

# Business Comment

APRIL/MAY 2023



**Technology  
& Data**

 Edinburgh  
Chamber of  
Commerce



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# Technology and Data

Welcome to the latest issue of Business Comment magazine.

A new First Minister of Scotland has been appointed since we last published, and we extend our congratulations to Humza Yousaf and to the new Cabinet he has appointed.

While there are new faces and new roles, two notable absentees are former Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy Kate Forbes and Ivan McKee who had served as Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise. Both placed a high priority on the importance of business and the economy.

The Chamber repeats its plea for a re-set with Government at all levels, and in particular is keen to enjoy a genuine opportunity to collaborate with policy-makers to ensure that vital economic recovery – creating the jobs and wealth to fund our vital public services – is given a high priority. That means at the very least seeking to do no harm by adding to already significant barriers in business, and creating a positive policy environment that encourages business engagement and investment as we work towards a just transition to a net zero economy that will benefit all of our citizens.

The world of technology and data – on which we focus this issue – will be vital to the future success of our economy, our businesses and our city. Edinburgh is fortunate to have world class research, teaching and an increasingly skilled workforce in these areas, with our universities very much in the vanguard of harnessing and developing the power of technology, data and artificial intelligence.

While the work of the University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt is well known in these areas, in this issue we learn about the tremendously exciting work in cyber security and AI being carried out at Edinburgh Napier University. We also focus on how data is driving the future of a smarter and more flexible energy network, and how leveraging the right technology and using good quality data can help businesses improve productivity and performance.

You can also read the thoughts of the City of Edinburgh Council Leader, Councillor Cammy Day, on how the local authority is rolling out its Digital and Smart City strategies to make greater use of technology and data to deliver more efficient, focused and better services to the people of Edinburgh.

Enjoy the magazine.



**Liz McAreavey**  
Chief Executive,  
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce

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Bridging data silos through a data marketplace



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The 'New Equation' for productivity is human-led, tech-powered - and uses high quality data



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## Edinburgh Apprentices reduce Leonardo carbon footprint through sustainable energy project

A team of Apprentices working at aerospace engineering company Leonardo have just completed their first sustainable energy efficiency project that has been so effective, it is set to be rolled out in the company's labs at Crewe Toll in Edinburgh.

The team comprising apprentices Samuel Ramsay, Marina Hendren, Scout Horan, Sam Morton and Daniel Friel, conducted a study in the Receiver Lab in Edinburgh, to investigate the potential to reduce energy consumption on site.

Design Engineering Graduate Apprentice Sam Morton, joined Leonardo in Edinburgh after receiving straight As in her Advanced Highers in maths, physics and applied mechanics at Hamilton College in Hamilton.

Sam said: "People were very helpful when we reached out to our lab workers and lab managers. Our team leader Iain Adamson guided us in the use of engineering techniques to break down our tasks into a logical process. The Receiver Lab where we conducted the project is an important part of the business, as that is where we do a lot of test work on receiver parts and components. The receiver is the part of the radar that collects information coming in from the radar array."

The team analysed the impact of this energy wastage over a two-week period

and discovered it was the equivalent of watching TV for over 9000 hours, enough to view every episode of the Simpsons 36 times.

The team of apprentices then identified that there was a significant proportion of equipment left on while not in use. For the purposes of their study, they decided to class this as 'wasted energy'.

Working with the Lab Managers and users, they designed a process where individuals were assigned responsibility for sustainable energy usage in each lab area, to ensure unused equipment was switched off.

They calculated that over the duration of the project, their process had reduced wasted energy by 53% in the Receiver Lab. This was achieved by implementing a process to highlight when equipment was not in use to establish behaviour changes to turn unused equipment off. The apprentices soon identified that this process, and the resulting improvements, could be copied anywhere.

The project has been so well received by

the business that it is now being rolled out across the site's laboratories.

Sam said: "Going forward, there will be two or three engineers acting as Sustainability Champions in each of the labs. These engineers work there regularly and understand the equipment. They know whether it can be switched off safely and what needs to be left on for long running tests."

Mark Stead, SVP, Radar and Advanced Targeting said: "Many of the company's senior leaders began their careers as apprentices, and a significant number of apprentices go on to undertake degrees and achieve graduate status. This was our Edinburgh apprentices' first energy efficiency project and it reduced our carbon footprint in a measurable way. We will continue to encourage and support our apprentices in championing sustainability, as their fresh insights can help us experiment and explore our path to net zero both today at the start of their careers and in the years to come as they continue to grow as professionals."





L-R, Christopher Stuart, Sandra Carruthers and Richard Ellis

## Edinburgh hospitality venue triumphs at business award

Surgeons Quarter MD toasts award win to loyal staff and pioneering initiatives

The commercial arm of a historic Royal College has joined the ranks of fintech firms, EV charging providers and plastic-free shopping ventures as the winners of a prestigious innovation award.

Surgeons Quarter (SQ) has become the first hospitality business to win the Innovation in Business category at the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce's recent business awards.

The entry highlighted the company's unique offering of being the only hospitality organisation in the city to provide an events package which includes travel. The package includes the process of booking meeting space and accommodation as well as organising and booking delegate travel and providing event management at one of SQ's four meeting venues.

The innovative launch of travel agency SQ Travel took place during the pandemic. It was initially set up to streamline travel for the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) and in particular for surgeons

carrying out examination work on behalf of RCSEd.

It has subsequently supported travel needs for hundreds of delegates and has quickly expanded into providing both business and leisure travel for college members, guests and now the general public.

Scott Mitchell, Managing Director at Surgeons Quarter, said: "While RCSEd continues to lead the way in surgical practice, we apply the same world-class standard of care in hospitality".

"To be the first hospitality business to bring home the award is an extremely rewarding achievement especially as we pride ourselves on being a pioneering enterprise with the same ambition as our parent organisation."

In recent years Surgeons Quarter has also established itself as a sector leader for promoting innovative sustainable practice. It has held a Green Business Tourism Gold Award since 2008, removed plastic bottles from all rooms in its Ten Hill Place Hotel

saving an estimated 80,000 single-use bottles and £22,000 per annum, installed six EV charging points in the hotel car-park and powered its hotel by wind and hydro technology sourced in Scotland.

Scott added: "Our innovation is enabled by the brilliant team we have, who have weathered recent economic storms and remained positive and open-minded to change and opportunity."

Surgeons Quarter's profits go towards the RCSEd's charitable objectives of improving surgical standards and patient outcomes worldwide.

SQ Travel uses systems provided by Hays Travel Independence Group allowing it to benefit from the Hays Travel Group's expertise, buying power, technology, and back-office functions. Its independence is key to impartial advice and the best offers available.

For more information on Surgeons Quarter, visit: [www.surgeonsquarter.com](http://www.surgeonsquarter.com)

"Our innovation is enabled by the brilliant team we have, who have weathered recent economic storms and remained positive and open-minded to change and opportunity."



## Unlocking the power of data and technology

Unlocking the full potential of data and technology for the economy of Edinburgh and Scotland will require increased partnership working between policy-makers in government and the tech sectors.

Creating a positive policy environment, driving adoption by businesses, and demystifying the sector to increase access will all be required to access the full potential of data and technologies, including robotics and AI.

A recent roundtable discussion with Ivan McKee MSP, then Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise, along with a small group of Edinburgh Chamber members from a range of different businesses and organisations, gave our members an opportunity to hear from and engage directly with the Minister on the key challenges and opportunities currently facing our city's economy.

Data and technology came through strongly as themes of the discussion. Tech was highlighted as one of Scotland's, and particularly Edinburgh's real strengths, with the National Robotarium, located at Heriot-Watt University, held up as a genuinely world-leading centre for robotics and artificial intelligence, and a real opportunity to draw inward investment, create jobs, and deliver cutting edge data-driven innovation. The role of tech in the city's economy was

also underlined by recent ONS data, which showed that Edinburgh was one of very few areas in the UK last year to see stronger demand for Information and Communication Technology jobs than for Healthcare jobs.

At the Chamber, we also see data and tech as enablers, as well as industries in their own right. For example, Scotland's new Tech Scalers, to be set up by Edinburgh-based Codebase, will provide advice, networks, mentorship and more to help tech founders to scale-up and turn ideas into businesses. Meanwhile in the public sector, the recently published delivery programme for the National Planning Framework (NPF4) has underlined the need to digitise the planning system, in order to increase efficiency and accessibility.

