

SEPTEMBER 2025 | OFFSHORE EUROPE

BUSINESS BULLETIN

'We believe in the North Sea'

Viaro energy boss doubles down on North-east investments.

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North Sea can be 'powerhouse' of clean energy to 'keep UK going'

RGU's Prof Paul de Leeuw on his vision for the future.

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Adura set to be major player 'anchored in Aberdeen'

Shell and Equinor merger renews North Sea focus.

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Exclusive:
**Tradition won't
fuel the transition**



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Relief for renewables – but the job is far from done

The UK Government's decision not to move ahead with a zonal power market under its Review of Electricity Market Arrangements (REMA) has been welcomed by the offshore renewables sector – and nowhere more so than in Scotland.

This long-awaited decision safeguards billions of pounds in planned investment – the backbone of our energy transition here in the North-east – that developers warned could be derailed by zonal pricing.

Instead, the government will retain a single national GB-wide wholesale market, with “ambitious” reforms to follow.

That clarity matters. A zonal system – which remains years from being properly designed or deliverable – would have created long-term uncertainty, deterring investment at the very time government is relying on £40billion of annual private capital to meet its Clean Power by 2030 goals.

It would have introduced volatility, increased project risk, and threatened supply chain growth and green job creation – particularly in Scotland, already hit hard by the windfall tax in the North Sea, which is discussed at length in this Offshore Europe edition of Business Bulletin.

Scotland, with its world-class wind resource but sparse population, was at the heart of the zonal debate. But until a workable system exists, any move would have undermined confidence and delayed net zero progress.

Yet while the REMA outcome is a welcome signal of stability, it's only one part of the picture. A much greater – and more immediate – barrier to Scotland's offshore wind ambitions is the current regime of transmission charging.

Transmission Network Use of System (TNUoS) charges – the fees developers pay to connect to and use the electricity grid – are rising steeply.

In northern Scotland, they have soared by over 400%, wiping tens of millions off project value annually. Some developers now face projections of a further doubling in charges within five years, even as counterparts in southern England are paid to connect.

This system was designed in the fossil fuel era, when coal and gas power stations were clustered near demand centres.

But today, developers are being encouraged by government policy to build wind farms where the wind is strongest – in places like northern Scotland – yet penalised for doing so by a regulatory framework that tells them not to.

On the same day as the REMA update, Ofgem quietly announced it was “minded to” reject proposals to introduce a 10-year cap and floor on TNUoS charges – a mechanism that would have provided short-term certainty for developers.

Hopefully, Ofgem is instead preparing to implement deeper, longer-term reform – particularly around the “security factor” that determines how much redundancy must be built into the grid.

This could make charges more predictable and investment-friendly. A decision is expected soon, and cannot come quickly enough.

Meanwhile, reforms to AR7 – the government's key subsidy scheme for renewable projects – were finally published recently. Changes include allowing projects without planning consent to bid for a CfD, raising concerns over potential project cancellations or supply chain under-preparedness.

Other welcome changes include extending CfD contracts from 15 to 20 years, lowering the strike price by an estimated 10% and boosting investor confidence. There's also new flexibility for ministers to increase budgets if bids exceed capacity limits, and specific support for smaller floating wind projects from Crown Estate Scotland's INTOG leasing round.

The direction of travel is right – but the regulatory landscape remains uneven. If the UK is serious about becoming a renewables superpower, it must ensure its market frameworks, grid charging mechanisms and subsidy schemes work with, not against, the parts of the country best placed to deliver clean power at scale.


Russell Borthwick
Chief Executive

For Scotland, that means urgent and enduring intervention – or the full potential of our offshore wind resource risks being stranded just offshore.



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.

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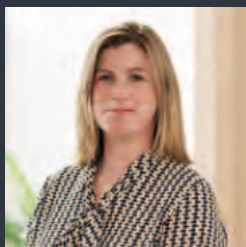
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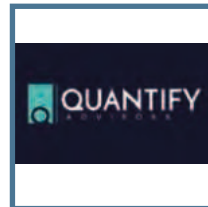
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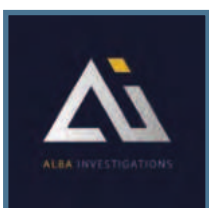
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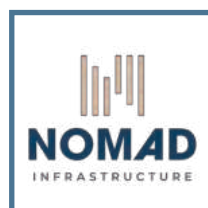
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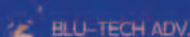
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A photograph of an offshore oil rig at sunset, with the sun low on the horizon and the sky filled with orange and blue clouds. The rig is a complex structure of steel and pipes, extending from the sea towards the horizon. The text is overlaid on the image.

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Mikey Fyffe,
Business Development Manager,
Cable Solutions

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we provide tailored solutions, quick turnarounds from our base in Inverurie, and expert technical support to help keep our customers' operations running seamlessly. As a proud part of the local community, we remain committed to servicing various industries and keeping businesses connected, both locally and globally.

Who are your customers?

We service a broad range of industries, including marine, offshore oil and gas, subsea, aquaculture, offshore wind, and renewables. From local businesses to multinational corporations, we provide critical operations with reliable products, rapid delivery, and expert technical assistance.

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

A key challenge is meeting critical turnaround times while maintaining our high standards. With industries like offshore oil

and gas, renewables, and marine demanding rapid delivery, our large stock holding allows us to offer immediate solutions. Many of our core products are also transferrable across sectors, ensuring flexibility. Recent investments, including a new cable cutting machine supported by Energy Transition Zone (ETZ), have streamlined operations, reduced lead times, and enhanced our ability to fulfil urgent orders efficiently.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

Being a Chamber member offers invaluable networking opportunities and industry connections that drive business growth. It's great to be part of a collaborative community that supports local businesses and provides a platform to share insights across various industries. The access to this network is a major advantage for any business looking to expand.



Diana Gormley,
Managing Director,
Danu Solutions Ltd

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Mainly SMEs, particularly those involved in manufacturing or production, who believe that their people are their greatest asset. Whether you want to increase employee engagement and retention, improve efficiency and quality, or reduce operating costs, Danu can help.

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

The biggest challenge at the minute is raising awareness of the value of implementing a continuous improvement culture using a Lean approach. Many businesses are aware of ISO 9001 but are less familiar with Lean and its incredible potential for organisational transformation.

The biggest opportunity is helping Scottish businesses to excel through the empowerment of their people, to drive operational excellence and maximise their competitive advantage at a national and global level.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Don't stay still in your business. Embrace change and innovation, stay curious, keep learning, ask for help if you need it and always put people first. Change provides an opportunity for growth.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The opportunity to connect and build relationships with local businesses, opening up opportunities for collaboration and creating impact at a local level. The Morning Bulletin is a great way to stay up to date with the local business scene and showcase our innovative service.

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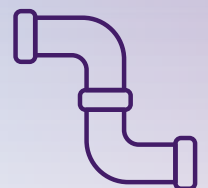
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Waste management leader uplevels portfolio and geography with strategic acquisition

A world-class name in specialist industrial services, specialist waste management services and process decontamination is poised for expansion, thanks to the strategic acquisition of a fellow Aberdeenshire company.

Denholm Environmental Limited (a Denholm Energy subsidiary) has acquired Oldmeldrum-based Pipetech for an undisclosed sum.

The acquisition – the fourth made by Denholm Environmental in six years – is seen as key to growing the company's capabilities and its footprint in Norway, a key target in its ambitious international growth plans and one where Pipetech has already made inroads.

Over more than 20 years, Pipetech has built up an enviable track record of success in the advanced and efficient process remediation cleaning of naturally forming blockages such as scales, waxes and corrosion from the internals of oil and gas processing systems.

Utilising specialist technologies across topside, subsea and downhole applications Pipetech can maximise production by ensuring full flow path efficiency, whilst minimising downtime and negating the requirement for harsh environmentally damaging chemicals.

Its portfolio centrepiece is the NZTC-supported Downhole Scale Remediation technology tool which will complement Denholm Environmental's existing capabilities.

All Pipetech staff will be retained and will relocate to Denholm Environmental's Inverurie headquarters, taking the company-wide permanent headcount to 200 across its operational sites in Carlisle, Grangemouth and Invergordon as well as Inverurie.

Brian Ritchie, managing director of Denholm Environmental, commented: "This acquisition represents an exciting step forward for us because it brings into the fold products and services that are highly complementary to our existing capabilities. It is a strategic move in our sustained growth plans as it enables us to deliver even more integrated and efficient solutions to a growing client base."



North Sea operators warned over fines for decommissioning delays

The North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) has warned operators could be fined if they continue to delay the decommissioning of oil and gas wells.

The NSTA says there is a backlog of more than 500 wells to be plugged, and North Sea operators are "running out of time" to tackle the issue.

The BBC has reported the estimated cost of £41billion is shared between the private sector and the taxpayer, but that further delays would cause the cost to soar by a further £4billion.

Offshore Energies UK (OEUK) said the oil and gas sector remained committed to decommissioning but that "policy instability" had created uncertainty.

However NSTA began an investigation after identifying hundreds of wells which had missed their deadlines to be plugged, a responsibility which falls on the operator after a well comes to the end of its life.

The NSTA has cautioned that further delays risk operators and supply chain vessels moving out of the North Sea to seek other opportunities, creating additional costs.

Pauline Innes, NSTA director of supply chain and decommissioning, said: "The stark reality is that operators are running out of time to get to grips with the backlog as more contractors consider taking their rigs abroad, which damages the supply chain's ability to meet demand and remain cost competitive."

She said NSTA was prepared to help operators when necessary but would "get tough" on those who continually delay.

The NSTA says there could be more than 1,000 further wells due for decommissioning by 2030, exacerbating the backlog if it is not addressed quickly.



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ABL completes first in-country competency assessment for NLNG's head of marine operations role

ABL Group has successfully completed the first in-country competency assessment for NLNG Shipping and Marine Services Limited (NSML) marking a significant milestone in the company's long-term commitment to marine operational excellence at Bonny Terminal in Nigeria.

Daniel Wood, ABL's director of ports and harbours for Europe and West Africa, and Jim Jack, senior consultant, led the assessment of the head of marine operations position in NSML.

The evaluation is part of a broader project launched in conjunction with NSML in July 2023 to build and implement a robust marine competency framework tailored to NSML's operational needs.

The assessment was anchored in the head of marine operations Job Competency Profile (JCP), a comprehensive standard developed by ABL and aligned with internal maritime competency assessment standards. Using oral interviews and scenario-based analysis, the process tested leadership, marine safety, risk management, emergency response, and compliance with international legislation.

Daniel Wood said: "This isn't just a test of knowledge, it's about judgement, leadership and alignment with NSML'S strategic marine goals. We were especially impressed by the candidate's emphasis on morale, safety culture and operational integrity."

Ikenna Duru, who was assessed on the head of marine operations role, demonstrated a practical, people-first leadership style and strong marine terminal experience.

"This process helped me reflect on the depth of responsibility the role carries," Duru shared. "It was more than an interview, it was a deep dive into what it truly means to lead safely, efficiently, and ethically in a high-stakes marine environment."



Daniel Wood and Jim Jack

Eztek supplies topside controls to Expro for Agogo and Ndungu oil fields

Eztek Limited is proud to have recently supplied several SECP (Surface Electronic Control Panels) to Expro in support of its vital oil and gas operations in the ENI Agogo and Ndungu fields.

These modular systems are designed for compact installations within purged cabinets, providing reliable control and monitoring of Expro subsea control equipment. Eztek's collaboration with Expro highlights its continued commitment to delivering high-quality, safety-critical equipment for the global energy sector.

Eztek was delighted to receive branded t-shirts and a heartfelt letter of thanks from Expro as a token of its appreciation.

Managing director Robin Hunter said: "It's always rewarding to know that our technology and support are making a positive impact on major international projects. We appreciate Expro's long-standing trust in Eztek and look forward to supporting their future operations."

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Chris Behan,
*Vice President
Operations – Scotland,
Worley*

We're in the midst of the most important industrial revolution of our time, one that will define the future for generations to come. That is an enormous responsibility, and one which none of us should take lightly. However, what fills me with optimism is the excitement and opportunity this change brings. If there's one thing our industry excels at, it's our ability to adapt, evolve and deliver at pace.

From ambition to execution

The speed of today's transition takes us back to the early days of the North Sea, over 50 years ago, when we mobilised an entire industry to realise the benefits of domestic production. Today's challenge is no different – only broader in scope – and we already have the skills, competence and ambition to succeed. We cannot afford to take that for granted.

The ambition is clear. The UK has long positioned itself as a global leader in the energy transition. From pioneering offshore wind to legislating the world's first net zero emissions target, we've moved faster than many of our peers. But in 2025, the conversation has moved on. It's no longer about ambition – it's about execution.

The need for a rapid transition to a lower-carbon energy system is undisputed. But we need a balanced approach. That means continued investment in oil and gas at significantly less carbon intensity, alongside the scaling of renewable energy sources. The importance of domestic production has never been more clear. Instability in global energy markets has only sharpened the focus on homegrown energy security, regional employment and long-term investment.

Digitalisation enabling transition

As an industry, we've made significant strides. We're decarbonising existing assets by repurposing, upgrading and deploying new technologies that emit a fraction of the CO₂ of traditional methods. Digitalisation has enabled remote operations, reducing travel and vessel usage to improve safety and extend field life, while oil and gas production assets are becoming smarter and more sustainable.

While net zero is one of the industry's biggest challenges, it's also one of its greatest enablers; sparking innovation and cross-sector collaboration.

We now have renewables capacity to generate around 50% of the UK's electricity. But despite this progress, prices at the consumer level continue to rise. The cost of electricity is too high to enable widespread behavioural and economic change.

The power of policy

This is where policy can play a powerful role. A predictable, balanced fiscal framework – one that recognises the need for both legacy energy infrastructure and new low-carbon technologies – is essential to maintain investment and confidence. Fiscal policy that supports long-term certainty can help unlock private capital, foster innovation and reduce the cost of transition. With the right incentives in place, the UK supply

chain can scale solutions faster, drive down costs and build a competitive advantage that extends well beyond its borders.

The UK supply chain is ready; poised to collaborate across sectors and technologies to overcome the challenges ahead, delivering both environmental and economic impact. We can take the tried-and-tested expertise from oil and gas and pair it with emerging innovation in renewables and other key enablers of the energy transition such as nuclear, hydrogen and CCUS.

Collaborating to lead transition

By combining our technological capabilities, renewable energy resources, digital expertise and the collective demand for decarbonisation, the North Sea can become a model for collaborative transition. We have the potential to lead the world not just in deploying lower-carbon solutions, but in exporting the knowledge, technology and skills that come with it.

Decarbonising the United Kingdom Continental Shelf won't be simple. And yes, there's pressure to get it right. But if we remain focused on delivering sustainable transformation we can rise to the challenge.



Oilfast to attend Offshore Europe 2025

Oilfast, one of the UK's fastest-growing fuel distribution companies, is proud to announce its participation in Offshore Europe 2025, in full partnership with the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE).

Offshore Europe is Europe's leading Offshore Exhibition & Conference, gathering global energy professionals, innovators, and industry leaders to explore cutting-edge solutions for a better energy future. As a family run business Oilfast is excited to contribute to showcase its extensive range of products and services tailored to the offshore sector.

"Offshore Europe is a key opportunity to engage with the brightest minds and latest technologies transforming our industry," said Tony Stewart, managing director at Oilfast. "We're looking forward to connecting with partners, customers, and stakeholders to support a more efficient and sustainable energy landscape."

At the event, Oilfast will showcase its commitment to energy transition, investment in low-carbon fuels, and ongoing support of critical industries across the UK. Visitors are encouraged to stop by the Oilfast stand to learn more about the company's evolving product

portfolio, tailored energy solutions, and its mission to deliver dependable, smarter fuel solutions across every sector it serves.



GEODIS launches a new fully digital sales channel

GEODIS has launched a fully digital sales channel in France, primarily intended for small and medium-size businesses. This platform is designed to simplify the purchase of logistics services.

Launched in early June, the new digital channel is now available directly from the www.geodis.com website. In just a few clicks, business customers can request a quote, pay for their order online and schedule a pickup for their goods. The order will then be integrated into the operational workflow and will benefit from the same high quality of service provided to all existing customers.

First introduced in France, the online sales platform covers GEODIS' core express (next-day delivery) and parcel (48-hour delivery) services, subject to certain weight and volume criteria (ranging from 1 kg to 3 pallets), with deliveries in mainland France and other European Union countries.

Laurent Melaine, executive vice president, sales, marketing and communications at GEODIS, said: "The launch of this new online sales channel in France represents a key strategic milestone.

"By the end of the year, we plan to expand the service to include air and sea transport, allowing us to serve new markets.

"Our goal is to meet the everyday needs of small and medium-size businesses by offering a simplified purchasing process and delivery solutions that are perfectly tailored to their occasional requirements.

"This channel is designed to give these players a fully digital, agile experience, from requesting quotes to real-time tracking and proof of delivery."



Credit: Sebastien Ortola



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BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Shabnum Hanif,
Managing Director,
IntrospeXion

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

I've been fortunate to have several influential figures shape my career. Jonathan Jenkins (NDB Digital) gave me my start in the energy sector, teaching me sales, what sedimentary rocks were and he patiently explained (to a psychologist) how we extract oil from the ground! He took a chance on me for which I'm deeply grateful. Mark Heine (CEO Fugro) has been another pivotal influence and still is. For me, Mark demonstrates what exceptional leadership from the front should look like, along with the importance of patience, perseverance and professionalism. Mark continues to be both a mentor and a friend and his continued support has given me the opportunities and self-belief to grow and thrive in my career.

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

The most effective training I've undertaken is from my work in psychology, which constantly teaches me about resilience and the complexities of human behaviour. Completing training for the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Children's Panel was also a profound experience. It was an eye-opener into the challenges many children face and the importance of compassion in every interaction.

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

The biggest lesson I've learned in business is the power of resilience and perspective. Being a woman in a predominantly male-led industry has taught me to hold my ground, speak with conviction and earn respect through competence. In business, tenacity is essential. Opportunities often lie hidden in plain sight and failures aren't the end; they're stepping stones for growth and reinvention.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

Going offshore has been my proudest achievement. I never for a second imagined travelling offshore to rigs or vessels, especially since I can't swim. Completing my offshore survival training with 3T was a pivotal moment for me. I genuinely thought it was going to break me. It was terrifying but incredibly rewarding. It reinforced that with determination and the right mindset, we (as individuals) can accomplish anything.

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

The diversity in the North-east of Scotland is truly remarkable. When I first moved here, I saw Aberdeen as a 'mini-London'; vibrant, fast-paced and surprisingly cosmopolitan. The level of innovation and creativity in

this region is remarkable and I feel privileged to have contributed to and learned from such a dynamic community.

What was your first job?

My first job was when I was 16, I was a receptionist at a golf and country club in Livingston.

Who or what inspires you most?

My dad is my biggest inspiration.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

"Game-changing". Everything seems to be game-changing, what was the original game...?

How do you relax?

Fast cars and shopping, those two give me my serotonin.

If you had the power to change one thing in the world, what would it be?

To remove all this hatred and have peace in the world.

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MEET *the* MEMBER



Ryan Bell,
Business Development Director,
Glacier Energy

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Glacier Energy delivers innovative solutions for the design,

manufacture, inspection and repair of critical infrastructure and process equipment for energy and industrial markets.

Who are your customers?

Glacier Energy supports a wide range of customers across the energy and industrial markets, including hydrogen, energy storage, carbon capture, wind, nuclear, defence, infrastructure, chemical and oil and gas.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

My advice would be to network and make the most of the opportunities around us. Having moved to Aberdeen 13 years ago, I have had some fantastic opportunities presented to me from working within the city which weren't available to me elsewhere.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The best part about being a Chamber member is being part of the community and having access to valuable networking opportunities and business resources.



Mark Anderson,
Managing Director,
HCS Aberdeen Ltd

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

HCS is a global solutions provider to the energy industry, delivering specialist subsea and topside equipment and services across installations and completions, well intervention, and plug and abandonment. With operational hubs in Glenrothes, Aberdeen, Perth

(Australia), and Great Yarmouth, we support offshore teams with IWOCs and hydraulic rental systems, experienced technicians, and services including system integration testing (SIT), maintenance, testing, and storage. Having evolved from a single site manufacturer into a multi-location services business, we remain committed to safety reliability, and innovation – keeping projects running efficiently, wherever our clients operate.

Who are your customers?

Our customers range from major operators to specialist energy companies working in production, well services, and decommissioning. Whether it's a multinational with global assets or a focused local contractor, we support offshore and subsea teams who need dependable equipment, responsive support, and practical engineering expertise. Our clients trust us to deliver – safely and efficiently – no matter the challenge.

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

The ongoing shift in the energy landscape continues to drive both opportunity and change. For HCS, increasing decommissioning activity – especially across the UKCS – has created strong demand for our intervention and plug and abandonment capabilities. We see this as a key area of growth alongside energy transition opportunities where our skills transfer naturally. That said, long-term investment and customer commitment are essential to maintaining momentum and building a more resilient, future-focused supply chain.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Growth comes from listening to your customers and adapting to change. At HCS, we've seen first-hand how evolving your services – without losing sight of your core values – can unlock new opportunities. Collaboration, trust, and consistency are what drive lasting success, whether you're working across sites, sectors, or time zones.

Trusted IT Solutions for Critical Infrastructure

Sword works in critical national infrastructure and regulated industries to maximise the value of investment in IT.

For over 30 years we have been applying our domain specific experience in combination with technical expertise to help solve the biggest business challenges. Today this means managing system complexity, embedding operational resilience, and streamlining support to bring down the cost of operations.

From asset transfers and business transformation through to fully managed services, we deliver solutions across cloud and hybrid infrastructure, networks, cyber security, software development, data management and reporting, and service operations.

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Ventyr contracts DNV to certify Norway's first offshore wind farm

DNV, the independent energy expert and assurance provider, has been awarded a contract by offshore wind developer Ventyr for the design certification of the Sørilige Nordsjø II wind turbines and offshore substation - Norway's first bottom-fixed offshore wind farm.

