.

Stewart Gibson, managing director of Robertson Granite, said:

"Reaching 150 years in business is a remarkable achievement and reflects the dedication, skill and commitment of generations of employees who have helped shape the company. While technology has transformed many aspects of manufacturing, craftsmanship remains at the heart of what we do. We continue to employ and train skilled craftsmen who mason, polish, carve and letter memorials using a combination of modern machinery and time-honoured techniques. Our commitment to quality workmanship and premium materials has been the foundation of our success for a century and a half".

Many of the company's craftsmen have achieved some of the highest honours within the industry, helping establish Robertson Granite's

reputation for creating unique and individually styled memorials. Alongside memorials, the company supplies corporate signage, pet memorials, benches, community and war memorials, and house plaques.

The team at Robertson Granite brings decades of experience to its work, and during August, two members of staff celebrated 40 years service with the company, another testament to the loyalty, expertise and craftsmanship that continue to define the business.

As it celebrates its 150th year, Robertson Granite remains proud of its roots in the north-east of Scotland and its role in preserving the region's renowned granite heritage while continuing to serve customers across the UK.

The Westhill office and showroom is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm, and Saturday from 9.30am to 12.30pm. For enquiries, call 01224 652000, email info@robertsonmemorials.co.uk, or visit www.robertsonmemorials.co.uk.

Thank you to all our customers and staff for being such an important part of our journey



**Robertson
Granite**
1876 - 2026

Silvertrees Drive, Westhill,
Aberdeen AB32 6BH
Tel: 01224 652000

www.robertsongranite.co.uk
sales@robertsongranite.co.uk





Gillian Sidey

Aberdeen Energy & Innovation Parks has strengthened its team with the appointment of Gillian Sidey as In-House Lawyer. Gillian brings a wealth of experience and expertise in real estate law.



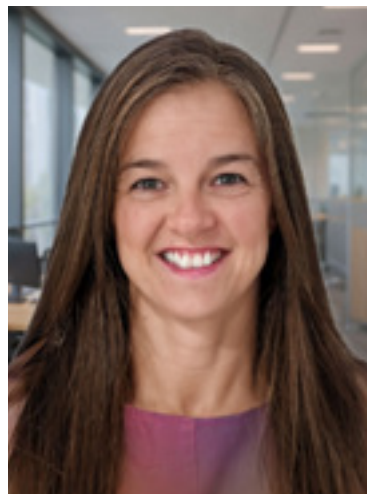
Ryan Webster

Accord People has appointed Ryan Webster as its Recruitment & Client Account Lead, bringing more than 15 years' experience across recruitment and human resources within the oil and gas industry.



Paal Eikeseth

Aker Solutions' Board of Directors has appointed Paal Eikeseth as the company's new President and CEO. Paal is an experienced business leader with a strong track record in operational growth, performance improvement and transformation.



Angie McKenna

Aberdeen Performing Arts has appointed Angie McKenna as its new Director of People, Culture and Organisational Development, completing a strengthened executive leadership team designed to support the charitable organisation's future growth.



Kane Winton

Aurora Energy Services has appointed Kane Winton as Managing Director of the Integrated Services division, as part of a restructuring to meet growing demand across energy and infrastructure sectors.



Carey Aiken

Brimmond has appointed Carey Aiken as Marketing, Communication and Events Manager, bringing 16 years of sales and marketing experience in the global energy sector to the role.





Kyle Paterson

Kyle Paterson has joined C-SAM as Customer Onboarding Specialist, strengthening its global Professional Services team as the business continues the rollout of its new SaaS-based platform.



Heather Kerr

Charlie House has welcomed Heather Kerr as Fundraising Executive, bringing with her experience in customer engagement, events and fashion, alongside an existing connection to one of Charlie House's most popular events.



Rob van der Spek

DNV has appointed Rob van der Spek as Artificial Intelligence and Innovation Manager for its Industrial Services business unit, a newly created role focused on accelerating the practical use of AI, digital tools and innovation.



Lewis Downing

ESWL Ltd has appointed Lewis Downing as its new Internal Sales Representative, strengthening the company's sales team as it continues to grow across the energy and industrial sectors.



Chetan Doonga

Two of Aberdeen's most prestigious hospitality venues, award-winning wine bar Grape & Grain and sister restaurant Mediterranean, have appointed Chetan Doonga as General Manager.



Cooper MacKinnon

Greenwell has strengthened its growing team with the appointment of 18-year-old Cooper MacKinnon, who will work across the company's office furniture and cabin divisions, bringing plenty of energy and enthusiasm.



Mitali Arora

Mitali Arora has joined Integrity QHSE as Digital Content & Growth Executive, bringing a strong combination of digital marketing, market research, communications and customer-focused experience to the team.



Stuart Gray

Katoni Engineering has appointed Stuart Gray as its new Head of Engineering Delivery, bringing over two decades of North Sea experience to the role.



Anne Jenkins

Langstane Housing Association has announced the appointment of Anne Jenkins as its new Chief Executive, following a robust recruitment process, bringing 20 years of extensive experience.



Jennifer Crawford

Little's Chauffeur Drive has welcomed Jennifer Crawford as business development manager, supporting the company's continued growth across Scotland and strengthening relationships with key clients and partners nationwide.



Cheryl Henderson

Munro's Travel, the specialist travel management company serving the marine, offshore and energy sectors, is pleased to announce the promotion of Cheryl Henderson to the role of Operations Director.