However, in our roundtable, we were also reminded that accessing the full potential of data and tech will require us not just to innovate and create new technologies, but also to drive adoption and diffusion of existing tech. This will require action from policymakers on skills and training for all

ages, but also sets our tech industry the task of demystifying the sector, and making digital accessible to those people and businesses who have previously felt put off.

Finally, this year Edinburgh celebrates the 5th birthday of the Data Driven Innovation (DDI) Programme. Born out of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, the DDI initiative is a cluster of innovation hubs at the University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt University that bring researchers and industry together to use high speed data-analytics to identify trends and behaviour and ultimately to drive innovation. 2023 marks the halfway point in the 10-year DDI delivery timeline, with all six planned innovation hubs set to become operational by the end of the year. Enormous expertise and innovation already exists in our city, through our world-leading academia, our thriving tech sector, and the most highly-skilled workforce in the UK. The DDI programme presents a real opportunity to consolidate these strengths, futureproof our economy, and form partnerships across the region in pursuit of becoming the data capital of Europe.





## Ten Years of New Ways of Working

At a time when the business world is full of uncertainty, one might think this is not the time to be giving staff paid leave to volunteer in their local community. However, that's exactly what Kinross-based Ogilvie Ross has been advocating for the past ten years.

Since 2012, all partners and staff have up to two-days paid leave each month to volunteer for local community groups and charities in any role they wish. Additionally, the partners took the decision to allocate 10% of corporate fee income to an internal fund known as 'Giving Back'. This provides the financial capability to directly fund community projects or pay for staff time.

Projects they have supported include building a new sports pavilion for a local cricket club, funding and project managing the refurbishment of a community youth centre, funding and building additional classrooms for a special needs school, decorating the offices for a mental health charity, providing support to an outdoor riding centre, installing furniture at The Kilbride Hospice, and driving the minibus to take disabled cricketers to a tournament at Old Trafford in Manchester.

The firm's partners are also encouraged to give their time to longer term projects for example, as board members for charities and sport governing bodies. Whilst these are voluntary roles, they provide a different perspective and a sense of real-world challenges away from the hum-drum of travelling, city, and corporate life.

Managing Partner, John Ross, said "Our people spend a considerable amount of time in client boardrooms advising on high-level strategy and business planning. Giving them the opportunity to break out of that environment to do something completely different takes their mind off work and enables them to focus on something they really value personally. This has had a significant and positive impact on how

well they perform professionally and their personal wellbeing."

Time off to volunteer is not the only unusual aspect of the Ogilvie Ross management ethos. John explained: "We prefer that partners and staff only work four days per week. Anyone who does work more than that in a single week is encouraged to cut back in the following week. We find that having this flexibility gets more done, increases employee retention, creates happier, healthier staff and builds increased employee engagement.

This very different approach to managing staff has had significant benefits for the business. Ogilvie Ross has grown to become an international consultancy business working with some of the world's largest companies as well as governments and multi-national NGOs. Based in Scotland, the firm has major long-term project offices in London, Frankfurt, Stockholm and Paris. Revenues and profitability have increased by over 25% in each of the past 5 years. Additionally, the firm has almost no sick days and staff feel they have a significant voice within the business, which aids business and product development.

John said: "Our clients expect creative solutions to their business issues. By freeing up our people and letting them break away from their normal routines, we encourage them to experience diverse groups of people from all walks of life which increases creativity and expands their range of views. In turn, our team is agile and adaptive to client needs and challenges. We believe this adds value and creates significant impact to our clients".

This open approach to management has brought the firm a clutch of awards and wider recognition. This has increased the volume of public speaking engagements and opportunities to introduce the volunteering concept to many other firms.

Anthony Drew, the firm's Learning & Development Partner added, "Before joining Ogilvie Ross I spent 12 years in London regularly working 80 hours a week and feeling totally undervalued. Now, I feel valued in my job and have the time I want to do the other things that are important to me and my family.

In a post-pandemic world many businesses are re-evaluating how they work and what they can do to build both client and employee engagement. As Ogilvie Ross has shown, being more understanding of staff and community needs and building your business around them creates a sense of pride in the business, together with profitable returns and higher growth.

### **Ogilvie Ross LLP**

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ROSS**



## Connecting Scottish Businesses Internationally

The international team have had a busy couple of months hosting international missions.

On 23rd February we held a virtual trade mission to Germany where our delegations including a number of food and drink companies heard from our experts in market on the opportunities and support available. Delegates took part in a number of b2b meetings which gave them a chance to promote their products/ services to German organisations.

On the 21st-23rd March we held our first in person mission to Poland. The main discussions for the delegation focused on the green economy including green technologies, electric vehicles, net zero and green hydrogen.

Speakers included Ivan McKee MSP, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism, Grzegorz Piechowiak Polish Secretary of State for Foreign Investments and Janusz Bil, Director, Energy & Renewables Export, Department of International Trade Poland.

Delegates attended a networking reception hosted by CMS to meet with



members of the British Polish Chamber of Commerce.

Delegates also took part in site visits to ORLEN Group, the biggest petrochemical company in Poland and Medcom a leading supplier for the EV sector.

We are starting to plan future trade missions so if you are interested in international trade and would like to take part please get in touch with the international team on **0131 221 2999** or email [international@edinburghchamber.co.uk](mailto:international@edinburghchamber.co.uk)



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## In Conversation With...

### Sarah Boyd – Managing Director, Lothian Buses

#### What is Lothian Buses mission?

As an employer of choice Lothian's aim is to deliver a sustainable, reliable and fully integrated public transport network which takes into account and delivers for the changing needs of our customers.

#### What does your role at Lothian Buses involve?

As Managing Director, I head up a really talented team of fellow Directors and senior managers responsible for Lothiancity, Lothian Country, EastCoast Buses, Edinburgh Bus Tours and Lothian Motorcoaches services across our entire business. My role consists of regular engagement with our stakeholders and government personnel, at local and national level, promoting Lothian's mission and ensuring our business continues to be industry leading.

#### How has the bus service changed/adapted since the COVID-19 pandemic?

Since the pandemic, our network has gone through various changes to adapt to the evolving needs of our customers. Many customers haven't returned to the traditional 9-5 Monday-Friday in the office, rather doing one or more days at home, in a blended hybrid working pattern - so gauging travel patterns has been difficult. However, Lothian is committed to delivering for our customers and our vision to provide safe and reliable services for everyone remains the same.

#### Can you tell us a bit about Lothian Buses' commitment to sustainability?

All of our vehicles are Euro 6 which means that the entire Lothian fleet is LEZ compliant and ready well in advance of the deadline in Edinburgh. In 2021 we introduced four fully-electric double decker buses into our fleet. We are working on a decarbonisation strategy so that our vehicles continue to be among the cleanest and youngest in the UK. Our ENVIRO400XLB buses, if full, can take as many as 100 cars off the road, highlighting our ability to provide public transport in a cleaner, more sustainable city.

#### What is your vision for Edinburgh transportation in the future?

As we look to the future we continue to lead the way in public transport for Edinburgh. As the main bus operator



Sarah Boyd

across Edinburgh and the Lothians our business will continue to be an integral part of city life. We also play a huge part in the success of Edinburgh's vibrant tourism economy through our open top bus tour and coach operations and aim to evolve our offerings to meet the everchanging needs and demands of our customers, both residents and visitors to our city.

#### Are there any exciting projects on the horizon at Lothian Buses that you are able to share?

We have just launched our Business Plan for 2023 which signifies the end of recovery mode from the pandemic and the beginning of the rebuilding of Lothian. The plan gives a clear focus for delivery over the next 12 months and beyond, structured around three strategic themes:

Resilient & Reliable, Safe & Sustainable and Trusted & Valued. Each outcome is supported by objectives for each part of our business. Ultimately, the plan sets out how Lothian will deliver for our people and our customers.

#### Other than your current position, what would be your dream job?

I should probably say something profound here but the reality is - I'm in my dream role. I have always had a huge interest in people and that's what the bus industry is really all about. As an industry leader, working for Lothian was always something I aspired to do. We play such a vital role in the hearts and minds of the people of Edinburgh and the Lothians that it's genuinely a privilege to be the Managing Director.