Located in the southern North Sea, near the maritime border with Denmark, Sørilige Nordsjø II is one of Norway's flagship offshore wind areas. The development area spans approximately 520 square kilometers and is located 200km from the Norwegian south-west coast.

"Sørilige Nordsjø II marks a historic step forward for Norway's offshore wind ambitions, and we are proud to partner with DNV to ensure the project meets the highest standards from the outset," says Wim Verrept, project director at Ventyr. "Robust certification is essential to delivering safe and sustainable offshore wind infrastructure, and DNV's experience and technical rigor make them a natural partner for this landmark development."

"We are very pleased to deliver certification services for this project which represents a key milestone in Norway's offshore renewables ambition," says Kim Sandgaard-Mørk, executive vice president for renewables certification at DNV.

"DNV has been closely following the development of offshore wind in Norway and is actively supporting Norwegian authorities and regulators with technical insight and guidance based on decades of experience in certifying offshore wind projects globally."

"Certification plays a vital role in ensuring the safety, quality, and reliability of offshore wind infrastructure," explains Anne Lene Haukanes Hopstad, principal engineer and project manager for the Sørilige Nordsjø II certification scope.

"Our certification helps confirm that critical components - such as turbine foundations and substations - are designed to withstand the challenging conditions of the North Sea while meeting Norwegian regulatory requirements and international best practices."



Kim Sandgaard-Mørk, executive vice president for renewables certification at DNV



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WE NEED EVERYTHING, EVERYWHERE, ALL AT ONCE

Donald Trump's shoot-from-the-hip diplomacy was on full display in Aberdeen last month as he waded into the UK's energy debate, calling for lower taxes on North Sea oil and gas operators.

The president's remarks – delivered both in person and online to Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer – will have raised eyebrows in Westminster. However, in the North-east of Scotland, where redundancies are mounting, his comments tapped into a growing sense of frustration.

He may be a polarising messenger, but his advocacy for the repeal of the Energy Profits Levy (EPL) aligns with what the data, the workers, and the businesses on the ground have been saying for over two years – that the windfall tax is killing off a vital British industry and a crucial national asset.

According to data from Offshore Energies UK, 10,000 jobs have already been lost since the levy's introduction by the Conservative government in 2022. Harbour Energy, the UK's largest oil and gas producer, has since laid off 600 people in Aberdeen alone. These aren't abstract statistics — they are highly skilled individuals, families, and communities being sacrificed on the altar of fiscal short-termism.

Worse still, the economic wreckage isn't even delivering the returns that were promised. Independent analysis from Stifel shows that EPL revenues have consistently come in at the low end of government forecasts. Why? Because the supposed "windfall" they are taxing does not exist. Oil prices are down 50% since the peak of the Ukraine crisis. Gas prices have collapsed by 80%.

The result is a textbook case of policy failure. Tax hikes intended to boost revenues have instead triggered a collapse in investment, with over £20billion of planned capital spending now cancelled or paused. Exploration activity has ground to a halt. Fields are being decommissioned prematurely. The UK is forfeiting not just jobs and tax income, but its energy security.

This shouldn't just be of concern to those living and working in Aberdeen - this should alarm everyone, because the UK still needs oil and gas. Even in the most ambitious net-zero scenario, the country will require between 13 and 15 billion barrels of oil equivalent by 2050. Right now, we're on track to produce less than four.

And that energy shortfall isn't going to be filled by wind turbines and hydrogen pipelines overnight. The reality is that we are swapping cleaner, domestically produced energy for dirtier, imported alternatives.

According to the North Sea Transition Authority, gas extracted in the UK has less than a quarter of the carbon footprint of imported LNG. Yet we are allowing that domestic capacity to decline while increasing our reliance on higher-emission imports from the US and Qatar. It is environmental hypocrisy at its worst.

All the while, the UK Government continues to claim we are "maximising value" from our domestic resources. But how? By driving capital offshore? By gutting the supply chain that is also needed to deliver renewables, carbon capture, and green hydrogen? By forcing energy companies to pay tax rates that, in some cases, exceed 100%?

In 2024, Harbour Energy reported a pre-tax profit of £950million. However, after accounting for an effective tax rate of 108%, the company posted no net profit for the year. This level of taxation is without parallel in the UK economy. It's not just unfair - it's economically suicidal.

The UK's approach also compares poorly to our North Sea neighbours in Norway. While their headline tax rate is similar, the Norwegian government supports exploration and shares risk through its fiscal regime. That's why Norway continues to attract investment and why its energy sector is thriving. We, by contrast, have taken the opposite path - penalising production, scaring off capital, and hoping for different results.

What's even more galling is that the levy is being used to fund Great British Energy - the new public clean energy company set-up by the Labour Party. According to Stifel, EPL revenues are set to collapse from £5.5billion to under £1billion by 2029. You cannot fund the future of energy by strangling the very sector that underpins it.

So yes, President Trump is right to shine a spotlight on this issue. But the solution isn't a populist soundbite or a quick political win. It is a long-overdue dose of energy pragmatism.

That means abolishing the EPL - now - and restoring a stable, competitive tax regime that can unlock investment, extend production, and retain the critical skills base we will need for the next generation of energy infrastructure. It also means rejecting the false binary between fossil fuels and renewables. The future is not oil or wind. It is oil and wind. And hydrogen. And carbon capture. We need all of it. Everything, everywhere, all at once.

The UK cannot build a low-carbon future while dismantling the industrial engine required to deliver it. A managed transition must be just that - managed. And that means recognising the continuing role of oil and gas, treating our energy sector with the strategic seriousness it deserves, and stopping the ideological war against the basin that still powers Britain.

So, let's take Trump's call and translate it into smart, sober policy. Not because he said it, but because the facts demand it. The North Sea doesn't need special treatment, but it does deserve fair treatment. The alternative isn't a greener future - it's a weaker Britain.



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



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Scottish Enterprise backs big thinkers to achieve even bigger success. If your business has the vision, Scottish Enterprise will be right behind you.

Pict Offshore's vision is a safer way of working for offshore wind platform technicians. Supporting the energy transition is a key mission for the company – and that's an ambition Scottish Enterprise shares.

Mitigating an every-day risk

Until now, there has only been one way for offshore wind technicians to get between crew transfer vessels (CTVs) and offshore wind platforms. This involves the technician climbing from the CTV onto a ladder attached to the side of the platform in what's called a 'transfer'.

Each day in the offshore wind industry, tens of thousands of 'transfers' like these take place. Despite rigorous health and safety precautions, this process can be dangerous, particularly in bad weather or rough waters.

The founders of Pict Offshore knew there had to be a safer way of getting technicians onto platforms. In 2016, they began developing it.

Pict Offshore's solution

Pict's team designed and developed the Get Up Safe (GUS) system, partly inspired by a piece of equipment already used in offshore wind called a 'walk to work' gangway.

In simple terms, GUS is a small crane with automatic heave compensation and sensors that monitor the position of a vessel's deck during transfers. Technicians are attached to the crane using a safety harness and can then be lifted between the vessel and platform.

While this is happening, the crane responds in real time to deck movements, extending or reducing the line to keep the technician safe. This eases the safety risks associated with sudden deck movement. It also spares technicians long and difficult ladder climbs, saving time and physical effort, and further reducing risk.

“

Scottish Enterprise has been critical for our growth. It's a partner with us in this journey and it's great to work with an enterprise that has matching ambitions.

PHILIP TAYLOR, MANAGING DIRECTOR AT PICT OFFSHORE

”

Global potential

Knowing which opportunities to pursue and which markets to target can be a challenge for businesses with big ambitions. That's where Scottish Enterprise can help.

It's been working with Pict Offshore since the early days of GUS, connecting the company with its services, advice, and funding.

Find out how we can back your ambition www.scottish-enterprise.com

BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Julia Lutfy-Harte,
Subsea Account Manager,
Viper Innovations

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

My time at Bibby Offshore left a lasting impression on me, the team spirit and energy was fantastic.

The late, GREAT, Paul Fox arranged for me to go offshore on the Bibby Sapphire and it cemented my admiration for all things subsea; the engineering, the environment and mostly the people who make it all happen.

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

Mentorship – it doesn't need to be a formal set-up through your company but find someone you can trust.

Especially in an industry as challenging as oil and gas, it's good to have a sounding board who can give you level-headed advice and honest feedback.

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

Ask the question. There is usually someone else in the room thinking the same thing but too afraid to ask.

Additionally, trust your gut and don't be afraid to speak your truth, you're never wrong if you have good intentions.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

I am mostly proud of myself for putting in the work over the years, so that I could secure a role such as I have here at Viper Innovations.

A company which gives me both long term career opportunities and which actively supports me being present for my daughter and providing a good life for her.

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

I purposely moved to Aberdeenshire in 2011 to take advantage of its unique blend of career opportunities and country living.

You can have a busy day playing your part in a global industry then go for a walk around a castle in the evening.

In my relatively short time in the area (20 years!), I can see so many new creative businesses coming into play. It's exciting to hear about these fantastic new ideas finally getting the support they deserve.

What was your first job?

Washing dishes in a pub – I think some of the pots were nearly the same size as me at the time!

Who or what inspires you most?

My 4-year-old daughter is my reason for everything.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

The use of so many acronyms.

How do you relax?

By getting outside. Walking my dogs is my version of therapy.

If you had the power to change one thing in the world, what would it be?

I believe if everyone focused on acting with kindness rather than focusing on 'wealth' we'd all live much more fulfilled and valuable lives.

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SWIMMING AGAINST THE TIDE: VIARO ENERGY'S BOLD BET ON THE NORTH SEA



By Ryan Crighton

In a sector gripped by uncertainty, Viaro Energy is charting a different course.

While some of the world's largest oil and gas companies exit the UK Continental Shelf, largely due to fiscal instability, Viaro is doubling down.

Since its founding in 2020, the independent energy firm has pursued a bold expansion strategy, acquiring major assets, integrating infrastructure, and positioning itself as a key contributor to the UK's energy security.

Led by CEO Francesco Mazzagatti and newly appointed chief operating officer Jillian Owen, Viaro is betting on the long-term value of the North Sea - even when others won't.

With more than 500 personnel following the integration of Shell and ExxonMobil's Southern North Sea portfolio, and plans to hire 70 more, it's a story of growth against the odds.

“We’re swimming against the tide... But we’re doing it with purpose.”

BELIEF IN THE BASIN

Viaro's investment thesis is simple: the North Sea still matters. And for Mazzagatti, its role in ensuring domestic energy security has never been clearer.

“We believe in the North Sea. That's why we started investing in 2020 and why we haven't stopped, even in the face of enormous headwinds,” he says.

“Our strategy is securing a better tomorrow through responsible long-term energy investment today. With our acquisition of the SNS assets we will become one of the top 10 largest gas producers in the UK, owning and operating infrastructure vital to national energy security. The Bacton gas terminal alone moves around 30% of the UK's gas supply. We will become owners of assets that power homes, industries and the future. That's strategic infrastructure. Our aim is to keep it producing for as long as possible, leading with the highest standards of safety, integrity and care.”

The acquisition of Shell and ExxonMobil's Southern North Sea assets is central to Viaro's strategy. These mature but still resource-rich fields represent a foundation for Viaro's next growth phase.

Just weeks later, Viaro acquired Deltic Energy - bringing with it the Selene prospect, the largest undeveloped gas resource in the UK sector.

“Selene is key,” Mazzagatti explains. “It's not just an exciting development. It's an asset we were already heavily invested in through Shell, and when it became clear that Deltic was financially constrained, stepping in made strategic sense. This wasn't opportunism, it was about stability, continuity, and unlocking value.”

STITCHING THE BASIN BACK TOGETHER

But it's not just production Viaro is after. The company is also consolidating infrastructure, with a specific focus on the Southern North Sea.

Jillian Owen, who joined Viaro in March 2025 from Apache Corporation and has since been promoted to COO, is spearheading the integration of the newly acquired assets and teams. Her focus? Bolstering domestic energy independence, by positioning Viaro for long term resilience and growth. With a focus on safe operational continuity and efficient growth, unlocking near field potential through existing infrastructure.

“We now have a platform for reinvestment,” she says. “The infrastructure is already there. We're focused on using it to bring new resources online more quickly and cost-effectively.”

This infrastructure-led strategy is also about long-term resilience. By owning and operating key assets like pipelines and terminals, Viaro gains flexibility - and bargaining power - in a market increasingly fragmented by divestments and decommissioning.

"Other companies might see consolidation as a cost-saving exercise. We see it as a growth enabler," Owen says.

A HOSTILE CLIMATE

That optimism stands in stark contrast to the wider mood in the basin. The UK's Energy Profits Levy (EPL), introduced as a windfall tax on oil and gas profits, has been extended through to 2030, and operators warn of lasting damage to investment and confidence. "The EPL completely destabilised the fiscal environment," says Mazzagatti. "For me, we shouldn't be talking about reform, we should be talking about removal."

Owen agrees, having witnessed first-hand the impact of the tax during her time at Apache.

"We're not in a windfall environment anymore," she says. "Investment is declining, the supply chain is moving abroad, and we're seeing consolidation and job losses. If this continues to 2030, it's going to be difficult for the basin to survive."

Mazzagatti is particularly frustrated by the UK's divergence from international norms. "Germany introduced a windfall tax for one year and was taken to court by operators - and the court sided with the industry," he points out. "The UK is locking it in for a decade. How can that be right?"

LEGACY OVER DIVIDENDS

One of the reasons Viaro can keep investing while others pause is its financial discipline. The company doesn't pay dividends, and that retained capital is being



That mindset is evident in how the company is structured: lean, collaborative, and focused on speed of execution. Owen likens it to a high growth enterprise; agile and ambitious, but grounded in long-term thinking and operational discipline.

"We're not tied to outdated models, we can design this operation with intention, agility and long-term value in mind. That's exciting. We now play a role in securing energy today and enabling the energy of tomorrow."

reinvested into acquisitions and development.

"We're not like the others," Mazzagatti says. "We don't touch the cash. That means we can stay strong financially, even during tough times."

But the ambition runs deeper than financial performance. Both leaders talk about "building a legacy", a phrase that recurs often in conversation.

"One of the reasons I joined Viaro," Owen says, "is because Francesco wants to build something lasting. A modern energy company that's agile, inclusive, and focused on delivering value over decades - not quarters."

INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND PLACE

Viaro's expansion isn't just about assets, it's also about people. The Shell and ExxonMobil acquisition saw approximately 175 employees transfer to Viaro. Now, the company is hiring again.

"We'll be adding at least 70 more jobs this year," says Owen. "That's in addition to the Shell team, and it reflects our confidence in what we're building."

Beyond recruitment, Viaro is also investing in future talent. Through the SRM Foundation, the company has launched a multi-year partnership with Robert Gordon University, focused on research, education, and environmental restoration.

"We believe in the North Sea. That's why we started investing in 2020 and why we haven't stopped, even in the face of enormous headwinds."



Initiatives include scholarships, environmental projects like riverside habitat restoration, and immersive trips abroad for students and faculty. Earlier this year, three RGU students and two professors visited Houston to see the global energy industry in action.

“We wanted to show them that energy is bigger than just tax and headlines,” Mazzagatti says. “There’s a world out there that understands the value of this industry.”

Viaro is also looking ahead to life beyond oil and gas. It has signed a memorandum of understanding to explore investment in nuclear energy, seeing it as a key part of its long-term diversification strategy.

“When oil and gas isn’t needed as much, we’ll still be an energy company,” Mazzagatti says. “That’s the plan.”

A DIFFERENT KIND OF ENERGY COMPANY

As the energy transition accelerates and political pressures mount, Viaro’s approach may seem contrarian. But for Mazzagatti and Owen, the company’s independence - and willingness to act decisively - is its greatest strength.

“We’re swimming against the tide,” Owen says. “But we’re doing it with purpose. The infrastructure, the jobs, the investment - it all matters. And we believe this basin still has a big role to play.”

That belief, combined with a focus on creativity, capital discipline, and social impact, is what sets Viaro apart.

“Do you want one egg today, or a hen tomorrow?” Mazzagatti asks, quoting an Italian proverb. “We’re choosing the hen. And we plan to look after it for a long time.”



Francesco Mazzagatti

“Our strategy is securing a better tomorrow through responsible long-term energy investment today. With our acquisition of the SNS assets we will become one of the top 10 largest gas producers in the UK, owning and operating infrastructure vital to national energy security. ”

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Bob Christie,
Managing Director,
Concept Promotional Merchandise

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Concept is a long-standing supplier of in-house corporate clothing and branded merchandise. With over 30 years in the industry, what really sets us apart is that we brand every garment right here in Aberdeen. Our proudly local team has a true understanding of all embroidery and print processes, and we're fully

equipped to meet all client needs. If it can be branded, chances are we can source it, brand it, and deliver it!

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

I treat people the way I want to be treated - simple as that.

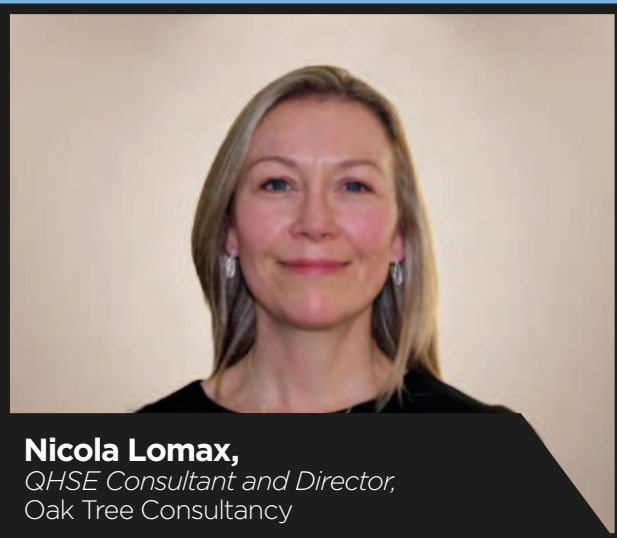
In my early days in the industry, I was working for a national company and the formal training I received was invaluable experience and gave me a great foundation for setting up Concept.

That early experience was like an apprenticeship, it taught me how to run a business properly and, more importantly, how to work with people.

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

Like most businesses, there's a certain time period I'd rather not name (you know the one) that posed our biggest challenge by far.

Fortunately, our business was financially secure, and that gave us solid footing to adapt quickly. We pivoted to meet changing client needs and powered through with a combination of hard graft and sheer determination. I'm proud to say we've seen healthy, consistent growth every year since.



Nicola Lomax,
QHSE Consultant and Director,
Oak Tree Consultancy

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

At Oak Tree Consultancy, we specialise in guiding businesses toward ISO certification and management system compliance with a practical, no-nonsense approach. Our focus is on driving real, measurable and sustainable improvements that drive success far beyond certification. By fostering safer, stronger and

more efficient organisations, we help our clients achieve lasting excellence.

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

My management style is rooted on integrity, trust and a commitment to open communication and collaboration.

I strive to foster an environment where everyone feels valued, supported and empowered with opportunities.

I believe this approach helps drive teamwork, inspires excellence and ultimately builds a strong and united team - the foundation of exceptional results.

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

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SCAN FOR MORE INFO

John Clark Motor Group welcomes BYD to its expanding franchise network

John Clark Motor Group, the trusted family-owned and family-run automotive business, is proud to announce the addition of BYD (Build Your Dreams), a global leader in electric vehicles, to its growing portfolio of franchises.

This strategic partnership underlines the group's continued commitment to growth, innovation, and delivering an exceptional customer experience. The BYD range of electric and hybrid vehicles will be supported by a comprehensive suite of aftersales services, reflecting John Clark Motor Group's investment in the future of sustainable mobility.

Chris Clark, managing director of John Clark Motor Group, commented: "We are delighted to welcome BYD to the John Clark family. This exciting new partnership not only enhances our dealership offering but also brings the very latest in electric vehicle innovation to our customers. With plans to launch additional locations following our first site in Aberdeen, we are fully committed to BYD's growth in the UK market."

Since entering the UK in 2023, BYD has quickly gained traction with a versatile lineup of award-winning electric vehicles, including the BYD Dolphin, Atto 3, and Sealion 7. Designed with cutting-edge battery technology and extended range capabilities, each new vehicle comes with a comprehensive manufacturer's warranty of six years or 93,750 miles.

The addition of BYD follows recent franchise expansions for the group, including the acquisitions of John Clark MG and John Clark KIA in 2024, marking a period of rapid and strategic growth.

Founded in 1974, John Clark Motor Group now represents over 19 automotive brands across 41 locations in Scotland, offering new and used car and van sales, servicing, and parts to customers throughout the North-east of Scotland and beyond.



Fathom Group joins international consortium for offshore wind in Poland

Fathom Group, an offshore engineering and software specialist, has joined an international consortium delivering offshore wind projects in Poland and the Baltic Sea region.

The consortium, which includes Industria, GuD Offshore Wind Polska, MEWO S.A., and Fathom Group, will offer integrated design, engineering, and software services for offshore wind farm developments.

Fathom contributes extensive offshore structural expertise and advanced digital twin technology to support

concept selection, FEED, detailed design, monitoring, and optimisation of offshore structures.

Richard McGowan, managing director at Fathom Group, said: "We're excited to bring our offshore engineering and digital capabilities to support Poland's clean energy goals through this collaborative effort."

Together, the consortium aims to accelerate the clean energy transition in the region.

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BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Steven Simpson,
Managing Director,
Safelift Offshore

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Starting out in my business career was pivotal due to a few directors taking a chance on me and providing mentoring guidance on the global energy sector as I had come from a family with no background in the sector.

This then led to global travel and opening myself up to new cultures, ways of working and altering ways of communication in the likes of Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

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

Communication training as a graduate working in recruitment and sales.

Communication is used every single day throughout our working and personal lives and can be a key factor in most decision making, planning and general activity.

This can be vital and the difference between a buoyant thriving business and one that is struggling or finding the market difficult.