Julie McAdams

North-east logistics expert, Petrasco, has bolstered operations with the appointment of experienced industry professional, Julie McAdams, as Head of Business Assurance, bringing nearly 20 years' experience within the Denholm Energy Services group.



John Maciver

Multinational law firm Pinsent Masons has elected John Maciver as Senior Partner, who joined the firm as a trainee in 1995 after graduating in law from the University of Edinburgh.



Stacey Hardie

Robert Gordon's College has appointed Mrs Stacey Hardie as its new Director of Sport, as the school embarks on an ambitious new chapter and launches a £3million Campaign for Sport.



Rhys Jones

SBP Accountants & Business Advisers has reinforced its senior management with the appointment of Rhys Jones, who brings more than 20 years of experience in the finance sector.



Bethan Vasey

Scottish Enterprise has appointed Bethan Vasey as its Director of North East Transition to strengthen its work with businesses and partners across the region and help unlock long-term economic growth.



Ryan Craig

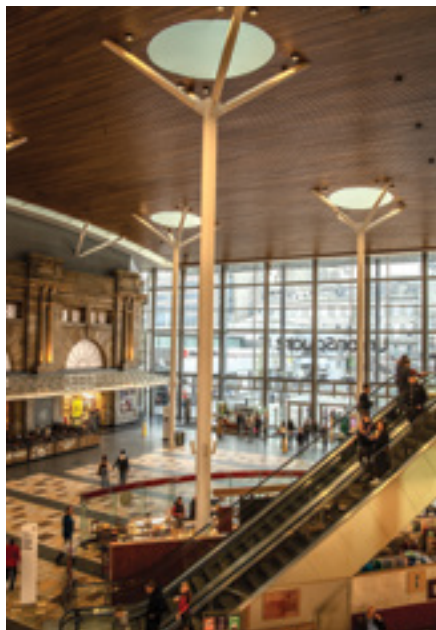
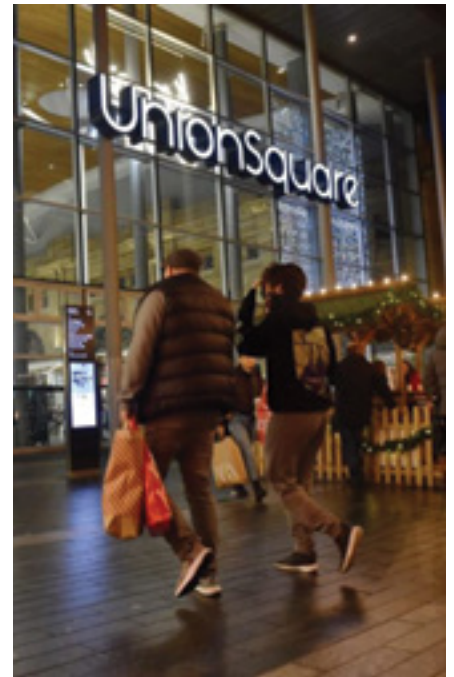
Ryan Craig has swapped the driver's seat for an office chair after changing lanes in his career with Stagecoach, starting a new role in its commercial team.



Sam Stanton

Tidy Green Clean has welcomed Sam Stanton to its growing team as Business Development Manager, strengthening the company's focus on building new client relationships and supporting continued growth across the North-east.

Union Square put up for sale for £175million



Aberdeen's Union Square shopping centre was put up for sale for £175million in September – just two-and-a-half years after changing hands for £111million.

US private equity firm Lone Star appointed property consultancy Knight Frank to manage the disposal of the landmark city centre mall.

The £175million price tag represents a £64million increase on the sum Lone Star paid to acquire Union Square from Hammerson in March 2024.

Union Square, which opened in 2009, is one of Aberdeen city centre's most significant commercial properties and combines traditional shopping centre space with restaurants, leisure facilities and a retail park.

The centre is home to major brands including Apple, Zara, H&M and M&S, alongside a Cineworld multiplex.

Its latest sale process comes amid renewed investment activity in Aberdeen's commercial property market.

Lone Star bought the centre through its Real Estate Fund VI in February 2024

It had originally been placed on the market by developer and then-owner Hammerson in 2022, when it was seeking around £150million.

Canadian investment giant Brookfield was previously lined up to buy the centre for around £140million, but that transaction did not complete.

Lone Star subsequently struck a deal at £111million – and following a buoyant spell of occupation, including the new headquarters of M&S, the global private equity investor is looking to cash in.

Not just square footage.

Space to shape what is next.

Start
with the right space.

Start now.

Not just square footage, but space to think bigger, adapt faster and build what's next. Space to grow. Space to innovate. Space to welcome customers.

Whatever your business becomes,
it starts with the right space.

Space to strengthen your business. Space to evolve with changing markets. Space to inspire your team. Space to meet demand.

Space to create opportunities. Space to launch new ideas. Space to invest with confidence.

Space to attract talent. Space to collaborate.

Space to

FG Burnett®



PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

BEGIN YOUR OWN TRADITION



YOU NEVER ACTUALLY OWN A PATEK PHILIPPE.
YOU MERELY LOOK AFTER IT FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.

ANNUAL CALENDAR, REGULATOR-STYLE DISPLAY REF. 5235/50R

Jamieson & Carry

142 Union Street, Aberdeen
Tel: 01224 641219