# Specialist drinks industry team announced

Whisky is one of Scotland's most popular exports, generating £5.5 billion towards the nation's economy annually, and with the total number of distilleries currently standing at over 130 and more springing up regularly, it's easy to see why.

This surge in distillery ownership is great news for Scotland's tourism and food and drink sectors, but this well-regulated industry can be a minefield without the correct legal advice. From the moment the decision is made to start a distillery, there are several legal factors to consider, including planning, HMRC regulations, health and safety, and crucially - what defines a whisky.

Starting any kind of business can be a daunting process and the regulations that come with whisky distilling in Scotland makes starting a distillery all the more complex and bound in red tape.

Ensuring a steady cash flow is also crucial and being able to keep the stills going in the long term is an expensive process. This is why many distilleries turn to gin production, visitor centres, and blends using mature spirit from elsewhere to provide a steady income while the new make spirit is maturing.

My colleagues and I are very proud to have worked with many clients in the industry, including a range of distilleries, for many



**Angus MacLeod**

years. We've helped our clients navigate a wide variety of challenges over the years, so it made sense for us to bring together our experience to create a specialist offering.

The food and drink sector has been particularly affected by many challenges in recent years such as Brexit, supply-chain issues, inflation and cost increases as well as the potential impact of Government interventions such as the deposit return scheme.

By launching our new specialist team, we aim to work closely with clients who may be facing these kinds of issues, to ensure they are fully informed of any developments in the industry and that they can navigate matters as smoothly as possible.

The team will be advising clients on a wide variety of areas, from contracts to compliance requirements, labelling to advertising, to funding and development of new capital projects such as distilleries.

For more information on WJM go to [www.wjm.co.uk](http://www.wjm.co.uk).

Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie LLP is a full-service, independent Scottish law firm, with a history stretching back over 165 years, operating from offices in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Inverness, Dunblane and Dunfermline.

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<https://www.thrivewise.co.uk>



## 60 Seconds

**Name:** Dr Rebecca Williams

**Company Name:** Williams Stress Management

**Website:** [williamsstressmanagement.co.uk](http://williamsstressmanagement.co.uk)

**Q In five words or less, what do you do?**

A: Reduce the impact of stress

**Q How long have you been a Chamber member?**

A: 4 years

**Q Why did you join?**

A: I wanted to meet people in the business world and liked the look of their networking events.

**Q What services do you use?**

A: Masterclasses and networking events

**Q What's the best business/benefit you have won through the Chamber?**

A: The opportunity to run my stress webinar for Chamber members in lockdown

**Q Are there any additional services or information you'd be particularly interested in?**

A: Not at the moment but it's useful to know the services are there.



Dr Rebecca Williams

**Q If you were telling another business person about the Chamber, what's the first thing you would say?**

A: It's a very friendly and supportive Chamber

**Q Where do you read your copy of Business Comment?**

A: At home

## GET WITH IT

By Bill Magee

Scottish Business Technology  
Writer of the Year



International Data Privacy Day laid great stress on what should be a commercial given

That of safeguarding an organisation's operation online globally and especially its and clients' sensitive information

A key digital driver in this Digital Era must be continuous training-up by engaging all staff, irrespective of their grade.

Whether it be involvement in relevant courses, boot camp, online program. You name it.

An organisation conducting business online has a global reach. Here, a vital area for an organisation is aligning its tech strategy with sustainability initiatives.

It's all about seizing the circular economy opportunity. Every business is deeply intertwined with environmental, social and governance (ESG) concerns.

As a tech-savvy society we are consuming more at a faster rate. A key area is recycling of old technology into new areas.

Here, older assets can be refreshed and transformed to be fully fit-for-purpose for brand new projects.

Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) circular economy approach enables an enterprise to do exponentially more with less,

This is achieved by leveraging efficiencies and asset longevity designed into its products, services offerings and business models.

Billions of devices are coming online and such growth is causing organisations to hit resource limitations as they try to scale.

A priority is removing such inefficiencies

across the entire IT product lifecycle and adopting sustainable IT practices making the most of budget.

It's all about keeping assets in use longer to reduce new raw material extraction and minimise e-waste.

Such upcycling services like the one provided by HPE, as a partner, maximizes end-of-use asset value and provides money back for other innovation projects.

A sustainability policy engages staff along with clients, community partners and shareholders.

Bottom line: an ESG route map is vital towards fully embracing the circular economy. And ensuring the planet becomes more eco-friendly.

# Changing lives through work-based qualifications

Qualifications are a crucial part of an individual's learning and training experience and make a valuable contribution to society. They give people a goal to work towards, and open the door to further education, training and career opportunities.

Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are based on job competence and recognise the skills and knowledge people need in employment. With over 500 SVQs available in sectors as diverse as accounting and retail to forestry and fashion, they can be achieved in most occupations for all types and level of job. SVQs range in level of difficulty allowing for progression in the workplace.

SVQs are assessed on the practical activity undertaken by the learner in the workplace using a portfolio of evidence that meets occupational standards. This makes them ideal for those in full-time employment wishing to undertake a qualification.

SVQs are also an integral part of most Modern Apprenticeships. Modern Apprenticeships allow young people to enter paid employment whilst gaining an industry recognised qualification. Edinburgh based development body, Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS), is just one SQA training centre offering SVQs through Modern Apprenticeships in museums all over Scotland, from Shetland to the Borders.

The Museums & Galleries Technician Modern Apprenticeship allows learners to demonstrate their understanding of the museums and galleries sector through practical experience, and by undertaking the SVQ in Museums and Galleries Practice at SCQF level 7. This SVQ includes assisting visitors in getting the best from their experience of a creative and cultural organisation, providing specific information on a collection for a cultural heritage organisation, and contributing to the care of items within a cultural venue.

## Dismantling barriers in the museum and heritage sector

In 2020, James McLean began the SVQ in Museums and Galleries Practice through MGS, whilst working at the Scottish Maritime Museum as a Collection's Assistant.

James says: "Before deciding to pursue my interest in the heritage sector, I was a factory worker for six years. I have always had a passion for social history but for various reasons could not go to university after leaving school, so had to find employment wherever I could. I had convinced myself that it was silly to believe I could have a career in museums.

"Historically, museums have always had a high barrier to entry with a university degree being the minimum entry requirement. Alongside this, contracts tend to be temporary or part-time, both of which



James McLean

only really suit people that are financially comfortable with a safety net. Being from a poor, working-class background, I didn't have either of those things.

"When I was offered a place on the SVQ program through MGS, I jumped at the opportunity. I have gained an incredible amount of experience in all aspects of museum work. Learning on the job in a small independent museum has not only shown me the proper way of working in museums, but also the unique difficulties faced by smaller organisations in the sector. Now that this SVQ is provided as part of a Modern Apprenticeship, I hope that more working-class people find their way in to working in museums and lend their voice to the interpretation of our shared history."

Thanks to his experience and knowledge gained through the SVQ, when the role of

Curator at the museum came up, James was offered the position.

James explains: "I do everything from writing grant proposals and managing the extensive maritime collection, to responding to research requests and managing the twenty strong cohort of museum volunteers.

"Becoming a Curator has always been the dream for me. Had I not undertaken the SVQ, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to show that I could take on more responsibility within the museum. I would recommend SVQs to anyone, especially those from under-represented backgrounds, as it's a great way to learn and demonstrate your skills and knowledge."

To find out more about all of the SVQs that SQA offer, visit [www.sqa.org.uk/SVQ](http://www.sqa.org.uk/SVQ).



As the Regional Manager for Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian, Theresa McGowan has extensive knowledge of SQA qualifications, from those delivered in schools and colleges, to workplace-based qualifications. She supports and engages with organisations delivering SQA qualifications in her area and aids the development of new qualifications to meet the changing needs of learners and employers. If you would like advice on delivering SQA qualifications, please contact Theresa at [theresa.mcgowan@sqa.org.uk](mailto:theresa.mcgowan@sqa.org.uk).



# Looking back on a memorable year

As we begin the new financial year, there feels like no better time to reflect on the last years' worth of events we have hosted. In this time, we have put on over 120 events for our members, ranging from virtual webinars, in-person networking mornings and lunches, panel discussions and president's dinners.