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

Never rest on your laurels and always keep striving to develop and learn more to stay hungry and

be adaptable to the ever changing business climate.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

Contract wins within various sectors including renewables, defence, marine and of course oil and gas comes to mind especially when first entering new sectors, but I do genuinely get a buzz when I see a colleague and team member doing well and climbing their career path.

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

Honesty, reliability and hard-work have been major factors in the success of the North-east over the years and while these words may now be deemed slightly old fashioned, I still believe they are hugely relevant to this day as we aim to stride forward within this new chapter for the North-east of Scotland and utilise our experience to maintain our high regard in global marketplaces.

What was your first job?

Bar porter on weekend mornings at the Hopeville Social club, Inverurie from the age of 10.

Who or what inspires you most?

Business people and entrepreneurs that have the drive to keep going and pursue new interests no matter how successful they have previously been.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

'Above my paygrade' annoys me as it's merely a deflection tactic rather than looking into ways of solving it or gaining an answer.

How do you relax?

Watching football, although watching my beloved AFC can often not be relaxing!

If you had the power to change one thing in the world, what would it be?

Good health, without that then life really is difficult to fulfil ambitions and dreams.

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Prax Lindsey Oil Refinery to shut after government fails to find buyer

The Lindsey Oil Refinery in Lincolnshire is to close after the government failed to secure a buyer for the facility.

Prax, which had owned the site, went into administration in June, placing 420 jobs in jeopardy.

The refinery was taken over by the Official Receiver and Ed Miliband demanded an urgent investigation take place into the collapse amid concerns about its management.

The BBC reported in July that Energy Minister Michael Shanks said “no credible offers have been made to purchase the entire refinery and it will be winding down operations”.

He added: “We are deeply disappointed with the untenable position in which the owners left Prax Lindsey Oil Refinery.

“Our sympathies are with the workers, their families and the local community.

“While we continue to strongly encourage the owners to do the decent thing and publicly commit to making a voluntary financial contribution to support workers, all those directly employed at the refinery are guaranteed jobs over the coming months.

“The government will immediately fund a comprehensive Training Guarantee for these refinery workers to ensure they have the skills they need and are supported to find jobs in the growing clean energy workforce.”



Altrad Sparrows Qatar secures multimillion crane and engine maintenance contract with key offshore operator

Altrad Sparrows, the engineering and maintenance specialists for the global energy and industrial sectors, is pleased to announce the award of a new contract with a key offshore operator in Qatar.

The scope of work includes the provision of crane and diesel engine maintenance and repair services across Al Shaheen field - one of the world's largest and most complex offshore oil fields, located approximately 80 kilometres North-east of Ras Laffan, Qatar.

The eight-figure agreement is expected to run for an initial period of three years, with an option for a three year extension.

A crucial element of the scope is supporting the client's existing and growing assets in the Al Shaheen Field. Over 20 Altrad Sparrows personnel will support the new contract, including onshore focal points, senior

support engineers, offshore resident crane supervisors (mechanical and electrical), engine specialists, ad-hoc teams, and a workshop refurbishment crew based onshore.

The work will be carried out both offshore and at Altrad Sparrows' workshop in Doha.

Ryan Horn, general manager at Altrad Sparrows in Qatar, said: “This contract further strengthens our presence in the Middle East and underscores the trust this strategic operator in Qatar's energy sector places in our specialist capabilities, whilst helping to solidify our position as the leading and largest provider of crane services in the country.

“Moreover, it ensures we are well-positioned to support the growing number of platforms and cranes expected to come online in the Al-Shaheen field.”

MEET *the* MEMBER



Sarah Gray,
*Regional Director - Europe,
Fifth Ring*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Fifth Ring is a global B2B marketing agency helping energy, maritime, technology, and manufacturing companies own their space in

competitive landscapes. We blend sector expertise with predictive revenue strategies and award-winning creativity to deliver marketing that drives measurable business impact.

Who are your customers?

We work with ambitious B2B brands, from global industry leaders to disruptive start-ups, who want to grow, differentiate, and own their space in complex markets.

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

We are all operating in a turbulent time with geo-political challenges impacting budgets, forward planning, and in some cases the very existence of some organisations.

It's important for us to ensure that our clients understand that in these times it's more important than ever to recognise marketing as an essential investment as opposed to a cost centre. With markets evolving at speed, the demand is greater than ever for marketing that's creatively compelling but also commercially accountable. That's both the challenge we embrace and the opportunity we deliver on - helping clients achieve smarter, faster growth through strategic, insight-led campaigns.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Marketing is most effective when it's tied to the wider business strategy. Aligning marketing with sales and strategy unlocks real growth - not just visibility, but measurable business results.



Stuart Charles Sinclair,
*Chief Executive Officer,
Integrity ISS Limited*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Based in Aberdeen and established in 2017, Integrity is a specialist Integrated Service Solutions provider for plant turnarounds, operations and maintenance, plant integrity (find and fix), engineering, design, construction and commissioning.

The business focuses on the safe and efficient delivery of services to support clients to increase plant uptime, improve asset performance and optimise operating expenditure. Integrity has an extensive track record of projects completed to date, offering a diverse yet complimentary range of services across multiple industry sectors and operates to ISO 9001:2015, 14001 and 45001 accredited management systems.

Who are your customers?

Our customers range from small businesses, startups and individual clients to asset owners, depending on the service we provide. We focus on building strong, long-term relationships by delivering tailored solutions that help our clients grow and succeed.

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

Like many businesses, we're navigating a rapidly changing landscape - technological shifts, evolving customer expectations, and economic uncertainty. Our biggest

challenge is staying agile while continuing to innovate. At the same time, that's our greatest opportunity: to lead through change, adopt smarter tools, and find new ways to add value for our clients.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Stay connected and collaborate. The power of the Chamber lies in its network - don't underestimate the impact of shared knowledge, referrals, and partnerships. Supporting each other is the key to sustainable growth.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The sense of community. Being part of the Chamber gives us access to an incredible network of like-minded professionals, local insights, and opportunities to showcase our business. It's a space where support, visibility, and collaboration thrive.

A turning point for the UKCS Customs Landscape

Navigating reform and shaping a workable future

In November 2024, HMRC released new guidance that significantly changed how goods are documented when moving between Great Britain and assets on the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS). The update introduced three customs declaration options: Full Declarations, Simplified Declarations, and a new approach: Declaration by Conduct (DbC).

While intended to modernise processes, the rollout has instead raised concerns about complexity, cost and feasibility. A single vessel carrying goods from 50 exporters may require 150 electronic submissions (G-Forms), potentially costing industry over £29million annually, excluding hidden costs like storage, on-hire charges, and system changes.

Following substantial feedback from industry, HMRC has extended the testing and transition period indefinitely, beyond the initial May 31, 2025 deadline. HMRC advises: "This will allow more time for industry to prepare and will enable us to continue to work with industry to find appropriate solutions to the implementation challenges that have been identified."

It continues: "We are keen to build on our existing constructive relationship with the industry to develop approaches which allow industry to meet these customs requirements whilst minimising burdens."

Current developments and industry response

As part of its ongoing engagement with industry, HMRC intends to publish updated guidance by the end of September 2025, with the aim of providing greater clarity, consistency, and practical direction across the board.

In parallel, several enhancements to the G-Form and associated procedures are being actively explored, including:

- Simplifying the form to streamline user experience
- Allowing a single G-Form submission per vessel or aircraft
- Introducing flexibility to include separate contact details for goods (to assist HMRC or Border Force in the event of checks)
- Improving the clarity of data fields to reduce errors and confusion
- Assessing the feasibility of uploading manifests or CSV files - potentially easing the administrative burden, though this would require standardisation across the industry

It's important to note that these improvements are still under review and are not yet confirmed.

Their implementation will depend on internal governance approval, resource availability, and overall technical feasibility. At present, no firm timelines have been set.

To support the transition, HMRC will offer non-mandatory education sessions focused on customs basics and the practical use of Declaration by Conduct (DbC).

While full training is in demand, no organisation can deliver comprehensive programmes until the final customs model is confirmed. These sessions serve as an interim measure to build understanding during the transition.

HMRC expects to host these sessions in late August and September.

A moment to shape the future

Despite the complexity, this is a critical opportunity for businesses to influence the final shape of the UKCS customs model.

HMRC has created the space for feedback and engagement, and industry must seize this moment to ensure the system is both compliant and commercially viable.



Nicola Alexander, director, Bethan Customs

Companies are strongly encouraged to share operational insights and practical concerns directly with HMRC via: **ukcsdeclarationspolicydelivery@hmrc.gov.uk**

By working together, there's a chance to build a system that reflects the unique demands of offshore operations, supports regulatory integrity, and protects the economic resilience of the UK's energy sector.

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Free trade agreements and global trade

By William Bain, Head of Trade Policy at British Chambers of Commerce

2025 has seen the return of tariffs to news coverage across the world, and a second look at how important they and other commercial costs are to trade in goods.

From the mid-1980s tariff reductions took place across the board through successive World Trade Organisation rounds, applicable to all countries via the key most favoured nation principle in Geneva under the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). As this multilateral process lost any momentum in the early 21st century with the Doha Round having never been completed, countries and business communities looked more to free trade agreements between two or more countries to lower tariffs and other trade barriers.

But for some FTAs, other agreements, and resultant trade surpluses in goods became unbalanced, and that notion has driven the sweeping changes to global trade introduced by President Trump.

In the run up to EU Exit, the priority for UK trade policy was to keep the trade preferences which business had benefited from.

Post-Brexit trade deals were made with Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and now India going beyond previous commitments which have lowered tariffs and created new market access terms for goods and services with these key markets. With Australia and New Zealand around 99% of tariff lines were liberalised completely, with quotas introduced for UK imports of certain meat products.

When the India deal comes into effect next year, 90% of Indian tariffs on UK goods will be either completely liberalised or subject to phased reductions over time.

The UK also joined the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) with the 11 existing nations, creating a group of trading nations with 15% of global GDP, and an agreement that we can broaden in terms of members and deepen in terms of market

access in the years to come. The UK also made digital-only trade agreements with Singapore and Ukraine, and various other investment and trade accords with territories including Taiwan and Indonesia.

The Economic Prosperity Deal with the US has provided stability and certainty for traders and investors alike after it was concluded in May. Being implemented in phases, it ensures that civil aerospace and automotive US tariffs have fallen compared with the rates since April 2025.

On steel and aluminium goods, implementation details are being finalised which should mean most UK product exports could receive zero tariffs on entry to the US. For other goods sectors exported from the UK, US tariffs remain at the 10% supplemental rate from early April. The agreement also provides for specific and preferential UK treatment should separate pharmaceutical or other section 232 tariffs be introduced by the US in the future.

Perhaps our most significant free trade agreement is that with the EU which provides for zero tariff zero quota trade in goods across the Irish and North Seas and the English Channel.

Free trade agreements are only of use to the economy if businesses have the confidence and knowledge with their customer bases to use them to drive more international trade. That is where our Chambers family stretching from the North-east of Scotland to Devon and Cornwall, from China to Colombia internationally makes the difference, with the domestic network alone facilitating £16billion in annual UK exports.

Chambers were established centuries ago to enable their member businesses to seek better links and terms on global trade. That ambition burns as brightly today across the Chambers Network and, with the right trade deals, can be engines of future trade and economic growth in energy, services and goods trade for the North-east of Scotland for decades to come.



The case for introducing strategic infrastructure-led permits to replace traditional offshore licensing



Professor John Underhill,
University Director for Energy Transition,
University of Aberdeen

We live in uncertain times and energy security has risen to the top of the political agenda. Until renewable sources are in place, oil and gas will continue to serve some of our energy needs. Yet the sector faces severe headwinds including the prospect of no new licences or fields. But could there be a way for the Government to meet its manifesto pledge yet enable the drilling of climate compatible prospects rather than carbon intensive imports?

The North Sea basin is a mature oil and gas province. As with other global exemplars, geophysicists and geologists identified the big structures like Brent, Forties, Leman and Inde early and the drilling thereof led to their development and ramp up in production during the 1970s and 80s.

As a consequence of the North Sea opening up, the UK became self-sufficient for its oil and gas needs and for a time became a net exporter, with all the positive consequences that had for revenues, the taxable profits from which underpinned growth after a period of national decline. The Office for Budget Responsibility state that tax receipts rose to a record high of £12.4billion in the 1990s and 2000s compared to £1.4billion - a fall of 88% - in the following decade.

Oil and gas production exceeded demand in 1980 and 1995 respectively, peaked around the turn of the century, before gas demand

exceeded production in 2004 and oil demand exceeded production three years later. Production rates have now diminished to the point where the UK currently produces 800,000 barrels a day (compared to almost three million bbls/d in 1999). Similarly, gas production was around 4,000 million standard cubic feet of gas per day (MMscf/d) last winter and just over 3,000 MMscf/d in May, five times lower than the 15,600 MMscf/d produced at its peak in 2000.

The current diminished state of the basin is underlined by the reduced average field size over the years, which has declined from 285 million barrels over the period 1964-1983, 57 million barrels between 1984 and 2003, and 48 million barrels between 2004 and 2022.

Despite the desire to wean ourselves off oil and gas and the decline in production, the UK has become no less dependent upon them, and our energy consumption still relies on oil and gas to meet three quarters of our needs. Furthermore, gas provides the domestic supplies for around 22 million homes (over 85% of the total), relying on it for electricity baseload, sometimes to the tune of over 50% of our power generation at times when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine.

The shortfall in our gas production is met by imports and we are reliant upon gas supplies from countries like Norway, the USA, Algeria, Qatar

and Peru. In the case of the USA, the liquified natural gas we receive is largely derived from fracked shale, which is carbon intensive and the exploration of which is banned in the UK.

The closure of oil refineries - of which Grangemouth and Lindsey are simply the latest examples - also means that in addition to importing to close the gap between indigenous production and the supply need, some of the North Sea's product is exported, refined and then re-imported.

Major and laudable efforts are being made to make the UK a clean energy superpower and meet our legally binding net zero targets through the build-out of a renewable energy sources and investment in the grid infrastructure needed for an electrified system. However, given the current reliance we have on oil and gas and the time and money needed to repurpose and build a new, robust and reliant renewables-based system, there remains an urgency to address the ever-increasing gap between UK production and imports that has emerged.

While fossil fuels are polluting and we need to pivot away from them, the Committee for Climate Change identifies that there will still be a role for oil and gas in the energy mix in 2050 and beyond. Given our current dependence and that need, the challenge to transition is self-evidently difficult, nuanced and must be managed if it is to be orderly and just.

For context, the UK's greenhouse gas emissions have dropped by over 50% since 1990 (down from 812 MtCO₂e then to 384 MtCO₂e in 2023) and is now less than 1% of the global total. The direct extraction from our oil and gas fields and terminals was 12.9 MtCO₂e in 2023, meaning they accounted for 3% of greenhouse gas emissions in 2023 (i.e. only 0.03% of global emissions).

Given that backdrop, increased imports also bring the inconvenient reality of an even higher carbon footprint than our highly regulated home-grown product, something that is detrimental to the global climate, the very opposite of the intent.

Retention of the Energy Profits Levy, despite the windfall tax conditions having long past, the commitment to no new fields and no new licenses, the Fitch Judgement regarding scope 3 emissions, and low commodity prices means that there is a real uncertainty in the oil and gas sector. The resultant lack of confidence means that the UK is not an attractive place to invest and the industry is feeling unloved and unwanted.

Implicit in the UK Government's commitment to "no new fields" and "no new licensing" is the acceptance that we will still need old ones to produce and existing undeveloped discoveries to come on stream. Development of existing discoveries and undrilled prospects could meet half of the demand. The penalty for not doing so is more imports.

None of the investment for the oil and gas we use will be made by the sector without a clear signal from Government that some projects can go ahead. Without such encouragement, the UK runs the risk of closing down our part of the North Sea and replacing its supply with even more oil and gas imports from other parts of the same sedimentary basin or sourcing them from further afield with a dependency on the best and most secure routes in an uncertain world.

Without the pre-requisite renewable supplies being in place to replace oil and gas, the current inertia has adverse consequences for the economy, tax revenues, closure of industrial clusters, loss of jobs and the climate.

The current position in the UK contrasts with that of other countries like New Zealand and the Netherlands, where the need for in-country production has led to a reversal of their oil and gas policies.

Review of the results of offshore licensing rounds over the past decade shows they have had low work programs (seismic and drilling commitments), something that has resulted in limited amounts of oil and gas being discovered and produced - equivalent to only around 40million barrels or so being produced from awards in the 28th to 33rd licensing rounds.

As a consequence, there is a strong case that licensing rounds in their current form are simply symbolic, political theatre and thus, are no longer fit-for-purpose.

Production from existing fields depends on pipelines to shore and as such the latter are critical infrastructure. If the pipelines receive less throughflow, tariffs reduce and they can become uneconomic, they could be switched off prematurely. This has already happened in the Southern North Sea, where closure of the Caister-Murdoch-Schooner pipeline and cessation of operations at its Theddlethorpe terminal led to producing fields having to shut-in leaving stranded reserves.

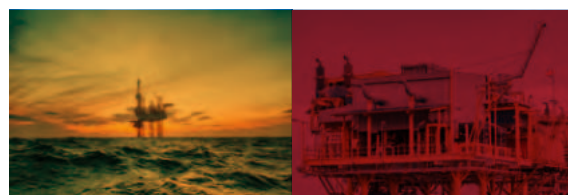
If one accepts these premises, the question is whether there is a way square the circle that offers a solution for investment, increases energy security, addresses environmental sustainability and global climate impacts, yet is consistent with the manifesto commitment of no new licenses?

I believe there is and it is achievable through strong regulation and good stewardship that continues efforts to drive down home-grown emissions by banning flaring, encouraging carbon storage solutions and

increased electrification of offshore platforms on the one hand, and by permitting near-field exploration or infrastructure-led drilling around existing fields and the aforementioned strategically important pipelines on the other.

Adopting this approach would enable timely and bespoke applications to be made and evaluated for their economic importance and climate compatibility on a case-by-case basis. Doing so, would lead to the quicker development of high impact discoveries, albeit of modest size, that can help arrest the current and projected decline in UK production. A similar model was adopted by Denmark in 2020, who allowed drilling permits to be issued whilst declaring that no new exploration licenses would be offered.

Allowing the issue of permits focused upon near-field or infrastructure-led exploration is a practical and pragmatic way for the UK to arrest an otherwise ever-increasing dependency on imports to meet society's current needs, provide support for the sector at a time of stress, enhance energy security, avoid the premature closure of critical facilities, reduce our impact on global emissions and help avoid an unmanaged, disorderly and unjust outcome for communities be they in Aberdeen or across the UK.



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Superdry deal announced at prime retail hub in Aberdeen

The owners of Bon Accord Centre Aberdeen have announced a new addition to the existing tenant line up of the city centre scheme that has been at the heart of retail in the Granite City for more than 45 years.

Following the arrival of Danish retail chain Sostrene Grene last year, lifestyle retailer Fat Face secured space in April, bringing their casual clothing, footwear and accessories offer to the scheme already anchored by Next, Boots, New Look and Waterstones.

Now contemporary clothing retailer Superdry is to move into a 6000 sq.ft store in the centre.

Rosie Taylor, Superdry head of stores, UK & Ireland commented: "Superdry is delighted to be returning to Aberdeen. Our new premium SD Co. By Superdry store concept has been thoughtfully designed to bring an elevated shopping experience to the city.

"We can't wait to welcome both loyal customers and new fans to explore our brand, in a space that truly reflects our signature preppy aesthetic and quality-driven collections."

Letting agent Richard Noble, director at FG Burnett added: "Bon Accord remains very much on the radar of retailers illustrated by the recent raft of new entrants.

"What's really encouraging is that we also have existing occupiers showing confidence in the location by renewing leases and then completing new shop fits which really freshens up the mall.

"Whether a new entrant to the city or completing a relocation the existing depth of occupiers makes Bon Accord a compelling option. We are delighted to welcome Superdry."

Joint agent Kevin Sims of Sims Property Consultants commented on these latest developments: "Sostrene Grene choosing Bon Accord for their Aberdeen store reflected the strength of the scheme, the lettings to fashion retailers Fat Face and now Superdry highlight the terrific location, car parking and tenant mix.

"I am pleased to report that discussions continue with further retailers looking to secure space in the development".





Roddy James,
Chief Commercial Officer,
Port of Aberdeen

Q&A with Roddy James

Can you give us an overview of Port of Aberdeen and the key industries it serves?

1

Port of Aberdeen is the UK's oldest business with a history spanning almost 900 years. The port is a vital hub for the energy sector, serving both the oil and gas industry and will be an international hub for the growing offshore renewables market.

In addition to energy, the port handles approximately 3.5 million tonnes of cargo annually, supports lifeline ferry services to Orkney and Shetland, and plays a key role in Scotland's expanding cruise tourism sector.

How does the port support its energy customers in oil and gas and renewables, and how do you see that changing with energy transition?

2

The port offers specialised support for energy operations, underpinned by decades of experience in oil and gas. As the industry transitions, Port of Aberdeen is evolving to accommodate offshore wind and other renewable projects - supporting both capital developments and long-term operations and maintenance (O&M).

The shift will not be uniform; instead, the port will provide bespoke services to address the distinct requirements of both conventional and emerging energy sectors.

How is the port adapting its services and facilities to meet the changing demands of energy customers?

3

The development of South Harbour has significantly enhanced the port's capacity, offering deepwater berthing, heavy-lift capabilities, and extensive laydown space - crucial for large-scale offshore wind projects and supports the fuels of the future that the nation will import and export.

Alongside renewables, the port continues to provide world-class support for oil and gas operations, including mobilisation, logistics, and long-term O&M.

Through these strategic investments and a flexible service approach, the port ensures it remains a trusted partner throughout the energy transition.

The port has invested in new technology to offer green shore power at 10 berths - why has the port chosen to take an industry-leading role in this area?