Some memorable highlights over the last year include our annual Chamber Summer Party, which saw its return in August 2022. At the event, 100 of our members descended on the Royal Botanic Gardens for an evening of flavourful food, tempting tipples and lively lawn games. Last year also saw the return of our infamous Chamber Scavenger hunt, a staple in our calendar for many years which saw

numerous companies going head to head as they trailed the city in search of clues, performing challenges and getting some pictures in imaginative positions!

In amongst all this, we also hosted a number of panel discussions through our Developing Edinburgh series which takes a look at city wide issues, topics and developments that are pertinent to our capital city.

Andy Burnham also joined us for our First President's Dinner post-covid to discuss his vision for Greater Manchester.

As always, we have hit a number of Edinburgh's favorite eateries for our popular networking lunches, visiting the likes of Fazenda, Hawksmoor, Gusto – and of course Dishoom for their renowned naans! We've also visited a number of interesting venues





for breakfasts, with exclusive tours around the National Library, Edinburgh Playhouse, Lothian buses – and we've even squeezed in some stadium tours with Hibernian FC and Heart of Midlothian!

However, we could not go without noting the huge success of our 2023 Annual Edinburgh Business Awards. Now in its 12th year, this year's awards hit record numbers, both in entries and attendees! This year we had over 160 submissions across our 16 categories, and over 600 attendees put their glad rags on and joined us on the 9th of March to celebrate Edinburgh's business success stories. The team and our judges were astounded by the caliber of entries and another well done must be shared to all our winners and shortlists!

Again another thank you must be extended to our category sponsors, as without their support our awards would not be possible! Guests were also able to enjoy a gin-induced drinks reception courtesy of Edinburgh Gin, and Fleurs de Villes provided some floral delight with one of their impressive floral mannequins. However, the party didn't stop at the Awards ceremony, and our winners and sponsors joined us for an afternoon lunch at Fazenda to celebrate their success - no better way than over some authentic rodizio dinning!



Keep an eye on our upcoming calendar where we will be heading out for some scrumptious lunches, intriguing early starts and thought provoking panel discussions!





## April

### Friday 14th

Focus On: Embargoes, Sanctions and End-Use Controls

### Tuesday 18th

Introduction to Leadership

### Wednesday 19th

Understanding Commodity Codes

### Friday 21st

Google Analytics and GA4

### Tuesday 25th

Promoting Wellbeing and Engagement within hybrid teams: an overview

### Friday 28th

Understanding Origin & Preference

## May

### Tuesday 2nd

A Beginner's Practical Guide to Exporting

### Thursday 4th

Video Creation for Business

### Friday 5th

Introduction to CDS - A practical Guide

### Thursday 11th

ICC - INCOTERMS ® 2020 RULES - Half Day Workshop

### Thursday 18th

Methods of Payment & Letters of Credit

### Friday 19th

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) - An Introduction

### Thursday 25th

Maximising productivity within hybrid teams: an overview

Focus on Food - Export Procedures

### Friday 26th

Mastering Online Sales series - Advertising & Selling on Google

Focus On: Northern Ireland - The Movement of Goods

### Tuesday 30th

Management Essentials - for team leaders, supervisors and managers (One Day Course)

## June

### Thursday 1st

ICC - INCOTERMS ® 2020 RULES - Full Day Workshop

### Friday 2nd

Mastering Online Sales - How to use Meta (Facebook & Instagram) shops

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# Heard the one about Elephant eggs? Why ChatGPT might not mean we're all losing our jobs to the machines just yet

Unless you've been living under a rock for the past six months, you cannot have failed to have heard about, or read about, the hype around ChatGPT.

When a tech-led mechanism and 'intelligent bot' such as ChatGPT makes its way onto a three-minute feature on the One Show, then we guess its time for us all sit up and pay attention.

Depending on what you've read, or seen, or heard, it's either the end of all professional human contributions in the workplace and the machines have now taken over, or it's a terrible and unreliable source that thinks Elephant's lay eggs.

The truth, as always, is found somewhere in the grey areas in between.

To begin with, let's try offering a layman's understanding of what ChatGPT actually is. It's a variant of its lesser-known big brother, GPT-3. While GPT-3 is reserved for enterprise use on a pay-to-use basis, their owners, OpenAI, opened up ChatGPT to all. So we all piled in.

ChatGPT is an Artificial Intelligence tool that can help you intelligently decipher and answer what could be some complex questions or queries.

We urge you to try it for yourself while its still free. Figure out where and how it might be useful for you within your business. Once you realise what its limitations are – what it can and cannot do – then you have a far more intelligent view of how it can be of use.

Many of the more popular scare-mongering tactics came in its ability to succinctly pull together content based around tricky or complex topics. Copywriters, for instance, immediately feared the worst. However, once you also understand its limitations, you then realise that it does in fact need human interaction.

As one key example, the information it pulls from is dated. Its very own homepage tells you that it has limited knowledge of anything that's happened after 2021. That immediately offers some major red flags for anyone tasked with pulling together up-to-date information. Ask it to list all the most recent Prime Ministers, and you understand why you then have to add a considerable dash of salt with its responses.

It also can't decipher bias. Questions around Brexit or Scottish Independence may well be pulling from extreme views or hate speech that can't be filtered by the AI 'bots'. The Microsoft Bot, Tay, released in 2016 based on learning from users' conversations, was quickly mis-used by mischief-makers, transforming it into a racist with Nazi sympathies within 24 hours of release.

Such instances underline why human intelligence remains such a nuanced and valuable asset.

Having said that, it's worth noting that prominent news sites like BuzzFeed, an outlet that was one of the pioneers of 'digital first' news says, it'll unashamedly be deploying OpenAI and ChatGPT for sections of its output.

At Mediaworks, we're watching its development with interest. There's no denying part of it are extraordinarily useful. Offer it the opportunity to think of ten headlines around nuanced topics, and it'll be a handy leg up to get beyond the dreaded blank page beginning of any content-writing project. Its ability to act as assistant in this fashion is winning it fans.

While it becomes an additional 'voice' in the room, it's certainly no replacement for all the varied views and opinions we normally rely on among the team. We've learned it gets

better when you get better at prompting it with the right types of questions. That takes time and effort.

It's worth bearing in mind that this is in its infancy, so may well develop encouraging and promising arms and legs as it evolves. It may also, like many 'tech sensations' die an embarrassing death. Google Glasses, anyone?

Microsoft has taken a \$1bn punt on its value already and integrated it alongside Bing's search facilities. Google's responded with its early 2023 launch of Bard, its equivalent tool that got off to a shaky start when it got a key question wrong about space discovery in a very embarrassing and high-profile way at its press launch.

It shows that we're really at the beginning of how and where AI can positively impact our day to day working lives, but we're all watching things very closely. We suggest you do too.



**Nick Smith**  
Managing Partner of  
Mediaworks' Scotland  
operations



# Bridging data silos through a data marketplace

Extracting the true value from data is a key challenge for many enterprises. A lack of accurate business insights not only impedes decision making at a tactical and strategic level, but it can also negatively impact overall performance and success.

**Gopalan Rajagopalan**

Head of Scotland at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

**Sandeep Saxena**

Global Head, Data Marketplace, TCS


A big challenge for many businesses is bringing together fragmented sources of data that may exist in silos across different departments from other organisations, or public bodies and integrating them into a single digital service.

Without seamless integration, it can prove

difficult to easily share data and real-time information across operational bodies, meaning opportunities for monetisation are inhibited. This can hinder innovation. Moreover, while Artificial Intelligence (AI) is penetrating our professional and personal lives, freely available data is essential for the AI engines to provide insights that are not just useful, but also actionable.

It has been long known that 'democratising data' across organisations helps overcome many of these common issues, however challenges still remain on the best way to achieve optimum data synchronisation. One approach is to implement a 'data marketplace', otherwise known as a data exchange.

Data marketplaces allow providers to publish their data as products, so consumers can search, discover, and purchase their own data requirements from multiple sources in a single location. With an effective data marketplace platform, business users can easily extract value from their data and identify top and bottom-line opportunities, with the platform also enabling the discovery, democratisation, monetisation and commercialisation of data. This promotes ethical data exchange between entities while maintaining compliance with the privacy, trust, risk, legal, and technical aspects of enterprise data, and can also improve transparency by providing access to data for public and private bodies.



Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) recently worked with two organisations to enable greater data sharing by implementing data marketplace platforms across their businesses.

### **Dog Control Notice database for the Scottish Government**

The creation of a new Dog Control Notice database was a commitment from the Scottish Government in their **Programme for Government in 2021-22**.

In a bid to ensure safer communities, the Scottish Government committed to reviewing the Dangerous Dogs Act as a way to tackle irresponsible dog ownership with the delivery of a national dog control database. The goal was to bring together information on all Dog Control Notices served across the 32 local authorities. However, this presented a challenge as each legacy system stored the data using different formats, which meant that information was effectively siloed within each of the respective councils.

Working with the Improvement Service, TCS implemented a data marketplace solution that collated the records of all 32 local authorities into one centralised online database, unifying Scotland's Dog Control Services under one digital umbrella. The marketplace can be accessed by Police

Scotland and local authorities who can review the background of any dogs across Scotland that are a cause for concern, tracking their movement across local authority areas. This solution also visualises Dog Control Notice hotspots and provides visibility on whether Notices have been served more than once to the same person.

The Improvement Service plans to expand the use of the data marketplace platform for sharing data for other use cases across local authorities, helping the government to achieve its objective of providing better services to its citizens.

### **Collaborating with the UK Government and the Rail Delivery Group**

TCS was selected by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) to create the UK Government's Rail Data Marketplace (RDM). First announced in 2021 to stimulate collaboration between government and industry, the RDM will bring together fragmented sources of rail data into one digital service, accelerating innovation in the transport sector and enhancing passenger experience.

The RDM will offer vital digital tools and frameworks to improve the sharing of data and real-time information to passengers

across the United Kingdom. This will not only simplify data sharing across operational bodies, including the UK's rail and non-rail transportation and mobility network, but it will also increase access to data for public and private bodies by improving transparency and facilitating a UK-wide railway innovation ecosystem.

TCS is also involved in several use cases in private sector enterprises regarding the use of data marketplaces. An example is telecommunications companies that are partnering with companies in other sectors, such as banking and retail, to create ecosystems for data sharing, enabling them to provide location-based information and increase targeted information for end customers.

### **Business benefits of a data marketplace**

As discussed, data marketplaces can create exponential value through the exchange of important business data. One key benefit is that they enable faster decision-making, with businesses able to quickly gain data-driven insights for better stakeholder collaboration, making the data democratisation process smooth and seamless across multiple different business ecosystems.

Improved data exchange redefines cross-functional boundaries for collaboration and data commercialisation, and the data marketplace's no-storage-based approach helps to mitigate any risks around privacy, consent and governance. Data is a highly valuable resource that any business can leverage to secure many short and long-term benefits, and the data marketplace offers a simple way for businesses of all sizes and sectors to easily tap into this unrealised potential.

While Artificial Intelligence (AI) is penetrating our professional and personal lives, freely available data is essential for the AI engines to provide insights that are not just useful, but also actionable.







# The 'New Equation' for productivity is human-led, tech-powered - and uses high quality data

As a measure of efficiency, productivity is relative and somewhat subjective. There's no doubt that leveraging the right technology can deliver efficiency that drives up productivity. Whether in a back-office business process, or as part of a production line, technology can change things quickly. But before you begin, do you know what your starting point is and what you're trying to achieve? These details are fundamental.

## Thomas Pulling

Technology & Data Partner,  
PwC Scotland



And the key to demonstrating whether you're getting to where you want to be is... consistent measurement of productivity using good quality data - and having the people in place to make it work in a sustained way.

## Measure the baseline and set achievable goals

Ask most management teams where inefficiencies lie, and they'll be able to highlight these areas pretty quickly. What's more tricky - but vital - is defining something measurable to target the best focus areas and demonstrate a return on investment. Put simply, you must define your metrics. For example, the number of manual journals a finance team has to post each month; the time and steps taken to process an invoice; or the time taken to pick and ship a customer order. These metrics all have key elements in common - they're simple and repeatable ways of measuring from the get-go.

As your programme around productivity gains traction, you can focus on more advanced activities, like process mining and digital twin creation - but that comes later.

With a sound understanding of the initial focus areas, and a defined approach to measurement in place, you can create a clear view of the targets you want to achieve. Setting realistic goals for improvement will ensure your teams remain engaged, and help you build momentum.

A 20% reduction in the number of journals posted manually by your finance team each month may seem too small a target, but that allows extra time for higher value activities - such as delivering insights - that boost morale. Once these targets are defined, you can establish the initial improvements to be made by refining data quality, retraining impacted teams, implementing robotic process automation for repetitive process steps, or even replacing technology.

## Improve your data - then deploy new technology

It goes without saying that modern, cloud-based technologies can deliver efficient processes, wider automation and highly effective management information. Implemented correctly, they can make remarkable differences to controls, efficiency and productivity across many business aspects.

However, implementing new technology without clear requirements and an understanding of your data can lead to disappointment. Having clarity around functional requirements means you can select the right technology, and inputting quality data will ensure it delivers the intended changes in process and productivity. This is why I often advise businesses to first and foremost look at the quality and availability of their data.

Improving the quality of data - like removing duplicate vendors, ensuring customer email addresses are complete and accurate, or clearing old transactions - can positively impact a business. From simplifying the processing of invoices and getting a better picture of vendor spend to enable discounts, to making existing systems run more quickly, having better data drives its own set of productivity improvements.

And the better the shape the data is in, the smoother the delivery of new technology.

Not only will it give you much better insight into your business, it will also open the door to process automation and the use of artificial intelligence.

## What about your people?

Whilst introducing new technology and delivering data quality improvements often has an immediate positive impact on businesses, it's the way in which people work that sustains this impact. Making changes to data quality needs to be supported by process improvements and an altered mindset around the value and importance of the data to ensure positive, lasting change.

Often businesses will try to increase productivity to reduce workforce costs, rather than redeploying people into higher value work. It's rare in today's business world that the introduction of technology will replace the need for people - that's why at PwC we focus on a human-led, tech-powered approach to encourage sustained, positive outcomes, known as 'The New Equation'.

More often than not, the introduction of additional technology is driven by individuals, and actually leads to an increasing need for people. What differs is the required skill-sets - so creating an environment that supports learning, development and upskilling will enable your people to adapt to changing business needs - and to keep driving productivity.

On a journey to increase productivity, technology can be a game changer when delivered in the right way. By creating a repeatable way to measure productivity metrics, you can define your precise requirements for technology and invest in the right areas. Underpinning this investment with evolving the skills of your people and using better quality data, is ultimately key to unlocking the improvements you're keen to see.

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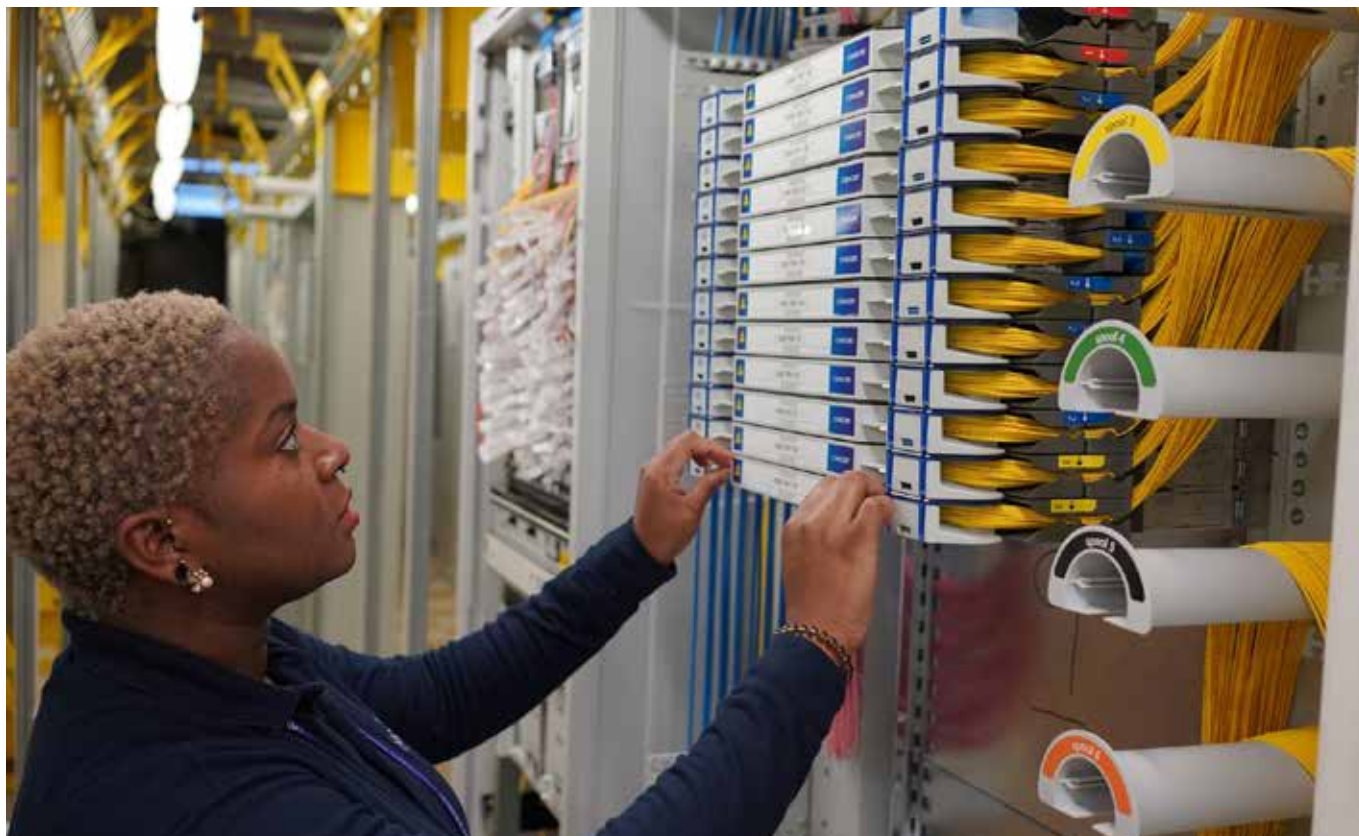
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## Broadband drives Scottish bandwidth explosion