4

The port's investment in shore power reflects its commitment to sustainability and leadership in decarbonising maritime operations. As a city-centre port, reducing emissions is particularly critical.

It significantly cuts emissions from berthed vessels, which account for 97% of the port's direct emissions. This initiative supports Scotland's net zero ambitions and promotes cleaner, greener port operations at the heart of the city.

Port of Aberdeen has been around for almost 900 years, what needs to happen to ensure its continued success in the future?

5

Continued success depends on strategic investment, operational agility, and collaboration with public and private stakeholders.

As a Trust Port, Port of Aberdeen reinvests all profits into enhancing its infrastructure and services for the future. With a legacy of adaptability - from its roots in farming, textiles, trading and fishing to its evolution into a vital energy hub - the port is strategically positioned to support both the oil and gas industry and the growing renewables sector, playing a key role in driving sustainable economic growth.



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EIS Waste Services renews partnership with Dons



Julie Sharp and Neil Sharp from EIS Waste Services

EIS Waste Services, a leading provider of waste management and recycling services in the North-east, has renewed its successful partnership with Aberdeen Football Club.

Building on a long-standing relationship with the club, EIS will continue as the Official Recycling Partner for the Dons with its distinctive logo remaining on the back of the men's playing shirts this season.

EIS is committed to supporting and promoting environmental responsibility within the community and this collaboration with the club enables it to build increased viability and further strengthen brand recognition for EIS as it looks to highlight the importance of responsible waste management to a wider audience.

EIS will also work closely with the club to enhance its recycling initiatives across all its facilities, including Pittodrie Stadium and Cormack Park, contributing to a more sustainable operation.

"We're incredibly proud to renew our partnership with Aberdeen," said Neil Sharp, managing director at EIS.

"As an organisation the club is a cornerstone of our community and it continues to mirror our own ethos, supporting the local area and driving forward sustainability

so it makes perfect sense to continuing working together when we remain so aligned.

"Seeing the EIS brand continue to feature on the first team kit is not only a point of pride but a visible reminder of our ongoing commitment to the Dons, both on and off the pitch."

Gary Herbert, business development manager at Aberdeen FC, echoed Neil's enthusiasm for the renewed partnership. He said: "EIS has been a valued supporter of the club for over a decade, and we are delighted they are going to remain a partner.

"Their expertise in waste management and recycling has been vital as we strive to improve our environmental performance. Further to that they are a fully engaged partner, who not only see the benefit of partnering with the football club but who are always keen to support the club's supporter engagement efforts as we saw recently with the 'Top Bin' activity at our Dons Live event.

"We look forward to another 12 months working alongside the team at EIS as we continue to assist them in maximising this opportunity with the club."

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Roula Samaha - Cluster General Manager, Hampton by Hilton

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Kevin Urquhart - Construction Director, Barratt & DW Homes, North Scotland



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Dave Rusling,
Managing Director,
QHSE Aberdeen

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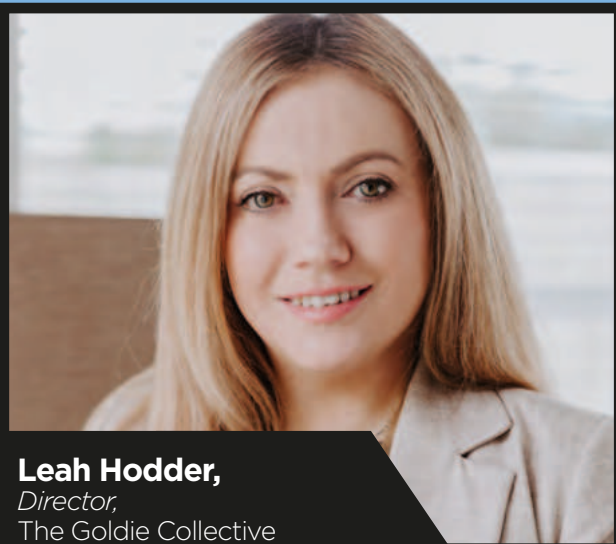
operational efficiency, keeping your workforce safe, and maintaining your company's strong reputation.

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

As a leader, I encourage professionalism, customer focus, and continuous improvement in my workforce. With over 30 years of experience across a wide range of industries, I steer my team to develop value-added QHSE solutions. Under my leadership, QHSE Aberdeen have achieved 95% client retention, and 100% first-time certification pass rate. We prioritise integrity, respect, accountability, and talent development for scalable solutions. By ensuring that processes are fit-for-purpose, we are enabled to provide clients with scalable and efficient solutions.

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

The biggest challenge has been adapting to diverse work styles - balancing independence, collaboration, structure, and flexibility. We addressed this through open communication, tailored support, and inclusive tools like mentoring and project platforms. Valuing individual approaches has helped us build a respectful, motivated, and productive team culture.



Leah Hodder,
Director,
The Goldie Collective

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

The Goldie Collective is a marketing consultancy working with organisations across tourism, culture, and lifestyle. We shape stories, strengthen brands, and build meaningful connections that last - through bold thinking, clear strategy, and a focus on lasting impact.

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

I lead with empathy, clarity and collaboration. I set direction, give space for creativity, and build strong relationships based on trust. This approach has helped create a loyal, motivated network of collaborators who feel empowered and valued.

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

Starting my own business while navigating being a new mum was a huge shift. I tackled it by understanding my strengths, staying focused and surrounding myself with people who lift me up, both professionally and personally.

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

"Build a business that works for your life - not the other way around." It's easy to get caught in the hustle. Designing a business that reflects your values and what really matters to you, makes everything more sustainable.

Martin Dickie MBE unveils new Aberdeenshire business venture

Martin Dickie MBE has revealed his latest Aberdeenshire business venture as the BrewDog founder enters the medicinal cannabis market.

The start-up, Waterside Pharmaceuticals, is about to harvest its first full crop at its facility in Aberdeenshire using cutting-edge Total Controlled Environment Agriculture (TCEA) to produce top quality starter material for the medicinal cannabis market.

In 2024, Waterside Pharmaceuticals secured a Controlled Drugs Licence from the Home Office to cultivate cannabis starter material for medicine production at the company's Aberdeenshire facility, which uses high-tech cultivation techniques to deliver a premium quality product. Now operational, Waterside Pharmaceuticals is about to harvest its first full crop.

Since legislative changes in 2018, doctors on the GMC's specialist register have been able to prescribe cannabis-derived medicines in the UK for certain conditions. Between 50,000 and 60,000 patients monthly in the UK are estimated to be prescribed medical cannabis, with domestic and global markets growing year-on-year as its therapeutic applications become better understood. However, demand is largely met by imported medicines, with UK supply very limited.

Russell Borthwick, chief executive of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, welcomed Dickie's new venture creating jobs in a "fast growing market" and boosting the local economy.

He said: "It's always fantastic to see new, innovative businesses investing here in the North-east of Scotland.

"Medicinal cannabis is a fast growing market – and with this region's agricultural heritage, combined with cutting edge technology and entrepreneurial spark, there's a real opportunity to seize an early-mover advantage within this burgeoning industry.

"Waterside Pharmaceuticals can bring a depth of experience to bear in terms of what's required to start and scale a business – creating jobs and unlocking value in the local economy."

Waterside Pharmaceuticals aims to become the UK market leader in medical cannabis. As the first in the UK to use Total Controlled Environment Agriculture in a vertical farming facility to produce medicinal cannabis starter material, the company can meticulously control every aspect of cultivation through the use of advanced technology and automation, resulting in a product that meets the highest international industry standards including the World Health Organisation's Good Agriculture and Collection Practice (GACP), and the UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency's Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Good Distribution Practice (GDP) guidelines.

Martin Dickie MBE, founder and CEO of Waterside Pharmaceuticals said, "Our aim is to become the UK market leader in medical cannabis. We have ambitious plans to expand the business, creating up to 100 new jobs in the local economy and investing around £20million over the next five years.

"Our longer-term ambitions involve building a second facility co-located with a renewable energy source minimising our environmental impact, creating jobs, and diversifying the rural economy.

"The global market for medical cannabis is growing rapidly as its clinical applications become better researched and understood. In the UK, medical cannabis can now be prescribed by specialist doctors, with an estimated 50,000-60,000 patients thought to be benefitting from cannabis-derived medicines. That figure is growing year-on-year, but supply depends largely on imported medicines.

"Waterside Pharmaceuticals is on a mission to provide safe, efficacious and cost-effective medicine that can help thousands of people."



BrewDog co-founder and Waterside Pharmaceuticals chief executive Martin Dickie



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“TRADITION WON’T FUEL THE TRANSITION.”

An insight into how a reset can empower the innovation necessary for a low carbon future

By Sarah Moore, Chief Executive of Peterson Energy Logistics

Turn the clock back to the turn of the millennium and the UK was a net exporter of oil and gas.

The latter part of the 00s and the mid-10s saw oil price crashes which devastated the industry and sent tidal waves through the local economy.

And the 20s have been all about the energy transition - navigating a new normal which has significant potential for our energy economy, security, and society.

Underpinning these seismic shifts throughout is a robust and innovative supply chain, but a reset is required so we can navigate the ‘new normal’ in a way that fuels an ambition to thrive, rather than simply survive, as we look to the 30s and beyond.

Peterson Energy Logistics has been an active and engaged partner in the North Sea through the ups and downs of the energy industry - unburdening customers with trusted and innovation-led services which ensure the safe, timely, and efficient movement of critical goods.

Sarah Moore, Chief Executive at Peterson Energy Logistics, said:

“The supply chain has always been innovative, but that innovation has been tempered by customer demand. In order to navigate the opportunities of the energy transition, a reset is required in the relationship dynamic between operators and developers, and the supply chain.

“If we, as a supply chain, are simply coming in behind and providing transactional services, working ‘for’ rather than ‘with’ operators through established and traditional models, then we are missing an exponential opportunity for maximising the economic recovery in the remaining decades of oil and gas, the decarbonisation of the industry, and our clean energy future.

“We remained a traditional business for a long time because investment in modernising logistics, a low margin game, is far from an easy sell as a value proposition.

However, we recognised that to move up the supply chain, repositioning us as an activated partner, and for logistics to take on strategic relevance for our customers, we had to think, invest, and deliver differently.”

For more than a decade, a key differentiator for Peterson has been its proprietary technology suite, Lighthouse, which illuminates the end-to-end logistics supply chain through apps which plan, track, and analyse areas including quayside management, transport, port activity planning, CCU fleet management, vessel activity, and cost allocation.

Peterson has now built upon that success, and Lighthouse has undergone a significant step change embedding AI and large language models to give customers unparalleled access to the power of their data.

Sarah said: “Tradition won’t fuel the energy transition and businesses like ours are proud to be the trailblazers who show what is possible. And we have done that, and continue to do that, through Lighthouse.

“The possibilities and potential are mind blowing and we are only scratching the surface. It means logistics experts can move beyond mundane processing and be a genuine value-add to operations and, most importantly, our customers.”

"The digital landscape is rapidly changing with AI at the fore of streamlining many of our day-to-day tasks and analysing, at scale, opportunities, challenges, operations, and potential solutions at the click of a button.

"The opportunities for logistics modelling, with access to more than 10m tonnes of cargo worth of data we have collected over the past 13 years, is immeasurable. Building on the breadth, depth, and quality of this data, Lighthouse will be able to provide invaluable insight into a vast array of areas from the right numbers of people, vessels, and trucks required for projects, the most efficient routing, the most efficient shift patterns, through to performance benchmarking - hugely impacting the ability to negate non-productive time.

"The possibilities and potential are mind blowing and we are only scratching the surface. It means logistics experts can move beyond mundane processing and be a genuine value-add to operations and, most importantly, our customers."

As well as being part of Peterson's logistics offering, Lighthouse is now available to clients globally through a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model. Sarah added:

"Repositioning Lighthouse from something that we have to something we market not only adds another string to our bow but demonstrates the agility which is essential for the supply chain to be true partners of the energy transition."

Peterson employs around 800 employees globally, half of which work in the North-east of Scotland. Alongside its work providing quayside, transport, warehousing, customs, and procurement services to some of the North Sea's leading oil and gas operators, the company is building an impressive track record in the renewables sector.

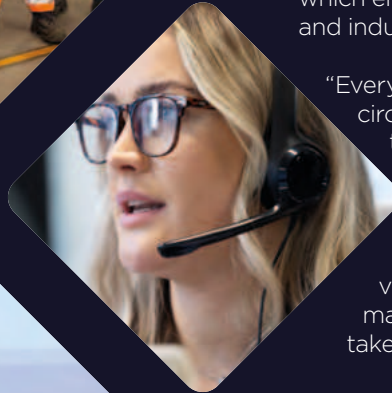
PETERSON





Peterson recently launched a consultancy service, focussed on Middle East and Asia Pacific regions working across the energy sectors, as well as heavy industries, offering customers insight and modelling from global subject matter experts.

These experiences underpin Sarah's desire for there to be a shift which ensures collaboration sits front and centre of the region and industry's economic future. She said:



"Everyone agrees this is a critical juncture yet, in many circumstances, there is still a disconnect, and adherence to the status quo, which threatens the success of the energy transition.

"We remain committed to doing all in our power to be part of the bigger picture, recognising our role as a vital cog in the wheel of industry. How our cog behaves matters - if it doesn't turn, nothing turns, and we do not take that responsibility lightly."

"Tradition won't fuel the energy transition and businesses like ours are proud to be the trailblazers who show what is possible. And we have done that, and continue to do that, through Lighthouse."



Planning granted for £15million industrial park near Aberdeen Airport

Arrowmere Capital, part of the Hurstwood Holdings Group, has secured planning permission for a new £15million industrial park in Dyce, Aberdeen.

The proposed scheme, designed by RGP Architects, will deliver 80,000 sq ft of high-quality industrial and warehouse space across five modern units, ranging in size from 10,000 sq ft to 18,000 sq ft.

Situated on a prominent 12-acre site within the established Kirkhill Industrial Estate, near Aberdeen Airport, the development will bring much-needed, state-of-the-art industrial accommodation to the area. Hurstwood Holdings acquired the site, formerly known as Craigievar House, in 2023.

Sam Ashworth, project director at Hurstwood Holdings, commented: "We plan to develop this scheme on a design and build basis, and we are already in active discussions with occupiers regarding a number of flexible options, including bespoke builds and fully serviced plot sales.

"There is a continuing demand for high-quality industrial, innovation and science hubs in the area and this scheme

will address that shortage as well as also delivering significant economic benefits for the local area."

The development reinforces Hurstwood Holdings' commitment to delivering high-quality industrial schemes and driving economic growth in key regional locations.

The group, which manages a national portfolio valued at over £350million and supports more than 1,400 occupiers across England, Scotland, and Wales, already has a significant footprint in Aberdeen, with a portfolio exceeding 1 million sq ft, including the two Aberdeen Innovation and Energy Parks.



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Energy bosses decry UK policy drift: EIC Survive & Thrive Report reveals 77% demand strategy overhaul

78% of UK companies reported growth in 2024, with revenues climbing 16% on average.

Yet beneath the surface, frustration is boiling over. Executives describe a sector succeeding despite the government, not because of it. This is according to the UK's largest energy trade association.

The Energy Industries Council's (EIC) latest Survive & Thrive report, based on interviews with 140 global energy firms, reveals a stark disconnect. While the UK industry is technically thriving, 77% of local respondents cite incoherent policy as their top concern. One CEO's blunt quote captures the mood: "Get a grip – stop tweaking and messing around and start developing a proper strategy and be fast about it."

Nearly 28% of respondents criticised UK policy "short-termism" that prioritises electoral wins over energy security. Project approval delays – flagged by 8% of firms – compound the problem. "There is supply chain fatigue working on projects that aren't reaching FID [Final Investment Decision]," one executive noted.

Stuart Broadley, EIC's chief executive officer, put it plainly: "The UK's supply chain is delivering growth, but it's doing so despite policy chaos. Without a 20-year vision, we risk losing talent and investment to markets like the Middle East." He points to a recurring theme in the data: skilled workers are eyeing exits. "Don't stifle the industry, as we will lose talented people," warned another survey participant.

Companies in the Americas grew by an average of 20%, while those in Continental Europe reached 13% and Asia Pacific just 8% – all trailing well behind the Middle East's remarkable 68% surge.

Energy Insecurity

Here's the reality check: 57% of UK supply chain revenues still come from oil and gas.

While renewables dominate headlines, the transition's funding relies heavily on hydrocarbon profits. When the government slaps windfall taxes on producers or signals hostility toward the sector, it destabilises the very engine financing its net zero ambitions.

"Don't turn oil and gas off overnight. That's not transition; it's energy security suicide," argued one respondent. Broadley echoed this, noting: "Optimism about 2025 growth is high – 87% of UK firms forecast it – but targets are fragile. If policy instability continues, we'll see cost-cutting and job losses by year-end."

Beyond balance sheets, the report uncovers a raw nerve: perceived disrespect. Oil and gas professionals, in particular, feel demonised despite driving the transition. "Why must we 'beg' for legitimacy?" one asked.

This sentiment fuels talent flight. "Capability will leak slowly, and when you look up, it will be gone," cautioned another.

Broadley warned: "The UK needs a joined-up energy plan incorporating grid, oil, gas, renewables, and skills. Regions with stable policies are magnets. Uncertainty is an export."

The UK isn't lacking ideas or ambition. It lacks consistency. With 42% of firms citing fiscal uncertainty (like the windfall tax) and 25% highlighting recruitment challenges, the warning lights are flashing. The sector's 2025 growth forecasts rely on fragile assumptions – chiefly, that policy turbulence eases.

One message rings clear from the supply chain: "There needs to be a UK energy strategy." Until Westminster delivers it, the boom may come with an expiration date.

Across the 140 global energy firms surveyed across five regions (Americas, UK, Europe, Middle East and APAC), 2024 was a record-breaking year for energy firms, with 77% of companies reporting growth and an average surge of 24% in revenue – matching last year's record. But that momentum came with blind spots.

Only 6% of companies, across all regions, pursued new export markets, energy transition revenues dropped from 9% to 5%, and 91% of firms stayed focused on oil and gas. Even digital strategies fell short: 60% used AI, but just 9% linked it to growth.



Stuart Broadley, EIC's CEO



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Denholm Industrial Services and Integrity ISS announce collaboration for integrated industrial solutions

Denholm Industrial Services Limited and Integrity ISS Limited are pleased to announce their strategic collaboration aimed at delivering comprehensive integrated industrial service solutions to several targeted clients across the UK and UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).

Combining their extensive expertise, resources, and industry experience, Denholm Industrial Services Limited and Integrity ISS Limited will jointly offer an expanded portfolio of services, including design, engineering and construction, scaffolding, insulation, painting, industrial cleaning, and specialist access solutions.

The partnership signifies a commitment from both companies to meet the evolving needs of their clients across diverse sectors such as energy, marine, petrochemicals and infrastructure development. This collaboration will leverage the complementary strengths and established reputations of both companies, providing an unparalleled capability to execute complex projects efficiently, safely, and sustainably.

"We are delighted to formalise our collaboration with Denholm Industrial Services Limited," said Stuart Charles Sinclair, CEO of Integrity ISS Limited. "By working together, we can enhance our service offerings and deliver greater value to our customers."

Steve Hill, managing director of Denholm Industrial Service Limited, added: "This partnership represents an exciting step forward. Our combined capabilities will allow us to provide integrated solutions that are innovative, reliable, and tailored specifically to our customers' needs."

Both companies are confident that this strategic partnership will enable them to effectively support clients in achieving operational excellence and meeting their long-term industrial goals.



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MOTOR MOUTH

Weekend with the Porsche Cayenne E-Hybrid: A Blend of Performance, Comfort and Efficiency

As a Chamber member in my role of vice president of operations at Worley, I was invited by the team to test out the new Porsche Cayenne E-Hybrid. As the owner of an electric vehicle already, I was really intrigued to see whether luxury really could meet efficiency and whether Porsche could really pull this off.

I have to say, they had me from the moment I walked into the showroom at Aberdeen Porsche, I was greeted with a welcoming service and I knew I would be driving away with a quality product. For once, I was delighted by the fact that my 'commute' to work is slightly longer than average as I drove back that evening to my home in West Linton – the perfect opportunity to test the car out across a range of conditions. Over the course of the weekend, the Cayenne handled everything from scenic countryside roads to urban traffic with ease, leaving a lasting impression as a capable, luxurious and impressively efficient SUV.

As a car enthusiast, I launched straight into the details to find out how impressive this machine really was. This model of the Porsche Cayenne E-Hybrid featured a 3.0-litre turbocharged V6 petrol engine paired with an electric motor, producing a combined output of 470 PS and 650 Nm of torque. This powertrain allows the Cayenne to accelerate from 0–62

mph in just 4.9 seconds, which is remarkable for a vehicle of its size and a lot of fun. Despite its performance credentials, the plug-in hybrid system still has excellent fuel efficiency, especially when operating in hybrid or fully electric modes.

On Saturday, we took a drive through the scenic Scottish Borders near Peebles, and it didn't disappoint. The winding country roads were no problem whatsoever. The Cayenne's adaptive air suspension soaked up the bumps like magic, and its all-wheel-drive system gave us that smooth, planted feel through every curve. But let's talk about the real judges of ride comfort – the kids. They gave the back seat two enthusiastic thumbs up.

We ended the day with a relaxed dinner at the Horse Shoe Inn in Eddlestone, arriving in a ride that's as classy as it is clever. Whether you're into tech, comfort, or just need a peaceful road trip with the family, the Cayenne E-Hybrid makes it feel easy – and it was pretty fun too.

Sunday's trip into Edinburgh offered a contrasting environment for testing, stop-and-start city driving mixed with stretches of open road. I have to say, the E-Hybrid system truly came into its own in urban conditions, with the car

operating frequently in electric mode. The electric-only range of up to 46 miles meant that most of the city driving could be done emission-free, aligning with the growing importance of low-emission zones in urban areas.