Online activity takes many different forms and touches almost every aspect of our daily lives – and our demand for data is insatiable.

### Robert Thorburn

Partnership Director,  
Openreach Scotland



Scots use around 100 million Gigabytes of data across the Openreach network every week – that's equivalent to 90 million hours of video calls, watching 38 million full HD movies, or 87 million hours of live streaming.

The growth trend was exacerbated by the Covid 19 lockdowns, with Scottish data usage doubling during 2020, and although life today has returned to relative normality, demand has not dropped back to pre-pandemic rates.

Our broadband use hit record-breaking levels in 2022, with an increase of around 2.5 per cent driven by factors including live online streaming of football matches and gaming downloads. One of the busiest periods was the weekend of the Queen's funeral in September, as millions of people watched online.

Our figures give the most comprehensive picture of UK broadband traffic, as they're

based on millions of homes and businesses using well-known providers such as BT, Sky, TalkTalk, Vodafone and Zen.

Our experts work behind the scenes to make sure there's enough capacity for every eventuality. They're constantly looking out for the next big impact on broadband traffic, whether it's live sports, new film releases on Netflix or a major gaming patch.

Entertainment, though, is just the tip of the iceberg. Openreach's national digital network is a vital social and economic driver – and we retain a relentless focus on delivering the connections that matter to Scotland.

Better connectivity is key to unlocking Scotland's future economic growth in times that remain uncertain. It can help businesses diversify and cut carbon associated with commuting, attract skilled new incomers and turbocharge education and access to information.

It will also be central to the policy aspiration of creating 20-minute neighbourhoods – areas where most residents can access everything they need within a 20-minute walk, cycle or public transport trip.

Businesses can be freed of some location constraints if better connectivity is on

offer. That's vital for the sustainability of neighbourhoods where people are seeking easier access to local services.

Our ultrafast broadband now reaches 800,000 homes and businesses across Scotland, with half of all Edinburgh homes and 6000 city businesses able to upgrade to the ultimate online experience through their chosen provider, but there is still much more to do.

If we want a strong connected future, reform of obstacles is vital. All too often, infrastructure build is thwarted or delayed by entirely man-made obstructions. In many cases, this manifests on the mundane – gaining access to a block of flats, or getting under the road, or even putting new fibre equipment on an existing telegraph pole.

Resolution of these sector-wide challenges will lead to faster delivery of those vital broadband connections – and better outcomes for Scotland's economy. Meantime, our engineers will continue working day and night to overcome the challenges they can address as they connect more local homes and businesses.

[www.openreach.com/ultrafast](http://www.openreach.com/ultrafast)

# Taking a digital-first approach to transform performance

The increasing complexity of programmes across Scottish real estate and infrastructure is being intensified by ongoing cost, labour and supply chain challenges. Project Director for Infrastructure Digital UK at Turner & Townsend, Christopher Frost, explains how adopting a digital-first approach will be critical to driving best outcomes in the region.

While the rate of cost escalation is forecast to ease through 2023, prices of materials, services, components and energy are expected to remain significantly higher than pre-pandemic. Exacerbating these rising costs is an ongoing skills shortage.

At the same time programmes in the region are impacted by increased scale, duration, economic and environmental impacts. Managing these challenges requires increasingly sophisticated digital skills, integrated systems, and smarter use of well-secured and controlled data.

A digital-first approach is about changing the way we design and deliver projects. Embedding digital practices will improve programme performance, drive productivity, and also ensure the asset or scheme makes a positive difference throughout the project and after completion, delivering real economic, environmental and social value.

To do that, it is fundamental to embed a digital-first approach from the start of the programme, from strategy, throughout set-up and finally delivery.

## 1. Digital-first strategy

Defining the desired strategic outcomes must always be the starting point. The most effective programmes focus these outcomes not just on commercial success – of cost and timescales – but also on the social, economic and environmental value created throughout delivery and after completion.



**Christopher Frost**  
Project Director for  
Infrastructure Digital UK  
at Turner & Townsend,

## 2. Getting set-up for success

Building on the solid foundations put in place in the strategy will ensure the programme is set up for success, focusing on the digital architecture needed to ensure teams and partners can see and understand where they lock into the overall design, and can plan and organise to do this. Assessing readiness is crucial here, defining the capabilities, skills and systems the programme needs across its lifecycle and supply chain.

## 3. Accelerating delivery

Programme teams will now be well prepared to initiate the main delivery phases. This starts with robust digital project and programme management, whether taking a waterfall, agile or blended approach, and powered by a digital project management office (PMO).

Getting digital first right does not just improve project outcomes and efficiency. There is also an increasing appreciation from investors and clients that a digitalised asset, such as a smart building or one with a digital twin and well-packaged data sets, offers greater value than its analogue equivalent. Investors and asset owners are now expecting the construction and operational phases to be digital first and to produce an asset with an accurate data set and models.

Across Scotland and the wider construction sector, clients need to focus on driving digitalisation, not only to improve productivity and commercial outputs, but also to deliver tangible societal change, making crucial headway on environmental targets and supporting sustained economic growth and resilience in the region.

To find out more about digital services at Turner & Townsend visit [turnerandtowntsend.com/en/expertise/services/digital/](https://turnerandtowntsend.com/en/expertise/services/digital/)





## Balfour Beatty: Engaging with the future of construction

The construction industry is one of the largest employers in Scotland and working in the sector offers exciting opportunities to literally shape the world in which we live. Balfour Beatty is trailblazing and dynamic, embracing technology and innovation to meet the challenges of climate change, sustainable development and working with communities to deliver positive social impact, local economic growth and generating lasting legacies.

Working in this industry, we see every day the positive impact that we can have on our environment and in our communities and yet, we continue to struggle with misconceptions about construction that persist with young people, teachers, parents, and carers. Attracting the best and brightest to deliver the projects of the future means widening our pool of influence to enthuse, engage and, ultimately, recruit a more diverse workforce.

Balfour Beatty have been working with young people in secondary education, colleges, and universities for decades and this has formed a core part of our business, providing access to employment, training and development for generations of young engineers and construction professionals.

Our recent engagement with secondary students has included working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland to create exciting hands-on workshops that give students insights to modern methods of construction. This includes the 'Drones in Construction' workshop which shows students how we apply drone technology within the

construction industry, before giving them the opportunity to pilot a drone for themselves. A further workshop, featuring a VR tour of our Edinburgh Futures Institute site is also in the process of launching to schools across Scotland.