Inside, the Cayenne E-Hybrid really shows off Porsche's commitment to quality and innovation. The updated interior features the new Porsche Driver Experience, a design philosophy borrowed from the Taycan, where essential controls are grouped around the steering wheel for absolute ease of driving. The large digital display, touch-sensitive climate controls, and very easy integration with Apple CarPlay make it both high-tech and intuitive, it was very easy to just jump in and drive without the fuss of setting everything up.

Charging the Cayenne E-Hybrid is really straightforward. With a 17.9 kWh battery, it was easily charged with a standard home wall box in under four hours, making overnight charging really simple and practical. I would imagine that for anyone using this car for short commutes or errands, it's entirely feasible to run on electric power most of the time.



All in all, the Porsche Cayenne E-Hybrid absolutely did not disappoint. For those who don't want to compromise between performance, luxury, and sustainability, this is an ideal choice. Whether cruising through the hills of the Borders or navigating the streets of Edinburgh, it delivers a driving experience that is quintessentially Porsche—refined, powerful, and remarkably efficient.

Chris Behan,

Vice President Operations
– Scotland, Worley

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Model used for illustrative purposes.

Combined fuel consumption (internal combustion model range): 24.1mpg – 26.0 mpg, combined CO₂ emissions 266 – 247 g/km.

Fuel consumption weighted (PHEV model range): 62.5 – 70.4 mpg, Electrical consumption combined (weighted) (model range): 3.2 – 3.1 mi/kWh,
Range combined (model range): 44 – 51 miles, CO₂-emissions (weighted) combined (model range): 103 – 90 g/km.



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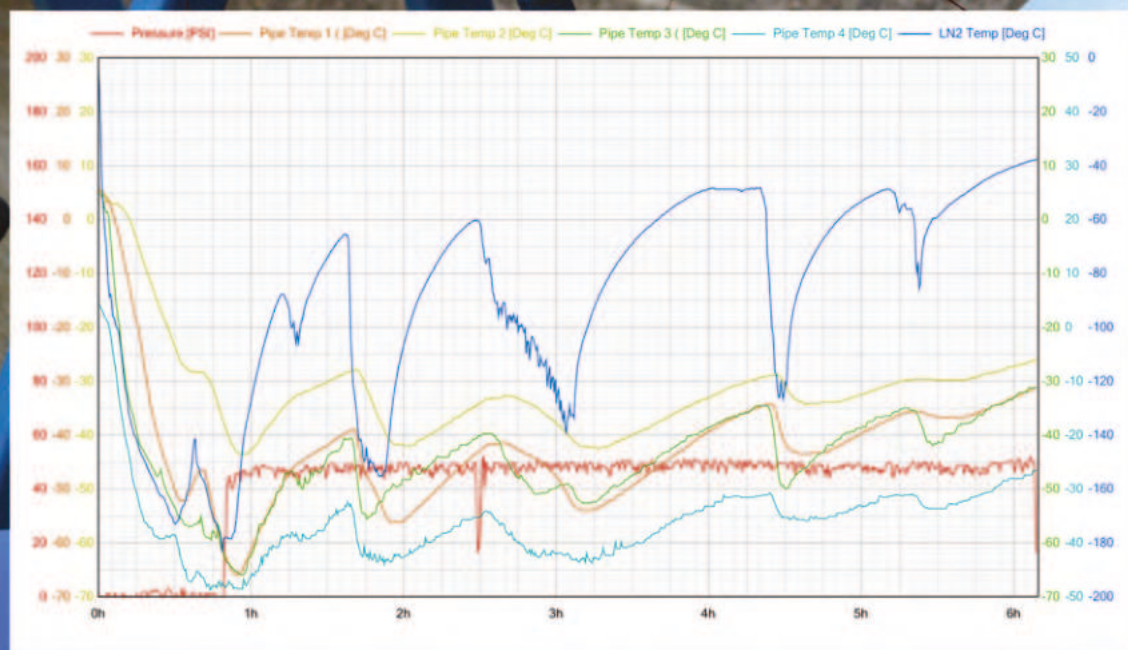
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Green Volt awards onshore FEED contract to Worley



Credit Flotation Energy

Green Volt, a pioneering joint venture project from developers Flotation Energy and Vårgrønn, has awarded a front-end engineering and design (FEED) contract for its onshore substation to Worley.

Worley, a professional services company of energy, chemicals and resources experts, was awarded the contract after a competitive tender process. It will develop an all-encompassing design plan for Green Volt's onshore substation, covering: electrical, construction, commissioning, operations and maintenance and decommissioning engineering scopes.

A team from Worley's Aberdeen office will lead the FEED, overseeing an anticipated 12 months of engineering work, in preparation for the next stage in the substation's build. Green Volt, headquartered in Aberdeen, says Worley's plans to deliver the project from the Scottish energy hub were a key aspect to its successful tender.

Matthew Green, project director for Green Volt, said: "Green Volt is proving floating wind technology can scale. There is huge opportunity to build a UK supply chain ready to act on the global opportunities ahead.

"We're delighted to welcome the support of Worley as it leads the delivery of the onshore substation FEED from Aberdeen, our home city. Green Volt is a highly ambitious project, designed for rapid deployment and today's announcement takes us one step closer."

Green Volt's onshore substation will be located north of Peterhead connecting a 560 MW floating windfarm 80km off the East Coast of Scotland. Having secured a Contract for Difference (CfD) from the government last year - and with full onshore and offshore planning approval - it is set to become the world's largest commercial-scale floating offshore windfarm.

The ORE Catapult estimates Green Volt will contribute £2.5billion in Gross Value Added, with more than £750million retained in Scotland. It will also create thousands of jobs, with many of these in Scotland.

Marino Barbi, senior vice president UK, Worley said, "This is a key project that will provide a sustainable energy supply to the UK's market, and we're excited to be part of it. This work aligns perfectly with Worley's own ambitions and I'm proud that our people are supporting Green Volt's efforts to meet energy demands efficiently, cost effectively and sustainably."

To find out more about the Green Volt floating offshore windfarm, please visit: **www.greenvoltoffshorewind.com**



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ENERGY



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EVENTS



The James Hutton Institute's world class science delivers huge economic impact

The James Hutton Institute has been recognised for its powerful economic impact and excellence in science after two independent evaluations confirmed an increase in its real-world value underpinned by globally recognised research.

A new economic impact report from BiGGAR Economics states that in 2023/24, for every £1 of funding the Hutton received from the Scottish Government, it delivered more than £15 in economic value for the UK economy, of which £9 was retained in Scotland and confirms the status of the Hutton as a key component of Scotland's research and economic infrastructure.

£61.8million of Gross Value Added (GVA) was retained close to the Hutton's two main campuses: £40million in Dundee city region; £22million in Aberdeen city region.

The Hutton also supported 2,575 jobs in the reported year, of which 1,525 jobs were in Scotland and 740 jobs in the Aberdeen and Dundee city regions (410 jobs in Dundee City Region and 330 jobs in Aberdeen City Region).

Food and drink sector

The report evaluates Hutton science in specific sectors and shows that in 2024, Hutton's research was worth £221.3million to the UK food and drink sector, supporting around 1,185 jobs in the industry. One of the main reasons for the increase in GVA has been an increase in the value of commercial research contracts secured by the Hutton since 2016 from under £1million to £2.6million. This is particularly noteworthy because this period also saw the UK's exit from the European Union, an event that had been widely expected to make securing research funding more difficult.

Another important change has been the emergence of a thriving and effective innovation ecosystem. An important catalyst for this has been the creation of the International Barley Hub and the Advanced Plant Growth Centre on-site, both of which were made possible by major investment through the Tay Cities Region Deal. (Sector-specific values are in notes for editors)

Climate change

Adaptation and mitigation in the face of climate change are important for the economy and the resilience of rural communities. The Hutton's scientific expertise is shaping resilient agricultural practices, preserving biodiversity, protecting and restoring natural habitats, reducing the carbon footprint of agriculture, enabling societies to thrive in the face of a changing climate and contributing to the Scottish Government's sustainability, environment, biodiversity, climate change and net zero agendas. Such impacts are more difficult to quantify in economic terms but represent huge benefit in terms of preventive spend in the face of likely high climate costs. The Hutton's

action-based approach such as the HydroGlen green hydrogen farm is innovating and setting out a blueprint for adaptation and mitigation in the rural sector.

Globally recognised science

This economic impact is a result of the Hutton's unique research, which brings together expertise in both natural and social sciences. In a recent review of Hutton's science conducted by international experts, it confirmed, without exception, the quality of science in each of its five departments noting it variously as "excellent", "outstanding", "well respected" and "highly original".

The review process highlighted that the scale of the economic and societal contribution made by the Hutton is a result of its long-standing mission and ongoing focus on issues of strategic national (and international) importance, underpinned by decades of institutional experience, globally important collections of genetic resources and specialist research and demonstration facilities that have taken decades to accumulate.

Speaking of these findings, Professor Colin Campbell, chief executive officer at the Hutton, said: "It's clear that investment in our excellent science makes an incredible contribution to the Scottish, UK and global economies and shows that science is a safe and productive investment. While the economic impact is large it is most visible the tip of the impact we have in terms of environmental social and economic benefits.

"We are grateful to our funders – particularly the Scottish and UK governments – who trust in our science and who are rewarded with the types of figures we are reporting today."





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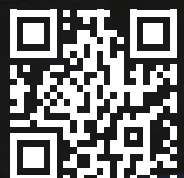
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Doug and Heather Pickering

Nomad Infrastructure deploys Doug and Heather Pickering to Aberdeen to facilitate UK expansion and support the development of the Evolution Hydrogen Peterhead Project

Nomad Infrastructure, a US-based asset development and engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) firm headquartered in Carmel, Indiana, has announced that Doug and Heather Pickering have arrived temporarily in Aberdeen to set the foundations and aid operations director, Paul Binnie, to expand the company's UK office and drive the strategy and groundwork for the Evolution Hydrogen Peterhead green hydrogen project.

Founded in Indianapolis, Nomad Infrastructure specialises in the development and delivery of high-value capital projects across the energy, industrial, and infrastructure sectors. The move into the UK market marks a significant step in Nomad's plan to support the expansion of clean energy infrastructure in the region.

With over 25 years of experience across startups and multi-billion dollar energy infrastructure initiatives, Nomad Infrastructure is poised to scale its UK operations and contribute significantly to Scotland's commitment to advanced energy infrastructure. Its leadership is expected to catalyse further investment, innovation, and skilled employment opportunities in the region.

In Aberdeen, Nomad will also support the development of the Evolution Hydrogen Group, LLP program, with its first planned project in the Peterhead area. Positioned near offshore wind energy landings and the port of Peterhead, this project is poised to become a centrepiece for Scotland's emerging hydrogen infrastructure initiatives.

Utilising Aberdeen's world-class engineering base, Nomad plans

to anchor EPC engineering, construction, and commissioning efforts to develop ongoing operations from this hub.

Doug commented: "We're thrilled to have Nomad join the talented community in Scotland."

"Establishing our presence in Aberdeen positions us uniquely to support Evolution Hydrogen Group, as well as tap into the region's extensive energy-focused workforce, supplier base, and partners present to help develop advanced energy infrastructure projects globally."

NOMAD
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the MEMBER MEET the



Gary Gray,
*Managing Director,
Strategic Resources*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Since 1987, our focus has been on providing exceptional staff and contractor recruitment services, coupled with outstanding contractor management and outsourced payroll solutions. Our extensive experience enables us

to grasp the market intricacies and cater precisely to our clients' requirements.

Who are your customers?

We have a diverse client base in the oil and gas sector, with several clients benefitting from our services for more than 25 years.

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

The windfall tax has presented a significant challenge for our business, impacting our clients' ability to invest in their businesses. As a result, decisions to divest assets have been made, reducing staff opportunities and contract recruitment opportunities. Additionally, the cancellation of projects by several clients has further affected recruitment prospects for both staff and contract recruitment.

As Winston Churchill famously said: "A pessimist sees the difficulty in

every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty." Embracing this mindset, we are exploring new avenues for growth and sustainability, particularly focusing on the renewable energy sector.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

To prioritise effectively, shift your focus towards aspects within your control. Redirect energy from concerns beyond your influence to empower action where it matters most.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

I believe that the Chamber is dedicated to supporting all businesses in the North-east. By actively listening to its members and striving to influence local and national governments, it ensures a strong advocacy for the local business community.



Steven Wright,
*CNC Manager/Product Designer,
Trojan Crates Limited*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

The company was founded in 1979 by our late chairman, Alistair Paterson, who started the business manufacturing timber crates from his home in Aberdeen. We now have three manufacturing facilities, covering the north and south of

the city. Our core business includes the manufacture and production of bespoke timber crates, flight/transit cases and custom packaging solutions including fully bespoke CNC engineered foam inserts.

Who are your customers?

We predominantly specialise in the supply and manufacture of bespoke packing solutions to the oil and gas and renewables sectors. We also provide bespoke flight cases and CNC engineered foam inserts to the entertainment and audio/visual industries.

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

Since exiting the EU, and like so many other companies, we've experienced some significant delays in our supply chain and increased costs of internationally supplied goods. As a result, we've had to restructure our international supply chains to adapt to the new trading relationship.

Recent acquisition of additional workshop space in the south of the city has provided a great opportunity to expand and grow our CNC/case making facility.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

As a fairly new member, we look forward to new opportunities to connect with local businesses and expand our network within Aberdeen and the Shire.



WELL-SAFE SOLUTIONS

Well-Safe Solutions is creating a sustainable future for the energy sector through safe and efficient well life cycle services. It supports each stage of the well life cycle, from drilling to decommissioning, as part of the global energy transition.

[WELLSAFESOLUTIONS.COM](https://wellsafesolutions.com)

Brown & Mason commits to Shetland's Dales Voe decommissioning site

One of Europe's largest demolition and dismantling companies has committed to the UK offshore decommissioning sector by entering a new partnership based at the Dales Voe site at Lerwick Harbour.

Brown & Mason, which has been operating for more than 60 years in the heavy industrial sector, has partnered with Peterson Energy Logistics to attract large-scale decommissioning projects to the island.

Richard Brown, UK operations director at Brown & Mason, said: "We are confident in the scale of opportunity and Dales Voe being the ideal location to launch our diversification into the offshore sector. As leaders in heavy industrial dismantling, and trusted partners of the energy sector, we are excited to bring our significant expertise to support this market.

"We are committed to working with the local supply chain, alongside our in-house experts and established partner Peterson Energy Logistics."

Dales Voe has one of the strongest quaysides in the UK, engineered to accommodate significant loads of up to 60 tonnes per metre squared, with a knife-edge linkspan loads of 800 tonnes per metre. This makes it 'single lift' ready and has previously accommodated topside and jacket projects.

The largest heavy lift vessel in the world, the Pioneering Spirit, has offloaded materials directly to the quayside at Dales Voe – something that is not possible elsewhere in the UK. There have also been skidded barge load-ins from its Iron Lady barge, which is only possible due to the depth capabilities of 12.5m and the geography of the site.

Captain Calum Grains, chief executive of Lerwick Port Authority, added: "In Lerwick, we have the capabilities and capacity to service the decommissioning industry. We are strategically located with the right assets and people to make this an incredibly efficient option for hundreds of offshore assets.

"Our track record handling these significant large-scale projects at Dales Voe includes the world's largest construction vessel Pioneering Spirit first delivering the 14,200 tonnes Ninian Northern platform topsides, returning in April 2022 with the field's 8500 tonne steel support jacket. Then returning for a third visit in 2024 to offload a cargo of materials direct to quayside for another North Sea project, which cannot be done elsewhere in the UK."

Brown & Mason is in the process of the applying to take over the SEPA site operating permit and is actively pursuing projects that will utilise Lerwick Harbour. The company is working alongside Peterson Energy Logistics which has operated in Shetland for more than 20 years and has been heavily involved in decommissioning projects during that time.



Lerwick Harbour's Dales Voe Base is strategically located in the North Sea, with natural deep-water access and has one of the strongest quaysides in the UK for large-scale decommissioning projects. Photo credit: © Alexander Simpson, Lerwick Port Authority.

Peterson employs around 75 people in Shetland across a range of shorebase, lifting, and technical services, with an extensive track record of managing and executing large and complex projects. This has included the logistics and load-in and out of new build and decommissioning assets, requiring complex logistical planning and engineering. Peterson has managed decommissioning materials across a range of sizes, weights, and sectors from subsea assets to larger Northern North Sea topside and jackets as single lifts.

Alongside its engineering and logistics capabilities, Peterson operates plant, equipment, and infrastructure critical to the success of large projects including mobile and harbour cranes, axle lines of self-propelled modular transporters, and large laydown areas.

Andrew Ellis, commercial director at Peterson Energy Logistics, said: "Decommissioning is an important opportunity for the island's economy, and we are pleased to be working in partnership with Brown & Mason to offer operators expert, trusted, and innovative solutions to complex requirements.

"We're proud to be part of a strong local supply chain which has proven itself time and time again in terms of delivering services for the largest structures and projects for the energy industry. We are ready to welcome more large-scale projects to Dales Voe with Brown & Mason."

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NORTH SEA CAN BE AN ENERGY ‘POWERHOUSE’ – if we manage the transition properly, says professor

By Danny McKay

The North-east and the North Sea can become an energy “powerhouse to keep the UK going”, according to the head of RGU’s Energy Transition Institute.

Professor Paul de Leeuw laid bare the rewards, for the region and the whole country, of an organised and smooth transition towards renewables – but also set out the consequences of failing to seize the opportunity on offer.

Robert Gordon University published a report in early June warning the UK’s offshore energy industry could face job losses on the scale of Grangemouth every fortnight without intervention.

But the report, which it is hoped will help shape government policy, also outlines what needs to be done to capitalise on the transition.



Prof de Leeuw said: “The report is called Striking the Balance, and it really is about balancing future opportunities. It outlines that if you get it right, if you do a proper energy transition and you really follow the industrial strategy, we up with 40% more jobs in the industry.

“Unfortunately, that’s not what we’re doing yet. And the report also outlines that if we don’t get there, we end up with fewer jobs than we have now.

“If we see oil and gas decline, we don’t pursue the industrial strategy, we don’t get clean power by 2030, and we see activity disappear, we can literally see the oil and gas industry workforce declining to the tune of a Grangemouth equivalent every two weeks for the next five years.

“The report is describing this as an opportunity for the UK, for Scotland for the North-east of Scotland – but there’s a consequence of not doing it.”

Prof de Leeuw said the report made the case and set out the opportunities available, but that it was now up to the government to take the report’s recommendations on board after the summer recess and in the autumn budget.

He said the autumn budget would be critical in which outcome in the report becomes reality, adding: “Is it plus 40% workforce increase or is it minus 20%?”

‘It is critical that we use the ecosystem we have’

He also emphasised the strength of the North-east’s hand in relation to energy projects, saying: “If you look at the North-east of Scotland, it’s the best starting point you can have.

“The North-east has the full ecosystem, operators, developers, supply chain companies, all the service companies, education institutions – everything is here.

“If you want a place to start the new energy future from, the North Sea and particularly the North-east of Scotland is brilliant.

“However, we need to be very mindful that we also need investment for activity to happen.

“If you look at the new wind developments, new carbon capture and storage, and new hydrogen activities, most of that is happening in other parts of the UK.

“Around 80% (by gigawatts) of future offshore wind activities for the remainder of this decade are currently planned to be outside Scotland.”

‘There is a massive prize for getting this right’

Prof de Leeuw was part of the North Sea Transition Taskforce, something he described as a “unique experience”.

He said: “The taskforce was only in existence for a short period. The report came out at the end of March, but the key findings were impactful.

“The combination of the taskforce report, other industry reports, and the government’s consultations provides a unique opportunity to shape a better, more investable, and more coordinated future for the North Sea.

“I look forward to seeing what comes out after the summer recess and the government hopefully makes announcements later this year.

“There is a massive prize for getting this right.

“You can potentially get more investment coming in and up to 40% more jobs across the UK, sustain the ecosystem, have oil and gas bridge the energy demand gap until the renewables agenda comes on, particularly in the 2030s.”

Prof de Leeuw said a “rapid acceleration” of wind energy policy and projects is required to ensure the government’s clean power strategy can be delivered.

‘The faster we can deliver that future the better’

He said: “That’s a good outcome for the supply chain, a good outcome for the workforce, and a good outcome for the country because it will get to net zero faster.

“That is the winning outcome.

“If that happens, I think we can see a new energy powerhouse in the North Sea.

“The challenge is that we’re not heading in that direction yet.

“A big correction is required – particularly in terms of policy, confidence and getting the investors back on track.

“How do we turn this opportunity into reality? I think the taskforce is saying get a real direction from government, sustain the supply chain, bridge the gap by keeping activity going, get investor confidence back again, drive the extraordinary supply chain capability we’ve built over the last 50 years and use it to accelerate the renewables agenda.

“That, for me, is where the big opportunity sits. Unfortunately, we’re not there yet.

“We have the opportunity to turn the North Sea into a multi-energy powerhouse, supported by a world-class energy workforce and supply chain.

“We’ll still have oil and gas, we’re going to have a huge amount of wind generation, we have carbon and storage, we have hydrogen, all co-existing.

“The faster we can deliver that future, the better it is for the environment, the supply chain, the workforce, and the region.

“It’s a winning outcome for everyone; we just need to make sure we deliver it.”



**ROBERT GORDON
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN**



Acquisition marks 21 years of service excellence for EuroES

As it celebrates 21 years of delivering service excellence, leading independent access, inspection, and maintenance company EuroES has announced an acquisition which will set the stage for the company's next chapter.

In a move that elevates capabilities and reach, Euro Energy Services Limited (EuroES) has acquired Aberdeen-based company Future Access Solutions Ltd (FAS). In joining forces, the two will uplevel the existing service portfolio and further enhance their combined foothold in key onshore and offshore markets including wind farms, civil engineering, utilities, food and drink, and offshore construction and maintenance.

Industry-recognised Future Access Solutions was founded by Andrew Graham who has more than 30 years of operational experience gained across the professional diving and topside access industries. The company provides access consultancy and maintenance services to the offshore energy, marine and onshore civils, and construction sectors.

EuroES works closely with client project teams. The company provides solutions across several disciplines including scaffolding, specialist access systems, NDT, inspection, hydro pressure testing and heat treatment services. EuroES prides itself on adopting a mix of approaches which can be used in a bespoke way to exceed client expectations by offering more choice and a greater range of solutions.

EuroES CEO Darryl Anderson said: "Acquiring FAS, along with our approved inspection techniques, will allow us to be more competitive when delivering inspection and maintenance programs to the renewable wind farm energy sector.

"This strategic move will unlock future potential by combining our strengths to achieve greater innovation, expanded reach and enhanced value for our growing client base. We look forward to benefitting from the knowledge and expertise of Andy's team as we pool our resources in maximising future opportunities."

He added: "As EuroES turns 21, this exciting new partnership signals a strong commitment to innovation, collaboration and continued leadership in the industries we serve."



[Visit our website](#)

Fuel for the future: Research that drives the North-east forward

In a region where energy has long been the heartbeat of the economy, understanding where we're headed next is more than a business imperative, it's a shared responsibility.

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce has been at the forefront of that task for decades, delivering two of the longest-running and most influential research programmes in the region: the Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) and the Energy Transition Survey.

While the QES (delivered in partnership with British Chambers of Commerce since 1989) has served as a trusted barometer of business sentiment across all sectors, the Energy Transition Survey, launched in 2005 and formerly known as the Oil and Gas Survey, has become a flagship study tracking the evolution of our regional energy economy. Now delivered twice a year, the survey captures confidence levels, investment trends, and workforce dynamics across the energy sector. Each wave has attracted over 100 business responses, collectively representing more than 50,000 employees.

This depth of engagement matters. It ensures that the insights generated aren't just statistically sound, they're sector-sensitive, timely, and actionable. The outputs have shaped not only local strategies but national policy discussions, including being cited in the House of Commons during debates on oil and gas worker transition support. As one MP noted in Parliament this April:

"According to the Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce's energy transition survey, fewer than one in five companies are confident about the UK's ability to achieve a just transition for the workforce."
(Hansard, 23 April 2025)

This kind of impact highlights the value of credible, independent research in shaping not only business decisions but the wider policy environment. When regional insight is articulated professionally and backed by robust data, it informs everything from government intervention to investment priorities and skills development.

Building on this legacy, Research Chamber is planning to launch a bold new initiative: a Sector Analysis & Insights programme. This recurring two-year research programme is designed to deliver deep, real-time intelligence on the sectors shaping the future of the North-east economy, including **property and infrastructure, recruitment, skills and education, placemaking** (covering city and town centres, service industries, and culture), and **technology and innovation**.

Every six months Research Chamber will collaborate with industry leaders to produce detailed reports grounded in live data, stakeholder interviews, and best-practice case studies.

The aim is not just to describe what's happening, but to help businesses adapt to change, seize new opportunities, and build resilience against global shocks from digital transformation to urban regeneration.

Our approach is practical and participatory. We know from experience that the value of research lies not just in the numbers, but in how those findings are used. That's why each report will end with clear recommendations, stakeholder engagement sessions, and public dissemination via events, media, and digital platforms.

This isn't research for the shelf, it's research for action.

As we look ahead to the energy future, one defined by net zero targets, supply chain reinvention, and shifting workforce dynamics, our ability to unlock strategic insight will determine how well we navigate the transition. Research Chamber's research programmes remain an essential tool for making sense of complexity, building consensus, and driving forward a North-east economy that is innovative, inclusive, and ready for what's next.



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

samira.heshmatzadeh@agcc.co.uk

IADC North Sea Chapter: Changing industry perceptions

Members meet and greet.

Anyone attending Offshore Europe recognises these are challenging times for the UKCS.

With upstream activity significantly reduced, the IADC North Sea Chapter has long understood that industry survival depends on confronting this new reality - identifying opportunities, and transforming perceptions.

Representing all UKCS drilling contractors and 100 supply chain members, we are uniquely positioned to lead this transformation through targeted communication and advocacy across all stakeholders – governments, industry groups, educational institutions, and daily industry colleagues.

Our mission extends beyond protecting drilling asset jobs – that's too simplistic. Rather, it is our duty to do all we can to safeguard the rigs currently within the UKCS, **which in turn will positively impact a whole supply chain, and the thousands of directly and non-directly related roles within the UK.**

Retaining capacity, retaining capability, developing new talent

Our primary goal is preventing UKCS rig removal or stacking, thus maintaining adequate asset capacity and skills, not least to secure national energy security during global geopolitical uncertainty, whilst efficiently and cost-effectively undertaking the well P&A which represents a significant percentage of upcoming work. Despite ongoing frustration with P&A schedule ambiguity, we believe that even a small uptick in work during 2026/27 would be sufficient to retain the current number of drilling assets.

If anticipated P&A work materialises, capability retention should naturally follow. However, activity must begin before skills migrate to other industries and regions; a message we're actively conveying to decision makers.

We're also dedicated to redefining energy careers by positioning drilling as part of the broader energy sector, capable of transitioning between energy industries. While many believe a "career for life" no longer applies in this field, we believe it still can - but breaking down the siloes within the sector will be central to this shift in mindset.

Success requires better understanding of P&A opportunities, which are inevitable despite fluid timelines. P&A represents a fundamental well lifecycle stage; it's a challenge to be relished, a complex process which demands the ability to assess, challenge and manage risk. To ensure a **safe** and **cost-efficient** P&A industry, it's vital that we retain (and develop) amongst others, well control and well management skills.

Attracting new talent into our industry raises further challenges and a critical re-education and significant perception shift are required amongst those currently at school and college – and those who teach them. The IADC North Sea Chapter is 100% committed to getting this message across through increased activity with schools, colleges and universities.

Our approach

We champion a realistic, sustainable energy transition – emphasising the "transition". Our members possess extensive, relevant experience for this journey and beyond. We are the voice of that membership, working closely with external organisations to ensure the drilling contractor and supply chain communities are heard and understood at the highest decision-making levels.

Face-to-face communication remains high on our agenda, bringing our Primary (contractor) and Associate (supply chain) members together to share knowledge and insight, whilst building the relationships that prove central to safeguarding the UK's offshore energy industry.

To find out more about the support we provide, visit iadc.org/chapters/north-sea/#nsc-welcome



IADC
NORTH SEA
CHAPTER

he MEMBER MEET the



Dale Williamson,
Commercial Manager,
Norwegian Offshore Rental

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Norwegian Offshore Rental (NOR) is a global provider of sales and rental equipment, servicing the energy industry. NOR specialises in ROV tooling and survey rental equipment, delivering high-quality solutions tailored to meet the

demands of its clients. With a strong focus on innovation, sustainability, and customer satisfaction, NOR Offshore Rental has established itself as a trusted partner in the offshore industry.

Who are your customers?

Being a company that supplies survey equipment and ROV tooling, most of our customer base is within the energy sector. Our customers span the full life cycle of a project, from initial concept to decommissioning. If there is a requirement for equipment to be mobilised on vessels or ROVs that's when we can provide solutions. Typical core customer projects that we provide equipment to support with include ROV, construction and inspection.

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

NOR Offshore Rental has expanded rapidly within the last year, and we have plans to enter other regions

to further grow the company and support our customers globally. This comes with its challenges, particularly with regards to attracting the right people, however we're confident with the success we have had to date that we can continue to build a strong team.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Treat others how you wish to be treated, and I believe that business should be conducted on a win, win basis for all parties.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

There's a long list of reasons why being a Chamber member is beneficial, however here are a few. It's the networking opportunities, being part of a community, business advertisement, the opportunity to collaborate with others and being honest, having a relationship manager to keep you accountable and making sure you are fully utilising the membership benefits.



Stuart Sutherland,
Country Manager UK,
Odfjell Technology

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Odfjell Technology delivers exploration and P&A campaigns efficiently, safely and reliably. We bring together experienced people, proven tools and integrated services across UKCS platform drilling operations, well services and

projects and engineering - reducing complexity and keeping projects moving at pace.

Who are your customers?

We work with Tier 1 operators, contractors and independents, supporting them across the well lifecycle, from running casing to fishing, intervention and P&A, with the tools, crews and capacity to deliver.

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

The instability of the UKCS remains challenging, impacting talent attraction, retention and industry growth. The P&A market presents a significant opportunity to apply our technology and experience to plugs wells, however this market is still being delayed by uncertainty.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Make the most of your membership by connecting with the Chamber team - they're there to help you unlock opportunities and maximise the value of being part of the network.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The Chamber's focus on improving the local business environment is invaluable. As a member, we can contribute to discussions and initiatives that drive positive change for the region.



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Established in 1996, Greenwell has grown from a family-run furniture business into a leading provider of office furniture, containers, modular buildings, and warehouse storage solutions. As the only showroom of its kind in the North East of Scotland, we offer modular office fit-outs, storage solutions, and full design, supply, and installation services – Go Green Go Greenwell.

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Final design revealed for Castlegate refurbishment

The final design of the refurbishment works at The Castlegate is to include significant greening of the area, restoration of the Mercat Cross, and new outdoor seating for cafes.

Aberdeen City Council's Finance and Resources Committee approved the designs which will also include an enhanced setting and access to seating for the Gordon Highlanders' Memorial, feature lighting, and clear and unobstructed pavements next to buildings.

Committee convener councillor Alex McLellan said: "The Castlegate is a historic part of the city so it is fitting it will get a refurbishment which will enhance the area.

"Features such as the Mercat Cross and the Gordon Highlanders' Memorial are an important part of Aberdeen's heritage so it is important they are not only refurbished but have an appropriate and more usable space around them.

"Engagement with local businesses and community groups has been very helpful and fruitful in designing this space and we thank people for their valuable input.

"We look forward to the start of the works soon and watching it take shape over the coming months."

A report to committee said engagement sessions took place last August (2024) with youth, community, business active travel, and transport groups who set the key principles of design based on the spatial. This was followed up with further sessions involving the Disability Equity Partnership, Cycle Forum, and Castlegate businesses.

The report said events in the space are an important part of the history and character of the Castlegate and the design reflects this. The area to the west of the Mercat Cross is designed to be the focus of events of a range of sizes. Street furniture, planters etc in the area are removeable to enable larger events as required.

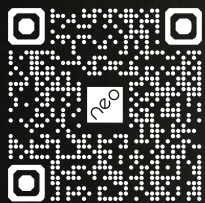
The Gordon Highlanders Statue is relocated to the south side of the Castlegate, with seating positioned opposite to improve the setting and support those paying their respects. Representatives of the Gordon Highlanders have been involved in the design and have sent a letter expressing their support.

Space is available for on street market trading subject to licenses, outdoor seating for cafés, restaurants etc, subject to café permits and other permissions.

Advance works such as utility diversions were expected to begin in August with main works due to start this autumn/winter thereafter. Construction start will be dependent on completion of advance works and is expected to take around 12 months.



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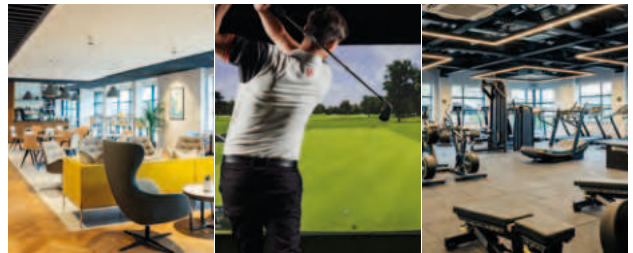
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First part of £50million Aberdeen beachfront redevelopment officially opened

The first part of a £50million redevelopment of Aberdeen beach has officially opened with the unveiling of the new-look Broadhill.

Aberdeen's Lord Provost, councillor David Cameron, toasted the occasion with a cup of tea from a tartan flask and a traditional rowie at a striking new viewpoint on top of the well-known landmark.

The five-hectare Broadhill has been transformed with new access steps, footpaths, viewpoints, drystone walls, timber and concrete seating and landscaping. The work was completed in time for the public to enjoy the site as a vantage point for the Tall Ships Races in July.

As he surveyed the completed works, the Lord Provost said: "This is an exciting occasion to toast with the first part of the beachfront works finished."

Broadhill is part of the biggest redevelopment of Aberdeen beach for 35 years with work well under way in creating a beach park and a large events field.

The Broadhill works have seen more than 10,000 new trees, shrubs, and underlying vegetation planted across the site to help enhance the natural environment by further diversifying the habitat and ecological value of the area.

The Lord Provost was joined for the opening ceremony by members of the city's Young Ambassadors, a group of young people who contributed ideas for the beach plans.

The other beach works have seen five new buildings and shelters currently being constructed for the play and events sites along with a new skate landscape while the foundations have been laid for a large bespoke play structure called the Rope Factory which is set to become an iconic attraction.

The play area will have four zones – sport, adventure, woodland, and coastal – all with different free activities.

The 2.5-hectare events field will have an amphitheatre and will be able to host festivals, larger concerts and gatherings. The play park and events field are due for completion in autumn 2026.

Hub North Scotland is the council's development and delivery partner for the master plan projects and the main contractor for the beach works is the Robertson Construction Group.



Build **FOR THE FUTURE** with **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** at NESCol

**NORTH EAST
SCOTLAND
COLLEGE**

North East Scotland College has launched a new Workforce Development team to expand support for the region's employers.

NESCol has a long track record in providing training for individuals and organisations seeking to reskill and upskill across a vast range of disciplines.

The creation of the Workforce Development function is designed to build on that delivery and strengthen the partnerships with employers that help shape an offer which already featured more than 200 part-time courses with a focus on personal and professional development.

Iain Cocker, who leads the team in his role as the College's Business Development Manager, said: *"NESCol works closely with organisations in every sector to ensure training reflects the needs of the North East and we are equipped to adapt and respond to demand. The Workforce Development team is an evolution of the way in which we have been forging those partnerships with employers over a number of decades and we're excited about this next phase."*

"Our established courses have been devised and developed over time to ensure the latest industry trends, advances in technology and legislative changes are incorporated. We also build bespoke programmes, working with employers to identify training needs and provide customised interventions designed to meet specific objectives."

The new Energy Transition Skills Hub, which welcomed its first full-time students this summer, presents a new opportunity for innovation and will be home to a range of development opportunities for employers and individuals.

The facility, the first of its kind in Scotland, is located adjacent to the College's existing Aberdeen Altens Campus and within the Skills Campus of the Energy Transition Zone. ETZ Ltd has worked with partners to deliver the project, which is operated by NESCol. It has received funding support from the UK Government and Scottish Government's Just Transition Fund for the North East and Moray, ETZ, Shell UK and NESCol as well as industry sponsors.

Iain Cocker added: *"The Workforce Development team supports every sector in the region and the energy industry is naturally a key focus. The Energy Transition Skills Hub, with cutting-edge equipment and flexible teaching spaces, provides new possibilities that we're looking forward to bringing to the fore."*

From welding and fabricating to heat pump technology and charging infrastructure, there are growing and changing skills demands. We're in a fantastic position to meet those needs and look forward to continuing to play a central role in the North East's net zero ambitions."

NESCol is one of the largest providers of vocational education and training in Scotland, delivering to more than 20,000 full-time, part-time and online students each year. The College operates from its main Aberdeen Altens, Aberdeen City and Fraserburgh campuses as well as the Scottish Maritime Academy in Peterhead.

In addition to its key role in the Energy Transition Zone, the College collaborates with the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB) and is an active member of the Energy Skills Partnership (ESP) and the National Energy Skills Accelerator (NESA).



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Visit us at the North East Scotland pavilion at Offshore Europe

At North East Scotland College, we understand the importance of ensuring people in your business have the knowledge and expertise they need to help your organisation develop and grow.

From one-day short courses to SQA qualifications, NESCol offers a wide range of courses to meet your needs.

Alternatively, our tailored courses are designed to enhance skills, boost productivity and ensure you meet the requirements of current legislation.

Education programme aiming to inspire next generation of talent in sector ‘abundant with opportunity’

Developing skills and connecting emerging talent with opportunities is at the heart of the new and expanded skills and education programme which will debut across all four days of Offshore Europe 2025 (OE25).

The programme, which is supported by bp, OPITO and bp Aberdeen Hydrogen Energy Limited is expected to attract around 300 school pupils as well as students and those looking to upskill, change careers or return to the workplace.

The revamped initiative builds on a concept developed by bp to improve awareness of the energy industry among young people. It has been developed to inspire and showcase the exciting career opportunities available within the offshore energy sector.

Education specialists TechFest and Developing the Young Workforce North East (DWYNE), with OPITO as the education delivery team, are leading the development of the hosted schools programme, ensuring it aligns closely with the curriculum and provides a high-quality learning experience.

The Education and Skills Programme will include:

STEM Activity Zone: A space for interactive challenges and demonstrations to engage and inspire school groups and young visitors through hands-on STEM experiences.

Future Talent Hub and Theatre:

Industry leaders will discuss topics including career pathways, skills transfer and recruitment in the evolving energy landscape.

Guided Schools Tours: Structured tours including visits to themed hubs across the exhibition floor and selected exhibition stands, offering practical insights and hands-on experiences.

Doris Reiter, senior vice president, bp North Sea, said: “The energy industry is abundant with opportunity, and it will take the brightest minds and the broadest thinking to unlock its future. That’s why bp is supporting the education offering at Offshore Europe. Its expanded focus resonates with our commitment to inspiring and developing the talent and skills that will power the industry in the decades to come.

“We hope the engagements the young people have at the event will ignite sparks of curiosity that develop the next generation for our dynamic industry.”

Stephen Marcos Jones, chief executive officer at OPITO, said: “We are proud to champion the expanded Skills and Education Programme at SPE Offshore Europe 2025. This is more than an event - it’s a vital opportunity to open young eyes to the future of energy. By connecting students with real-world experiences and the technologies transforming our sector, we’re not just informing - we’re inspiring.

“Through My Energy Future powered by OPITO, we are actively shaping a talent pipeline that reflects the diversity, innovation, and ambition required for a net-zero future. By working in close partnership with educators and industry, we aim to spark curiosity, nurture confidence, and help every young person see a future for themselves in this dynamic and essential sector.”

Dr Oliver Taylor, chief executive for bp Aberdeen Hydrogen Energy Limited, the joint venture between bp and Aberdeen City Council developing the Aberdeen Hydrogen Hub, said: “Captivating young minds is fundamental to building a vibrant future workforce. We’re proud to sponsor Offshore Europe’s education programme and get involved in the brilliant programme of events that I’m sure will help light the path for exciting careers across the energy industry.”

OE25 is free to attend and registration is now open –
www.offshore-europe.co.uk



Neo Energy and Repsol deal creates new North Sea operator



Repsol has completed the merger of its UK North Sea business with privately-owned Neo Energy to create one of the largest oil and gas producers in the region.

The new combined company Neo Next has been created from the merger of Neo and Repsol Resources UK, a deal that was announced in March this year.

Neo's owner HitecVision retains a 55% ownership in the new company with Repsol holding 45%.

The combined company will be one of the largest producers in the UK North Sea with a projected output of 130,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day in 2025, of which 68% is oil, according to Repsol.

Neo has assets in the Central North Sea, including interests in the Shearwater, Britannia Area, and Elgin Franklin hubs. Repsol's UK portfolio includes the Piper and Claymore fields.

John Knight, executive chair of Neo Next, commented: "The combined company has much more scale and diversity and opportunities for cost consolidation and portfolio high-grading giving resilience despite the tough conditions in the UK.

"The benefits of synergies from consolidation will create much stronger value creation, profit and cash flow yield for shareholders and more options for capital allocation decisions well into the next decade. But this company will also be very well positioned to choose both organic and inorganic growth.

"We will certainly look to be making more value accretive acquisitions. We have known Repsol E&P for many years and have the highest regard for them as a capable and reliable partner."

Francisco Gea, executive managing director of Exploration and Production at Repsol, commented: "This combination will create a jointly governed business which will call upon the key strengths of both shareholders. Repsol contributes operational capabilities on production, development, and decommissioning activities which will be combined with NEO Energy expertise on financial and commercial matters.

"We believe this combined business has many more opportunities for profitable growth in the basin and beyond."

INTRODUCING ADURA

When Adura was announced as the name of Equinor and Shell's major joint venture, it set the tone for the company's commitment to Aberdeen and the North-east of Scotland.

The name Adura brings together the "A" of Aberdeen and "dura", representing durability.

Collaborating closely to identify the name for their incorporated joint venture (IJV), Shell and Equinor wanted something rooted in their respective heritage and focused on shaping the future of the North Sea basin in the years ahead.

Adura is a company built on firm foundations, much like the strong granite synonymous with the city.

That loyalty and commitment to the city has not gone unnoticed, with industry figures, politicians and business bosses welcoming the move and voicing their excitement for the future.

MP Stephen Flynn vowed to work closely with Adura to ensure the region reaps the rewards of its success.

He said: "Aberdeen is home to a proud and productive industry and Adura has a key role to play in helping to secure a prosperous future for our region.

"Success for our city will be measured in jobs, economic growth and progress towards net zero and I will be working closely with the new company to make that future a reality."

MSP Kevin Stewart added: "Aberdeen remains a major player in the energy industry, and I'm delighted to see that reflected in the new name, with

Aberdeen literally putting the A in Adura.

"This welcome commitment to Aberdeen is good news for investment, jobs, and the journey to net zero, and I look forward to hearing their plans for the long-term future of the North Sea energy sector."

The creation of Adura follows the announcement in December 2024 that Equinor and Shell would be combining their UK offshore oil and gas assets and world-class expertise to form a new company.

OEUK's chief executive, David Whitehouse, nodded to the new company honouring the region's "proud industrial heritage".

He said: "Shell and Equinor's joint investment in Adura reflects real confidence in our North Sea's enduring role at the heart of UK offshore energy.

"As we build out renewables, oil and gas will remain essential to our energy mix for decades to come. By drawing on deep local roots and decades of expertise, these companies are creating new opportunities for UK jobs, UK growth, and the future of UK energy supply - while honouring and building on our proud industrial heritage."