Our focus has now turned to how we can capture the imaginations of younger children. We commissioned a research project to identify the barriers preventing people from more diverse backgrounds joining the construction industry. One of the key learnings from this research was that often young people have made their mind up about construction from a very young age and that this can be based on a perception that construction is dirty, unsafe, old fashioned or for those who are not academically minded.

This led directly to the creation of Balfour Beatty's 'Big School Visit'. We want to inspire young people in Scotland to consider a future in construction. That means starting early and speaking to children in as many of Scotland's primary schools, as possible to give them the opportunity to hear about why construction is such an exciting career choice.

As well as talking about traditional roles, we will be sharing some of the exciting opportunities in 3D design, augmented and virtual reality, AI, tech, and robotics. We will also be highlighting roles in sustainability, carbon, ecology, and social impact to demonstrate that there really is a career for almost everyone within our industry.

To achieve this, we are recruiting and training volunteers from within the business and working with Primary Science Development Officers (PSDOs) from across the country to help us to engage with schools. Our volunteers will visit schools, talk to young people about the industry and deliver fun, practical activities to get young people thinking about the difference they could make by choosing a career in construction. We will also engage with teachers, parents, and carers to explain why we are at the school and hopefully start to challenge the narrative on what construction is really about.

It's a big challenge, but it is important to us to share something we are so passionate about and secure the future of the industry.





**David Climie**  
District General Manager,  
Edinburgh and Borders,  
SP Energy Networks

## The network of tomorrow is driven by data

At SP Energy Networks we keep the electricity flowing to two million homes and businesses across Central Scotland, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We always strive to deliver a first-class service to our customers – whether that's by enhancing the safety and reliability of our network, connecting new customers, or providing support to our vulnerable customers when they need us most.

We are regulated by Ofgem and as part of that we submit business plans for set periods of time – known as 'price controls' – and the plan for our electricity distribution license is referred to as RIIO-ED2. In April the next price control starts with plans for £3 billion worth of investment in our distribution network set to begin over a five-year period.

Our business is crucial to the delivery of the UK and Scotland's Net Zero targets and the transition to a more sustainable future.

Electricity is at the heart of the solution. We forecast that up to 1.8m electric vehicles, 1.1m heat pumps, and up to triple the amount of distributed generation, will be connected to our networks by the end of this decade. This is a radical change. Our job in this five-year period is to make this a reality – by building on the trust we have built in the communities we serve, by improving our services through our extensive innovation programme, and by delivering timely and cost-effective network solutions that match customers'

expectations.

The electricity distribution network is a product of almost a century of incremental evolution. Our networks were designed for predictable, stable demand at a time when wide-spread use of electric vehicles, heat pumps and renewable energy would have been unthinkable. When much of the current electrical infrastructure was installed, our homes used gas or solid fuel for heating and there was, on average, only twenty appliances running on electricity. If we compare that to today, there's more than fifty in the average home.

Over the next two decades, we expect to see electricity demand rise significantly as we decarbonise heat and transport. We need to future-proof the network to ensure the continued safe, secure and reliable service for our customers.

To deliver a smarter, more flexible network, we will establish a future system that can support a more dynamic and active

network. Data and technology are central in our investment plans. The network of tomorrow will provide real-time data-driven analytics to tell us what's happening on the network at any time.

We will expand our toolbox of solutions to support flexibility markets, analyse and share data, enable transparency and competition, and help manage a more complex and interactive system. Our ability to monitor the electricity network means we have an active fault management system in place to reduce power cuts and increase overall network resilience.

SP Energy Networks is committed to being an enabler of the transition to Net Zero. Businesses are our customers, partners and stakeholders, and effective collaboration will be essential to the success of the journey.





## The age of AI is here—is Scotland ready?

Less than 6 months after the launch of the ChatGPT prototype, it only takes a quick online search to reveal an ongoing headline frenzy as the world continues to grapple with the potential implications of this fast-growing technology.

Regardless of where you stand in the debate, it's clear the age of AI, with its myriad ethical, legal and security issues, is already upon us. How is Edinburgh, and Scotland, positioned to respond to this profound shift in the global tech landscape?

At Edinburgh Napier University, our pioneering cyber security efforts and economically impactful spinouts are already helping put Scotland on the map as a leading cyber security research and development nation—a crucial position to hold as we move into a cyber-dominated era characterised by a surge in novel tech and data advancements.

We are no strangers to leading the charge in terms of cyber security R&D and education. With over 70 academics and 1,400 students, we have one of the UK's largest university computing departments, with a reputation for innovative research in areas such as cyber security and blockchain technology. We were also the first UK university to have both undergraduate and postgraduate course options certified by the National Cyber Security Centre.

Many of our academics are talented entrepreneurs, able to provide students and

graduates with the skills needed to grasp the opportunities of continued digitalisation and support Scotland's economic growth. Edinburgh Napier has strong form in this space with many cyber security spinouts, including ZoneFox, Symphonic Software, MemCrypt and Cyacomb, already successfully making the leap from research lab to market.

ZoneFox—which created software to detect harmful digital activity by insiders to security within an organisation—was originally founded by a digital forensics graduate student at Edinburgh Napier and ultimately acquired by global cyber security giant Fortinet.

Symphonic Software's dynamic authorisation solutions enables companies to share sensitive information securely across their digital landscape, while MemCrypt's technology detects active ransomware attacks. Finally, Cyacomb offers tools that enable law enforcement to scan devices for known child abuse or terrorist content up to 100 times faster than traditional methods.

In addition to these ground-breaking spinouts, the latest UK national research assessment, REF 2021, places our Computer

Science and Informatics research power in the top three in Scotland, with 100% of our research work achieving the highest 4\* 'world-leading' rating, a performance achieved by only six other universities in the UK. As a teaching institution, we are also currently ranked the number one UK modern university for Computer Science (Times/Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023).

While it seems platitudinous to reference a 'rapidly changing world', it is indeed what we are facing—and it is changing almost daily both in scope and complexity. But Scotland is already an internationally recognised hub for cyber and tech skills, and it's clear we collectively understand the importance of cyber skills and research to global progress and our economic prosperity.

Let us continue to embrace this forward-thinking approach—we have much to offer the UK, and the world, in terms of leading-edge, home-grown cyber talent and innovative tech solutions.

We thank our Partners for their continued support of the Chamber.

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# Edinburgh, a creative and innovative Capital

Think of Scotland's biggest trailblazers in tech right now and I'd be surprised if your first thought was a member of the public sector. Not least, in the current climate, local government - where years of Government cuts have led to much tighter council budgets.

**Cammy Day**  
Leader of the City of  
Edinburgh Council



Yet, even with extreme financial challenges, Edinburgh has never been a city to rest on its laurels. Creativity and innovation are historically what our Capital is renowned for and at the council, we're harnessing high tech in ways which might surprise you.

We're sourcing, designing, and rolling out a number of innovative new technologies as we action the Council's Digital and Smart City strategy - which sets out a fresh approach for using data and cloud-based technology to connect systems in the digital age. In fact, I'll soon be joining public sector workers from all over the world at a smart cities summit in Taiwan, where I've been invited to learn and share Edinburgh's best practice.

At home and at work, we've all been increasing our use of technology to make our day to day lives simpler, greener, and more connected. Edinburgh has always been at the forefront of innovation and a shining example of this is our world-famous universities, including the research currently taking place at the Edinburgh Futures Institute. Likewise, digital is playing a major role in the way we operate as a Council. Critically, it is also helping us to provide accessible, secure, user-friendly, and efficient services for

residents and businesses.

For instance, we've been busy installing Scotland's first cloud-connected smart sensors in on street bins - helping us to understand how and when residents are reaching bin capacity so that we can better coordinate refuse collections. In recent months we've placed over 4,000 sensors within street litter and communal waste bins across the city, putting us on target to hit an impressive 11,000 sensors as part of our citywide trial.

These sensors will be used to proactively monitor and manage fluctuations in how full bins can get - think a hot summer's day in the Meadows versus a rainy Monday in March - which we hope will help us to offer everyone a more efficient and proactive waste collection. Likewise, we're considering installing smart damp-sensors on Council buildings, to proactively monitor the condition of homes to help us address issues at an earlier stage.

We also began the year by unveiling a fantastic new £2.6m smart operations centre, harnessing high tech to create a video analytics hub which is already helping us to keep the city safer. This new system replaces outdated CCTV we had and means we're able to respond even more quickly to major planned events, as well as emergencies and unpredictable changes. Overhauling this system has been part funded by the council as well as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) 2014-2020 programme, known as 'Scotland's 8th City - the Smart City'.