Professor Paul de Leeuw, director of Robert Gordon University's Energy Transition Institute, said the joint venture would allow for a more focused approach to the North Sea without distractions of other assets around the globe.

He said: "We've seen other companies do it, that's how Spirit Energy was created, so the mould is already there and it's been very successful.

"It's up to the new team to turn it into something that's a really powerful mechanism for the region.

"It is going to be one of the largest producers and therefore one of the largest investors and therefore one of the largest players in the area, so it's a really important development."

Adura will sustain domestic oil and gas production and security of energy supply in the UK and beyond, headquartered at the Silver Fin building in Aberdeen city centre. Aberdeen, the UK's energy capital and a major centre of global engineering and supply chain excellence, is at the heart of operations and central to the name of Adura, alongside an enduring commitment to the future of energy from the North Sea.

Work continues towards securing regulatory approvals, with launch of the IJV expected by the end of this year.

Bob Keiller, Our Union Street boss, is hopefully Adura's decision to base itself at the Silver Fin will help bring other major companies into the city centre.

He said: "Adura's decision to base itself on Union Street is hugely significant for Aberdeen. It sends a powerful message that the heart of our city remains a vibrant and credible location for doing business at the highest level.

"This isn't just a new chapter for the North Sea energy sector - it's a moment that should inspire real pride and confidence across our community.

"Significant investment in our city centre is possible when ambition, place and purpose align.

REGION REACTS AS UK NORTH SEA'S LARGEST INDEPENDENT OIL AND GAS PRODUCER PUTS DOWN ROOTS IN ABERDEEN CITY CENTRE

"We believe this can act as a catalyst – encouraging other businesses to follow suit, to see the value of being part of a thriving city core, and to help write the next chapter in the Union Street story."

Shell and Equinor each announced the venture to their staff at their respective offices at the end of June.

Simon Roddy, senior vice president Shell UK Upstream, said: "Adura has taken an exciting step forward with the announcement of its new name – rooted in a proud history in the North Sea and looking forward with confidence to delivering secure energy for the UK for many years to come."

"When Adura launches later this year it will become the UK's largest independent producer."

"Through combining assets and expertise, we will create a robust portfolio, with a shared purpose, to unlock long term value."

Camilla Salthe, senior vice president Equinor UK Upstream, said: "We are so pleased to have reached this major milestone in the creation of the new company with Shell."

"For us, the name Adura represents the very heart of this company and speaks to its people and place within the energy community anchored in Aberdeen, alongside its longevity and commitment to the North Sea."

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce's Chief Executive Russell Borthwick welcomed the announcement, and the vote of confidence in the North Sea by Shell and Equinor in their choice of name.

He said: "This is an exciting moment for the future of the North Sea as two major companies take a positive step towards combining their assets and world-class expertise."

"The new name, Adura, demonstrates their pride and shared history in Aberdeen – as Europe's energy capital – and a long-term commitment to delivering energy security for the UK."

"Despite the slings and arrows thrown at the sector in recent years, for as long as we need oil and gas we should be proud to produce our own, applaud those skilled workers involved in doing so and feel extraordinarily lucky that companies choose to headquarter and continue to invest in the Granite City."

Stuart Dickson, left, and Simon Roddy of Shell



Pádraig McCloskey - Shell



Viper Innovations: Proud winners of the Autonomous Dynamic Cable Inspection competition

Viper Innovations Ltd., a high-tech engineering company providing cutting-edge electrical integrity solutions to the global subsea, rail, and industrial sectors, is proud to have been selected as the winner of an Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult's Floating Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence competition.

Delivered in partnership with Flotation Energy and Simply Blue Group, the initiative sought proposals from companies for autonomous solutions to inspect dynamic cables on floating offshore wind turbines. It was supported by the Innovate UK Innovation Exchange (iX) programme.

The purpose of the competition was to identify innovative solutions for monitoring defects inside dynamic cables on floating offshore wind farms. Viper Innovations' entry built upon their record of providing electrical monitoring and asset integrity solutions for a broad range of applications and industries.

Daniel Denning, Viper Innovations engineering manager, said: "Our journey through this initiative, part of the iX programme backed by ORE Catapult, highlights the importance of innovation in advancing floating offshore wind technologies. As the UK prepares for the deployment of approximately 1,000 dynamic cables over the next decade, Viper Innovations is proud to be at the forefront of delivering the solutions needed to improve reliability and accelerate the energy transition.

"We look forward to building on this success and continuing to work closely with Flotation Energy and the Floating Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence to support the future of offshore renewable energy – to push Dynamic Cable Condition Monitoring (DCCM) into its next phase, helping the sector overcome the challenges on the dynamic cable."

Emily Sarveswaran, ORE Catapult dynamic cable strategic programme lead, said: "At ORE Catapult's Floating Offshore Wind Centre of Excellence, we were pleased to support Viper Innovations through the Innovation Exchange (iX) challenge. As the floating offshore wind sector moves toward commercialisation, condition monitoring of dynamic subsea cables is vital to ensuring long-term asset integrity and reducing operational risk. We look forward to continuing our support for Viper Innovations and the development of their solution."



BASF and Equinor confirm strategic partnership and sign 10-year natural gas supply agreement

Equinor will supply up to 23 terawatt hours of natural gas (around 2 billion cubic meters) annually to BASF.

BASF and Equinor have signed a long-term strategic agreement for the annual delivery of up to 23 terawatt hours of natural gas over a 10-year period. The contract secures a substantial share of BASF's natural gas needs in Europe. Deliveries will start on October 1, 2025.

"This agreement further strengthens our partnership with BASF. Natural gas not only provides energy security to Europe but also critical feedstock to European industries. I am very happy that our gas also supports BASF's efforts to reduce their carbon footprint. Gas from Norway comes with the lowest emissions from production and transportation", says Anders Opedal, president and chief executive officer, Equinor.

Natural gas is a key feedstock for European industries, especially in the production of chemicals and fertilisers. BASF uses natural gas both as an energy source and as a raw material in the production of basic chemicals. This long-term partnership will support the company's strategy

to diversify its energy and raw materials portfolio. The gas is sold on market terms.

"We are very happy to enter into this long-term partnership with Equinor for the reliable supply of low-carbon natural gas for BASF's operations in Europe. Equinor is a trusted and valued partner. The supply agreement not only comes with competitive terms but also supports our sustainability targets", says Dirk Elvermann, chief financial officer and chief digital officer, BASF SE.

BASF develops a broad portfolio of solutions that are essential components in the manufacturing of everyday consumer goods, such as car interiors, sportswear, personal care items, and agricultural solutions. Equinor has been supplying gas and liquids to BASF for several years.

Addition, not transition: Reframing the UK's energy future



David Wilson,
*Aberdeen Office
Head & Audit Partner,
Johnston Carmichael*

Since the publication of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce's 41st Energy Transition report in May, a familiar conversation has continued to reverberate across boardrooms, panel sessions, strategy documents and industry forums: the urgent need to secure energy transition, investment and policy clarity. The sentiment is near-universal. But the question must now be asked, are we making progress, or are we stuck in an echo chamber?

Throughout key sector events this year, there's been a growing acknowledgement that, while the conversations are necessary, we must now do more than repeat what we already know. The issues - energy security, offshore investment, infrastructure delays, policy uncertainty - are well understood. So too is the scale of the opportunity. Yet the sector is still waiting for the bold decisions that will turn intention into impact.

The continued efforts of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce deserve real recognition - not just for highlighting these challenges, but for persistently working to ensure they are heard at the highest levels of both the UK and Scottish government.

A recurring theme has been the idea that the term 'transition' itself may be flawed. It implies an exit from oil and gas. But the reality, acknowledged by operators, developers and supply chain leaders alike, is that oil and gas remain critical to funding, fuelling and enabling our cleaner energy future. A more helpful framing may be 'addition' - an expansion of the UK's

energy mix to include wind, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage (CCS) and solar, alongside hydrocarbons.

The Norway model is often cited as an example: maximising domestic oil and gas production while investing aggressively in renewables and emerging technologies. In contrast, the UK's current approach risks undercutting its energy security, skills base and industrial future.

That said, there have been encouraging signs in recent months that offer cautious optimism for the future of the sector. The announcement of a £126million carbon capture and storage project - set to create hundreds of jobs - demonstrates how existing infrastructure can be repurposed to support large-scale decarbonisation. Meanwhile, the appointment of Dan McGrail as CEO of Great British Energy signals a stronger commitment to delivering the UK's clean power ambitions, underpinned by £1billion in planned investment to strengthen domestic energy supply chains.

Still, the fundamentals remain challenging. The pace of offshore wind deployment is lagging, investment in United Kingdom Continental Shelf (UKCS) oil and gas has dropped faster than forecast, jobs are being lost and supply chain competitiveness is being eroded. Meanwhile, energy imports - and their associated emissions - continue to rise.

In my opinion, and shared by many, it is no longer enough to talk about change.

What's needed now is not another round of panels identifying the same familiar problems, but a genuine commitment to execution. Progress will depend on better alignment between government policy and industrial capability, supported by regulatory clarity and a fiscal framework that encourages rather than deters investment. At the same time, we must continue to support the sectors that are delivering real energy today, even as we accelerate the development of tomorrow's systems.

And if we can break out of the echo chamber and move from repetition to real action, the UK still has a chance to lead in building a balanced, secure and sustainable energy future.



nexos and Apache Corporation transform North Sea operations with ZynQ visual twin software



nexos and Apache Corporation have successfully transformed their approach to asset management across eight North Sea platforms, using ZynQ 360's asset visualisation software 'ZynQ' to consolidate years of laser scan data into a single, accessible platform.

The project addresses a widespread industry challenge: valuable laser scan data being delivered on hard drives, used once, then effectively lost in storage while new surveys are commissioned for areas already scanned. This costly inefficiency has been eliminated through the ZynQ platform, which brings together existing laser scan data from past project work across Apache's Beryl and Forties assets.

Since implementation in January 2025, the results have been remarkable:

- 25,238 + platform hits so far, demonstrating high user engagement
- Around 250+ hits daily, showing consistent operational use
- four organisations now collaborating seamlessly across eight assets
- Significant reduction in repeated offshore surveys
- Faster decision-making and construction turnaround times

The assets, now accessible through the platform, include Beryl Alpha, Beryl Bravo, Beryl SPM2, Forties Alpha, Forties Bravo, Forties Charlie, Forties Delta, and Forties Echo.

Scott Logie, technical services survey and design manager at nexos, commented: "This project has been a critical step in unlocking the full value of historical and current laser scan data across Apache NS assets. By consolidating these datasets into a single, accessible platform through ZynQ 360, we've not only improved visibility and planning for current operations but also laid a strong foundation for future operations of these assets."

Craig Reid, technical support and assurance manager at Apache Corporation added: "The project demonstrates how legacy survey data, often overlooked, can be utilised into accessible assets. For Apache NS this approach vastly reduces repeated offshore surveys, provides faster decision making and construction turnaround times, and an overall smarter and more efficient method of working. It's a scalable model for operators managing a complex and aging infrastructure."

The collaboration between Apache, nexos, and ZynQ 360 has established clear standards for data integrity and user adoption. ZynQ 360 is working closely with both partners to implement guardrails for future surveys, data management protocols, value-driven integrations, and comprehensive training programmes.

Previously "lost" laser scans are now being reused for diverse applications including repair orders, lift and crane planning, with significant potential for future decommissioning projects.

ELEMENTZ: WORKING WITH INDUSTRY LEADERS TO BUILD THE BLUE DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM OF THE FUTURE.

Placing precision at the heart of everything, Elementz sits at the forefront of redefining how operators plan, execute and evolve their integrity strategy.

The year-old company specialises in robust and trusted Software as a Service (SaaS). The core offering - "Integrity Elementz" - provides a range of comprehensive, configurable cloud-based applications or "elements" to enable users to build End-to-End (E2E) integrity frameworks for their subsea assets. They can be tailored to provide all the functionality needed to serve as the core integrity platform to effectively plan, execute and report on all integrity and inspection activities.

Less than a year in, Elementz announced the creation of "Compass," a new customer strategic advisory board designed to co-create the future of digital subsea integrity and inspection management, and drive customer-centric innovation, by fostering deep collaborations with key industry leaders. The customer strategic advisory board truly acts as

the Elementz compass, guiding and steering product advancement based on actual need while embodying a joint industry spirit of discovery.

Supported by industry heavyweights such as Aker BP, Shell and Woodside, and other major operators, the board is a dynamic forum for industry pioneers providing critical insights, candid feedback and collaborative guidance as catalysts towards product strategy, usability and future innovation. Like the four cardinal points of a compass, it represents the vital connection between customers, users, developers, and support.

The creation of this powerhouse of operational expertise is vital in ensuring the Elementz portfolio evolves in step with customer needs, maximising open lines of communication and keeping it at the forefront of industry advancements whilst delivering tangible value: Elementz isn't just delivering software, it's building a Blue Digital Ecosystem that's shaped by those who use it.

Workflow standardisation and automation; actionable visualisation; improved entry usability and role-based access; smarter documentation and reporting, and practical data intelligence form the basis of the roadmap with a desired focus on more intuitive ways to interpret and interact with integrity data. The areas of focus will form the foundations upon which the next generation of the suite of products and services is built.



With Compass, Elementz isn't ready for change: it's creating it by leading from the front, putting operators at the centre of its innovation by setting a new standard for agility, collaboration and long-term value in digital subsea asset integrity.



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WORDS OF ADVICE



Mike Duncan,
*Regional Business Line Director Marine
Asset Integrity,
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Fugro is the world's leading Geo-data specialist. We map, model, and monitor the natural and built environment to create a safe and liveable world. Within our Marine Asset Integrity business line, we combine advanced technologies and innovative solutions to help clients extend asset lifecycles, reduce downtime, and manage risk.

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

A blend of accountability, trust, and clarity – always with a sense of humour. I want my team to take ownership, stay aligned on what matters, and enjoy the work they do. Throughout my career, I've found this approach builds a culture where people feel supported, responsible, and motivated to succeed.

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

Shifting from problem solver to empowering others to lead and deliver. Letting go wasn't easy, but trusting the team unlocked stronger ownership, faster decisions, and a culture built on accountability. It's incredible what happens when you stop trying to fix everything and create a space for others to drive success.

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

Don't just do something – stop and think. It's a twist on urgency that reminds me to pause, think, and lead with intent. Turns out, slowing down (a nod to Simon Sinek) often gets you further than rushing in with half-formed brilliance. Slow down to move faster!

London Stock Exchange considers 24-hour trading

The London Stock Exchange is exploring the introduction of 24-hour trading as part of a major effort to revitalise interest in UK equities and attract a new generation of retail investors.

The move, currently under discussion by London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG), would align the capital's trading hours more closely with global markets and respond to growing demand for round-the-clock access to financial assets - particularly from younger, tech-savvy investors who are used to the non-stop nature of cryptocurrency trading.

At present, the London Stock Exchange operates from 8am to 4.30pm. Under the proposals being considered, trading could be extended significantly or even made continuous, bringing the UK in line with developments in the United States, where major exchanges including Nasdaq and the New York Stock Exchange have filed plans to launch 24-hour operations.

A spokesperson for LSEG confirmed that a review of trading hours was underway, with early-stage consultations taking place across the financial community.

"We are examining all aspects, including market demand, technology requirements, and the impact on liquidity," the spokesperson said.

The LSE last reviewed its trading hours in 2020, when a proposal to shorten the day to improve work-life balance and increase liquidity was ultimately shelved.

This latest review appears to be moving in the opposite direction, driven by rapid changes in investor behaviour and a desire to modernise Britain's capital markets.

'Tremendous loss' as Raeburn Christie Clark & Wallace COO Callum McDonald passes away

Callum Anderson McDonald, the former managing partner and latterly chief operating officer of Raeburn Christie Clark & Wallace (RCCW) passed away suddenly on Sunday, July 6.

Callum enjoyed a distinguished career at the law firm over the course of four-and-a-half decades after joining the company in 1980 upon his graduation from Edinburgh University.

In a statement, RCCW announced Callum's passing with "profound sadness", adding: "Over the course of his distinguished career of 45 years at RCCW, he shaped not only the direction of the firm but also the values by which we work.

"He was more than just someone that we worked with, he had a brilliant legal mind and his sharp intellect was matched only by his remarkable wit, wisdom and unwavering sense of integrity and fairness.

"He had clarity of thought and a rare ability to see the bigger picture, he was a trusted advisor to clients and a guiding force to colleagues with a sense of perspective that many of us relied upon. Callum's legacy is woven into the culture of our firm and into the lives of those lucky enough to have known him."

Away from the office, Callum was a devoted follower of Scottish rugby, as well as a keen hill-walker and formidable quizzer.

The RCCW statement continued: "Callum will be missed more than words can express, as a Partner, an exceptional leader, and a friend.

"We extend our deepest condolences to his wife, Fiona, daughters Katie and Sarah and his granddaughter, Autumn and all who mourn this tremendous loss."



Ashtead Technology agrees partnerships with Hydrollica to provide more sustainable subsea technology

Ashtead Technology, a leading provider of mission-critical subsea technology solutions, has joined forces with Hydrollica, an advanced manufacturer of environmentally focused ROV and diver tooling.

The agreement brings a new generation of seawater-powered subsea tooling into Ashtead Technology's global fleet, including the Hydro Multi-Tool, Hydro Micro Multi-Tool and Hydro Power Pack. These compact yet powerful tools are designed to deliver high performance across a wide range of subsea operations while replacing traditional hydraulic oil with seawater, significantly reducing environmental risk.

"Hydrollica brings a fresh perspective to subsea tooling," said Dave Johnston, general manager of tooling at Ashtead Technology. "This agreement allows us to expand our rental offering with smart, forward-thinking technologies that support both operational efficiency and environmental responsibility. We're confident these tools will deliver real value to our customers working in increasingly complex and sustainability-driven projects."

Unlike traditional hydraulic systems, Hydrollica's tooling operates using seawater, eliminating the need for hydraulic oil and reducing the risk of contamination. This innovation is particularly relevant as subsea operators across renewables, oil and gas, salvage and marine construction look for cleaner, more sustainable solutions.

Commenting on the partnership, Colin West, co-founder of Hydrollica, said: "The team at Hydrollica are delighted to be partnering with Ashtead Technology, marking a significant milestone for both teams. This collaboration underscores a commitment to advancing eco-friendly subsea tooling solutions. Together, we aim to drive innovation and promote sustainable practices within the industry."



Jbs: Solutions-Driven Growth Through Listening, Agility and Engineering Strength

Jbs is proving that a clear strategy, backed by technical expertise and real engagement with clients, can lead to sustained results.

With four divisions delivering specialist products and services - from controlled flow excavation to blast containment, screw conveyors and fabrication - the business continues to grow by solving industry problems and staying close to customer needs.

Built on a reputation for responsiveness, Jbs has evolved into a globally active firm whose technology and team are trusted across critical infrastructure projects. It has diversified, invested and expanded - but always with a focus on delivering practical, engineered solutions that make a difference.

Jo McIntosh, Sales and Marketing Director at Jbs, said: "What drives us isn't just product development - it's listening to clients. When we



understand the challenge, we can engineer a smarter response, and it's how we continue to evolve across all four of our divisions."

The Sea Axe controlled flow excavation system, developed and patented in-house, is a key example. Designed to deliver high-volume seabed excavation with control and precision, it has been deployed on complex projects in the UK and internationally. A recent mobilisation involved removing more than eight metres of sand from 29 submerged piles - just 10 days from initial enquiry to project start.

The Sea Axe system has also been deployed as part of the construction phase for one of the world's longest subsea interconnectors, linking the UK and Denmark.

Elsewhere, Jbs blast containment systems are designed to manage the risks associated with pressure release events during testing, maintenance and intervention work. Capable of withstanding high-velocity projectiles

and extreme overpressure, each unit is engineered to meet client-specific requirements and space constraints. The enclosures are modular, fully reusable, and quick to assemble, providing robust protection for personnel and critical equipment during operations. With in-house design, build and testing, Jbs ensures every system is performance-rated, certified and ready for deployment across onshore and offshore environments.

Jbs designs and manufactures screw conveyors for demanding energy applications, with dual-drive systems offering enhanced durability, control and throughput. Built in-house and tailored to project needs, they are suited to handling abrasive or high-volume materials in offshore activities where reliability and safety are essential.

Jbs provides high-quality fabrication services across a range of structures including A-frames, spreader beams, tanks, platforms and pipework. With in-house design and welding expertise, the team delivers to exact specifications for clients.

“

What drives us isn't just product development - it's listening to clients. When we understand the challenge, we can engineer a smarter response, and it's how we continue to evolve across all four of our divisions.

This capability is underpinned by the company's operational base in Peterhead, home to five dedicated workshops where design, manufacturing and testing are carried out in-house. From this hub, Jbs delivers internationally - combining local strength with global reach.

That success was recognised at the 2023 Northern Star Business Awards, where Jbs won the Going Global category. The award acknowledged the company's international expansion and strong client delivery.

Jo said: "It's fantastic to demonstrate what a Scottish business can achieve globally. However, there's more to come from Jbs, with so many exciting opportunities in the pipeline. We're continuing to invest in our people, our technology and the way we deliver for clients."

That investment includes future talent. Jbs is an active partner in the Peterhead Academy Learning Partnership, offering pupils insights into engineering careers and what working in industry really looks like. Jbs continues to invest in apprenticeships as a core part of its

culture and growth, with over 60% of the team beginning their careers on a Jbs apprenticeship scheme.



"It's fantastic to demonstrate what a Scottish business can achieve globally. However, there's more to come from Jbs, with so many exciting opportunities in the pipeline."

Looking ahead, Jbs will be attending Offshore Europe, using the event to connect with clients, partners and peers.

Jo said: "It's sure to be a chance to engage, generate opportunities and get a real sense check on what the future holds - especially for the North Sea. These conversations matter, not just commercially, but in understanding where the sector is heading."

Jbs is also taking its environmental responsibilities seriously. The company is reducing its carbon footprint by adopting leaner processes through the Scottish Enterprise Net Zero Academy, delivered by the Sustainability Specialist Team. Solar panels have now been installed at the Peterhead headquarters, providing low-carbon, renewable energy and reducing emissions. This forms part of a wider energy efficiency strategy that reflects a Jbs commitment to building a more sustainable future.

With demand strong across its services, Jbs remains focused on growth through listening, delivery and strategic investment. The result is a business that not only adapts - but helps shape the future.

For more information, visit:
www.wearejbs.co.uk



Aramex UK helps exporters offset US tariff costs

Since President Trump announced that the UK was subject to a baseline 10% tariff on the majority of goods entering the USA, many British firms have been grappling with cost increases and heightened uncertainty.

In 2024, the UK's goods exports to the United States were valued at £59.3billion, making the US the UK's largest export partner for goods. It is estimated that around 59% of UK small exporters currently sell goods to the US.

On April 5, 2025, a 10% tariff was applied to the first 100,000 UK cars exported to the US each year. Any cars exported above that quota will face a 25% tariff. Tariffs on UK aerospace exports have been cut to zero on goods such as engines and similar aircraft parts.

For many British companies, the implementation of tariffs has already led to significant disruptions both operationally and from financial performance standpoint.

For international logistics specialist Aramex UK, it has instead turned to multimodal freight solutions to help ease the financial burden of incurred tariffs for its clients which sell goods into the US, ensuring to maintain service reliability and minimise disruption where possible.

In particular, it has looked to reduced reliance on air freight, largely due to rates still remaining high, opting instead to ship goods by sea to Canada before transporting them into the United States by truck.

With Aramex having a physical presence in both the USA and Canada, the company has been able to leverage its global network and infrastructure to design integrated end-to-end solutions that bypass the higher costs associated with direct air freight, while still having full visibility and control over cargo movements across borders.

Haissam Badr, national freight manager at Aramex UK, says that staying open-minded and rethinking traditional freight strategies has been key to overcoming the financial challenges posed by new tariffs, helping to keep UK-US trade viable and as profitable as possible for businesses which are already facing economic pressure on home turf.

He said: "By adopting a more flexible strategy, we've been able to offset unnecessary costs for our customers and minimise the disruption caused by the tariffs implemented by the Trump administration earlier in the year. To find viable solutions for businesses, we've taken a step back to analyse where efficiencies can be made across the entire supply chain, particularly by consolidating traditional transport methods and introducing more strategic multimodal combinations.

"This approach has allowed us to successfully maintain service continuity in the wake of these tariffs, albeit with a slightly longer lead time for goods to arrive, while also saving on shipping costs. In some cases, we've generated significant cost savings for clients, simply by thinking creatively about the most cost-effective way we can move goods.

"Businesses have been, and are still, concerned about the long-term impact of increased imposed duties, especially when the economic situation in the UK is already putting pressure on margins. However, there are ways which firms can reduce the cost of trading with the US without having to take drastic action. For instance, by considering alternative routing options and taking a more strategic approach to freight and customs planning, businesses can actually uncover efficiencies that could somewhat help towards offsetting the added costs from tariffs. The key is being open to rethinking traditional models and finding ways where practical consolidations can be made."





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Tall Ships leave lasting legacy as event attracts more than 400,000 visits

With a magnificent Parade of Sail, the Tall Ships have bid a fond farewell to Aberdeen after attracting more than 400,000 visits over four days and creating a lasting legacy for the Granite City, say organisers.

The partner organisations – Aberdeen City Council, Port of Aberdeen and Aberdeen Inspired – hailed the four-day event as an outstanding success, boosting the economy and re-energising the Granite City with a renewed sense of pride and confidence in the future.

Organisers unveiled visitor numbers that show an estimated 400,000 visits to Port of Aberdeen with tens of thousands more at the beach and around the bay during the Tall Ships Races Aberdeen 2025.

The figures were released as the almost 50 Tall Ships made their way out of the harbour in an organised procession of vessels. The stunning Parade of Sail, bringing the Tall Ships event to a close, was watched and cheered by thousands of people from nearby vantage points, such as Pocra Quay and Torry Battery.

Organisers also thanked the hundreds of thousands of visitors for embracing the past four days of celebration, fun and excitement that saw almost 50 beautiful vessels transform the harbour, alongside a packed programme of events, from Quayside Concerts to the high-flying Red Arrows.

Adrian Watson, chief executive of Aberdeen Inspired, said: “Wow, what a party that was! It created such a fantastic sense of vibrancy and excitement in the city that everyone who enjoyed it will never forget it. And 400,000 visits is an astonishing achievement.

“As well as the fun, the Tall Ships brought with them a major economic lift for the city with a huge jump in footfall for all the city centre businesses, who made the most of this opportunity, dressing their shops in bunting and posters, welcoming visitors through the door. It also underlines just how much there is to see and enjoy in our city centre.

“Above all, The Tall Ships Races Aberdeen was a masterclass in partnership, co-operation and vision that saw the public, private and third sectors all working together to create something special and unique. It is that spirit of ‘Team Aberdeen’ that we now need to harness to make our city the best it can be. That is the best legacy the Tall Ships can leave us.”

Bob Sanguinetti DL, chief executive of Port of Aberdeen, said: “Welcoming The Tall Ships Races back to Aberdeen has been one of the proudest moments of my life. Seeing our harbour come alive with these majestic vessels, and the joy they brought to hundreds of thousands of people, was genuinely moving.

“This event is deeply connected to our city’s rich maritime heritage, and it’s been inspiring to see that legacy reignited, not only for those who remember the events of the ’90s, but also for a new generation experiencing the magic for the first time.

“I’m hugely grateful to my team at the port, our brilliant partners at Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen Inspired, and the many organisations and individuals who gave their support. But above all, my heartfelt thanks go to the incredible volunteers. They gave their time and energy to make this event possible and we simply couldn’t have done it without them.”



the MEMBER MEET the



Viktorija (Vik) Thain,
Chief Executive Officer & Founder,
Scotia Financial Solutions

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

We help ambitious businesses truly understand their numbers.

From live cashflow forecasting to financial director-level insight, we turn your accounts into a strategy tool - not just a tax form.

Who are your customers?

We support SMEs, startups, and growing companies across Scotland, especially those looking to scale or needing clear financial direction without hiring a full-time FD.

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

Challenge: Helping business owners shift from reactive bookkeeping to proactive financial planning.

Opportunity: Technology lets us offer real-time financial insight - we are transforming how clients make decisions.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Treat your accounts like a business dashboard, not a history book. With the right support, your numbers can drive growth - not just track it.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The connections. It's a space where collaboration, support, and innovation thrive - we love being part of that energy.



Martha Gavan,
Managing Director,
TechFest

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

TechFest is a charity that inspires people of all ages to engage with STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths). Through interactive activities, we show how STEM builds transferable skills and opens doors to diverse careers - proving that STEM is exciting,

relevant and essential to everyday life.

Who are your customers?

At TechFest, we believe learning never stops and STEM is for everyone; from young learners to lifelong explorers. Supported by industry partners we spark curiosity across all ages, helping to create a supportive environment where young people are encouraged and empowered to pursue STEM education and careers.

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

Our biggest challenge is securing sustainable funding to expand our STEM programmes whilst engaging diverse audiences in an evolving digital world. The opportunity lies in growing industry partnerships to enhance hands-on learning; inspiring more young people to pursue STEM careers and build skills for the future.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Enjoy what you do. The positive energy you bring creates a ripple effect that benefits your customers, staff and partners. Stay passionate and never stop believing in your aims and ambitions - your enthusiasm will naturally attract others (including customers) to your cause.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The best thing about being a Chamber member is connecting with like-minded organisations and business people who understand local challenges and generously share their ideas and experience to help others succeed.

Exploring new horizons, staying true to ourselves



Fraser Stewart,
Chief Commercial Officer, ASCO

At ASCO, we've never been the type to shout about our achievements. That's not our way. But every now and then, it's important to pause, take stock and recognise how far we've come - and more importantly, where we're heading.

For nearly 60 years, we've been a trusted partner to the oil and gas sector, supporting some of the most complex operations in the world.

That legacy is something we're rightly proud of and will continue to honour. But what's becoming increasingly clear is that the expertise we've built over years of high-stakes, precision-led work isn't confined to one industry.

In fact, it's proving to be a real asset elsewhere.

Take our recent work in Mosjøen, Norway, for example. While we've worked with Alcoa for over 17 years, this marks our first time operating at their Mosjøen facility, where we now manage terminal operations. It's a new location and a different industrial setting, but the fundamentals remain the same: excellence in safety, service delivery and sustainability. We bring the same rigour, critical thinking and reliability to aluminium logistics as we do to energy - and it's being recognised.

And it's not just metals. We've recently supported a leading organisation in the pulp and paper sector, in Canada. It's a completely different environment on the surface, but the operational challenges are strikingly familiar - complex logistics, large-scale warehousing, and critical supply chain dependencies. By applying our proven approach, we're already helping them rethink how

they manage key elements of their operation. Again, it reinforces the fact that what we do translates well beyond our traditional base.

What these examples highlight is something I've believed for a long time: we've got capabilities that are incredibly transferable. Materials management, logistics coordination, supply chain optimisation - these aren't just oil and gas services. They're critical to any 24/7 industry that can't afford to stop.

Some parts of our business are already a step ahead. In Norway, a quarter of the operation is now based outside traditional oil and gas. That didn't happen by accident - it came from saying "yes" when asked if we could support something different. Then backing ourselves to deliver.

That mindset - open, responsive, adaptable - is something we're embedding across the Group. It's not about chasing every opportunity, but being sharp enough to spot where our experience adds real value, even if the client wears a different hard hat.

It's this strategic focus that's also guiding our continued international expansion. We've steadily strengthened our presence in key regions - from West Africa to the Caribbean - and we're now building capability in markets where critical infrastructure needs are emerging. Our approach is deliberate: we go where we know we can make a tangible difference, bringing the same

operational discipline that defines our work, wherever it's needed.

The world isn't getting any simpler. If anything, it's more complex and more interconnected than ever. But that's where we thrive - in the detail, in the doing, in the delivery.

So while we may be quietly exploring new directions, we're doing it in the ASCO way. Pragmatic. Professional. And always with both boots on the ground.





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Meet the Trainer - Anurag

Anurag Rai is a multi-award-winning leadership expert, bestselling author, and founder of AMHWAL Academy. As an organisational psychologist (registered with the British Psychological Society) and Fellow of the Institute of Leadership, Anurag brings a unique blend of psychological insight, business acumen, and practical experience to every session.

Over the past decade, he has partnered with public and private sector organisations across the UK to design and deliver high-impact training programmes that develop talent, strengthen leadership, and drive cultural change. Known for his engaging delivery style and ability to translate complex ideas into practical tools, Anurag specialises in making learning memorable, impactful, and outcome focused.

He is also the host of the podcast Life & Leadership, and his work has positively impacted thousands of professionals, from aspiring managers to executive leaders.



BESPOKE TRAINING SOLUTIONS

As an organisational psychologist with over 10 years of experience creating bespoke training programmes for organisations across a variety of sectors, Anurag can also design and deliver a custom programme tailored to the specific needs of your team.

AT THE CHAMBER, WE ARE **AGILE** IN OUR APPROACH TO YOUR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS.

Adaptable to location, dates, tailoring and delivery style.

Growth – training your staff allows your employees to grow and your company with it.

Intel – knowledge is key to knowing how to handle a situation, to get the best outcome and understanding processes.

Learning – we never stop learning throughout our life; the Chamber can take you and your team on a learning journey.

Empowering your staff to be the best they can be to support your business.

AT SCOTLAND'S LARGEST CHAMBER, OUR 1,300 MEMBER COMPANIES REPRESENT ALL INDUSTRY SECTORS. LET US HELP TO SIGNPOST SOME OF THE USEFUL COURSES FOR YOUR TEAMS AND THOSE WHICH ARE POPULAR IN YOUR SECTOR.

Team management

Whether your team are office or field based, we have relevant courses to develop skills to improve team productivity and engagement.

- **Essential & Advanced Supervisory Skills**
- **Train the Trainer (so they can deliver training internally)**
- **Communication & Interpersonal Skills**

Sales teams

The sharp end of revenue generation for any company, an effective sales team can be the critical link between the client and achieving company goals (graphic with arrow pointing upwards).

- **Presentation Skills**
- **Negotiation and Influencing**
- **Sales and Key Account Management**
- **Emotional Intelligence**
- **Imposter Syndrome**
- **Transformational Leadership Programme**

Hospitality

With tens of thousands of people working in the retail and hospitality sector in North East Scotland, the Chamber can help to make your first impression count and last.

- **Customer Service Excellence**
- **Dealing with Difficult Situations**
- **Personal Effectiveness**
- **Communication and Interpersonal Skills**

Finance, Project and Office Management

- **The Basics of Business Finance & Finance Skills**
- **Essential HR**
- **Stakeholder Engagement and Relationships**
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- **Coaching and Mentoring in a Challenging Environment.**
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Research by Psychologists outlines that the majority of people in business suffer from varying levels of imposter syndrome at different points in their career. Do you or someone you know doubt accomplishments and have a persistent fear of being exposed as a fraud, despite evidence of success? If so, this course may be worth considering.

To book this course which will help you reframe your thought process, reach out to the team at training@agcc.co.uk and see all our courses here.



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ITWORX UK marks 15 years with record-breaking growth

Leading Aberdeen-based IT and Communications Managed Services provider ITWORX UK celebrated its 15th year in business with its strongest start to a year on record - securing 15 new contract wins in the first half of 2025 alone.

Founded in 2010, ITWORX UK has grown into one of the North-east's most trusted technology partners, delivering managed IT services, cybersecurity, cloud solutions, communications and modern telephony systems to businesses across Aberdeen and the surrounding region.

Since becoming employee-owned in 2020, the business has continued to grow from strength to strength, building a culture of shared success and long-term relationships. This approach helped drive a record £4.6million turnover in 2022-23, reflecting a 40% year-on-year rise, supported by its 20-strong team.

To mark the major milestone, ITWORX UK hosted a special 15th birthday celebration at Aberdeen's Palm Court Hotel, celebrating the people and partnerships that have powered the business from its inception.

Philip Mowatt, founder and managing director, said: "Reaching 15 years in business is a major milestone for ITWORX UK. Securing 15 new contracts already this year reflects the dedication of our team and the trust our clients place in us. We're proud to be local, rooted in Aberdeen, and committed to supporting the North-east business community with smart, secure IT solutions and customer service that is second to none."

Stuart Bowlerwell, technical director, adds: "Our goal has always been to stay ahead of technology trends whilst aligning services tailored to our clients' needs. We're continually investing in the team, technology, and training that help our clients' businesses operate seamlessly and thrive.

"We continue to be recognised by our customers for the cornerstone of who we are - a dedicated team providing outstanding customer service fused with technical excellence."



be sustainable production ready

Staying ahead of the game in business is about being ready now and for whatever's next.

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Group


Adam Moxey

TMM Recruitment has welcomed Adam Moxey to the team, joining as a senior recruiter in the accountancy and finance specialism. Adam has a solid understanding of the recruitment profession and a valuable foundation of experience that makes him a great fit.


Daniel Wisely

Recycl8 has promoted Daniel Wisely from graduate engineer to project engineer. In his new role, Daniel will take on increased responsibility across project delivery, technical co-ordination, and quality assurance.


Darren Anderson

Wood has appointed Darren Anderson as senior vice president (SVP) of UK operations. Darren previously led Wood's technical function in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, where he focused on strengthening technical governance, assurance and operational processes across the region.


George Rennie

Bilfinger UK's vice president of offshore services George Rennie is retiring this summer, after an impressive 38-year-career in the offshore industry. George has played a pivotal role in shaping Bilfinger's offshore operations and supporting the company's ambitious growth strategy.


Ian MacIntosh

PCL Group has appointed well-known IT and telecoms specialist Ian MacIntosh to head up its new telecoms division. In this newly created role as telecoms services lead, Ian's primary task will be to lead the set up and development of the new division.



Brodie Callaway

Genny Hire Ltd has welcomed Brodie Callaway as the company's first apprentice, marking a significant step in its ongoing investment in future talent. His enthusiasm and growing interest made him a natural choice as Genny Hire launched its apprenticeship programme.



Carol Innes

ATPI has welcomed Carole Innes as its new business development manager for the energy sector. With four decades of experience across banking, accountancy, and insurance, Carole brings extensive business development expertise.



Anne Littlejohn, partner in residential property, Hannah Cruickshank and Heather Stephen, managing partner.

Hannah Cruickshank

Leading law firm, Raeburn Christie Clark and Wallace has announced the appointment of Hannah Cruickshank, as the newest member of its residential conveyancing team. Hannah joins the firm as an associate and brings with her a wealth of experience.



Martin Taylor

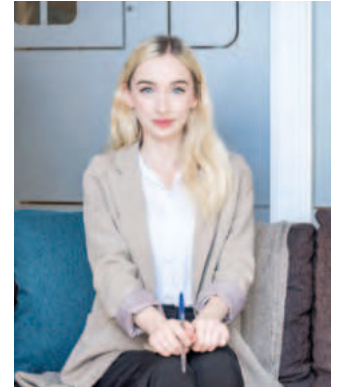
AMS Global Group has promoted Martin Taylor to the position of director. Martin has been a key contributor to AMS's growth over the past several years, playing a central role in developing the company's capabilities in safety equipment, instrumentation, and lifting operations.


Laura Ritchey

GEODIS has welcomed Laura Ritchey as president and chief executive officer of the Americas region. Laura will also serve as a member of the group's executive board, which is chaired by Marie-Christine Lombard, chief executive officer of GEODIS.


Hayley Smith

Hall Morrice has welcomed Hayley Smith as part of its continued investment in people and growth. Hayley brings over a decade of HR experience across the energy, asset integrity, and IT sectors, joining as the firm continues to evolve its people-first approach.


Alicja Higgins

Leading North-east estate and lettings agency Northwood has promoted Alicja Higgins to senior property manager. Her first role with the company was as a property assistant, later becoming a property co-ordinator before being promoted to property manager.


Steven Fraser

Steven Fraser, former managing partner at AAB, has joined AMS Accountants Group to lead its strategic expansion across Scotland and the North-east of England. Fraser's appointment signals AMS's ambition to build a strong regional presence.


Jillian Owen

Viaro Energy has appointed Jillian Owen as its new chief operating officer. With more than 25 years in the energy sector, Jillian brings operational expertise, commercial acumen, and a people-first approach to her new role.



Calum Purdie

Johnston Carmichael has appointed ecosystem expert Calum Purdie as its new head of technology and life sciences. Initially appointed to the firm as technology and life sciences ecosystem manager, Calum brings 10 years' experience of working with high growth businesses and investors.



Gayle Roddie

KR Group Scotland has welcomed Gayle Roddie as a senior quantity surveyor, bringing with her more than two decades of experience in the construction industry. In her new role, Gayle will take the lead on commercial operations across the company's steel and cladding divisions.



Stephen Wilson

PCL Live has appointed Stephen Wilson as its new head of events, marking another key milestone in the company's continued growth. With a strong background in technical production and team leadership, Stephen will play a central role in delivering exceptional events for PCL Live's clients across the UK and beyond.



Mara Marxt Lewis

Mara Marxt Lewis has been appointed creative changemaker for climate action at Aberdeen Performing Arts. Mara joins the organisation to focus on building meaningful bridges between creative expression and environmental action.



Jenna Simpson

Cocktail Events UK - the Aberdeen-based team behind Aberdeen Cocktail Week and Whisky Week - has appointed Jenna Simpson as corporate partnerships manager, a new role designed to strengthen and grow collaborations across their expanding portfolio of events.

‘A great leap forward’: AGCC welcomes Berwick Bank wind farms approval

The Berwick Bank project, one of the world's largest offshore wind farms, has been approved by the Scottish government.

The huge North Sea development, 23 miles off the east coast, could generate enough electricity to power every household in Scotland - twice.

Reacting to news of the 4.1GW development's approval, Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce's chief executive Russell Borthwick said: "This is great leap forward for Scotland's offshore wind industry – with fantastic opportunities ahead for the energy workforce and the world-class supply chain based here.

"Projects of this scale are essential to a successful energy transition – decarbonising our energy system while reindustrialising our economy.

"Businesses in the North-east of Scotland – our ports, service companies and firms pivoting from oil and gas to renewables – stand ready to help in driving major projects like these forward.

"That said, we hope the Scottish Government has learnt lessons from Berwick Bank. If we want to accelerate the transition, we cannot have projects sitting on the ministers' desks awaiting consent for well over two years. Resources need to be beefed up and decisions must be made more swiftly.

"The next challenge for this project sits with the UK Government in ensuring they are big and bold when it comes to the next Contracts for Difference round – so that projects like this can move through consent to build and on to powering homes and businesses."

Deputy First Minister Kate Forbes said: "The decision to grant consent to Berwick Bank is a major step in Scotland's progress towards achieving net zero and tackling the climate crisis, as well as supporting national energy security and growing our green economy."

UK Energy Secretary Ed Miliband said: "We welcome this decision which puts us within touching distance of our offshore wind targets to deliver clean power by 2030 – boosting our mission to make Britain a clean energy superpower."

He added it marked a "huge step forward" in the UK's energy security and "getting bills down for good".

Scottish Conservative net zero and energy spokesman Douglas Lumsden highlighted the importance of a mix of energy sources, including oil and gas, in providing affordable power and energy security in Scotland.

He said: "Scotland will only prosper with a realistic energy policy that draws on nuclear, oil and gas and renewables.

"The hostility of both the SNP and Labour governments to North Sea oil and gas is costing an estimated 400 jobs a fortnight and increasing our reliance on imported fossil fuels."

SSE Renewables said the project could create thousands of jobs and inject £8.3billion into the economy over its lifetime.





www.argosycoatings.com

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Joseph House
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Chris Daley,
Managing Director,
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