All of this work - in addition to our focus on re-using and recycling equipment and promoting paperless technologies - will guide the Council to save money and reduce carbon emissions in line with Edinburgh's net zero carbon by 2030 ambitions.



Recently, we awarded a new contract which will see solutions developed to monitor transport and make changes to traffic signals in response to what's going on in the city. This will link into the new smart operations centre and we'll be hearing more about this later in the spring when a report goes in front of members of our Transport and Environment committee.

We're seeing connectivity expand across the city, utilising CCTV points for Wi-Fi too and focusing on the parts of Edinburgh which are prone to higher levels of poverty. In West Pilton, for example, we're bringing together a whole collection of smart city initiatives to help us help the community to tackle issues like the digital divide and waste issues. We know that technology is a great enabler, with it used in many ways we never thought possible during the pandemic, and children here have been provided with iPads to help them with their learning. In fact, we're smashing our target under our extended contract with CGI to roll out 40,000 iPads to pupils and teaching colleagues.



Left to right: Miranda Matoshi, the Council's ERDF Project Manager; Council Leader, Cammy Day; Scott McEwan, acting CEO at North

In addition we are working with our housing service to install sensors in 500 homes which will assist us in predicting any repairs which are required. It will allow us to deal with this proactively, reducing the cost of repairs and resources involved to carry them out. This is the first phase of this trial but I'm excited to see how it will help us understand ways of working cost effectively while providing a good service to tenants.

All of this work – in addition to our focus on re-using and recycling equipment and promoting paperless technologies – will guide the Council to save money and reduce carbon emissions in line with Edinburgh's net zero carbon by 2030 ambitions.

Shrinking council budgets shouldn't be at the expense of efficiency or sustainability and we need to make spending work harder. So, as we face the twin challenges of population growth and climate change, we've never been more committed to pushing forward with our Smart City ambitions.



Council Leader Cammy Day cuts the ribbon to mark the opening of the centre





## Key tech partnership enhances health and care training at Edinburgh College

Edinburgh College and tech experts Cadpeople have collaborated to deliver an immersive Virtual Reality (VR) experience which has enhanced digital health and care training at the Capital College.

The ground-breaking learning experience prepares participants for working with people living with dementia by allowing them to see the world through the eyes of someone with the condition and enabling them to experience what it is like navigating through a VR home environment whilst encountering many of the sensory challenges that someone living with the condition would routinely face.

There is also a fully interactive knowledge-based element of the programme whereby participants can walk through a VR room and engage with a variety of learning stations, each with a unique focus on aspects of living with dementia in order to promote knowledge and develop skills relevant to dementia care.

By immersing participants in a person with dementia's reality, the VR Dementia Care programme gives learners a unique insight

into the practical care that is needed for people living with dementia, whilst also providing them with a more engaging learning experience that will set them up for a successful career.

The software programme is at the heart of the College's Digital Care Hub, helping to bring the College's vision of a learning space that not only fascinates students, but also inspires essential career pathways, to life.

With Scotland's ageing and growing population, industry demand for qualified health and social care workers is set to rise over the next ten years, with an additional 3,400 qualified health and social care professionals being needed regionally across Edinburgh and the Lothians by 2024, and a further 7,800 from 2024 to 2031.

The College recognises the importance of working alongside industry partners to create dynamic solutions to address demands for

skilled workers and sees technology as an effective tool to expose students to the many skills and specialisms that will effectively prepare them for their future within the rapidly changing care sector.

Accordingly, this state-of-the-art facility is helping the College to support the wider community by allowing students and industry professionals attached to health and care providers including the NHS to reap the educational benefits of new technologies.

The collaborative VR dementia programme also allows the College to further align itself with its commitment to providing students with an enhanced learning experience for many years to come. As outlined in Edinburgh College's Digital Strategy 2020-2025: "The use of digital technologies will continue to become a key defining feature of the College's performance and is critical to 'future proofing' our curriculum..."

Jon Buglass, Edinburgh College Vice Principal, said: "The VR experience has added a new dimension to the curriculum and professional training delivery. Learners gain a first-hand insight into the support required for dementia, as well as a strong theoretical foundation on its biological aspects. Participants are reporting that they are more inspired by this complementary learning facility and better prepared than ever for the workplace."

**"Learners gain a first-hand insight into the support required for dementia, as well as a strong theoretical foundation on its biological aspects."**



## Botanics grows corporate offer

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE), located just a mile from the city centre, which already has an enviable reputation as a unique and exceptional venue for weddings, corporate and private events, seminars and conferences, is about to extend its corporate offer following refurbishment of the Patrick Geddes Room.

The light and airy room conveniently located on the first floor of the John Hope Gateway at the Garden's West Gate has been refurbished to a five-star standard and now provides a space that brings the landscape into the room.

While RBGE is supported by grant-in-aid from the Scottish Government, like other publicly funded organisations, it is increasingly reliant upon the income it generates through commercial activities and the generosity of many supporters including The Robertson Trust, players of People's Postcode Lottery and over 9,000 Members and Patrons.

To increase self-generated income, future planning identified a need in the corporate market for an executive space within a unique venue. With this in mind, the Patrick Geddes Room, a former meeting room, has been undergoing a transformation in recent months, and will be reopening in April 2023 as part of RBGE's venue offer.

The sustainable central Board Table has been crafted from repurposed wood from the Garden. The wheelchair accessible room, which can accommodate up to 16 delegates, is ideal for meetings, working lunches and executive dinners. Easy access into the 70-acre Garden gives delegates the chance to step outside and explore the Botanics. They can enjoy peace and tranquillity whilst reconnecting with nature. RBGE is also offering a range of unique experiences and activities that can be added onto the meeting day. RBGE can provide pens/pencils and notebooks from the Botanics Shop for the delegates, or an activity as part of the day – such as a Garden Tour, a plant potting workshop, Gin tasting or a fun quiz.

Catering can be arranged too. Dishes on the seasonal menus are created using fresh produce and ingredients harvested from the on-site Kitchen Garden.

In addition to the Patrick Geddes Room, RBGE's other indoor venues are available

for hire including The David Douglas Room, also located within the John Hope Gateway, offering a meeting room with separate breakout or catering space. The room overlooks the Garden with floor to ceiling windows on three sides and access to a private decked area.

The Caledonian Hall is situated at the east side of the Garden. Originally built in 1820 as the Herbarium, it boasts period features, high ceilings and an abundance of natural light. It overlooks the world-famous Rock Garden and waterfalls. All profit generated from the room sales goes back to support RBGE's vital plant research and conservation work. It is an opportunity for businesses to support one of the top five botanic gardens in the world.

To book a venue email the team on [venues@rbge.org.uk](mailto:venues@rbge.org.uk) or to find out more about partnerships and commercial opportunities contact Clare Short, Head of Commercial Sales [cshort@rbge.org.uk](mailto:cshort@rbge.org.uk)





**Chiene +  
Tait**

### Alan, Mairi and John, Chiene + Tait

Accountancy firm Chiene + Tait (C+T) has announced the promotion of three of its senior colleagues. Alan Dean becomes a partner within the firm's fast growing Tax Advisory team, while Mairi Maciver is also promoted to partner taking a leading role with the Accounts and Business Advisory team.

Alan joined C+T in 2018 and specialises in advising high-net worth individuals, trusts and businesses on a wide range of tax planning issues. Mairi joined the firm in 2019 and has considerable experience across industry sectors with a focus on driving innovation and sustainable practices.

Another senior promotion sees John Kean become a director in the Tax Advisory team. John advises clients on a variety of tax issues, with particular emphasis on international matters.

The promotions reflect the rapid growth in C+T, and the firm's focus on supporting a wide range of UK and international business and private clients.



**Lorna  
Jack**

### Lorna Jack, Edinburgh Innovations

Lorna was recently appointed as Business Development Executive at Edinburgh Innovations, the University of Edinburgh's commercialisation service. Here she works with external partners to understand their needs and connect them to the University's work-leading research expertise and facilities.

Lorna works closely with the University of Edinburgh's School of Engineering where her remit covers everything from advanced materials and composites to novel methods of waste water treatment and carbon capture.

She's looking forward to getting out and about with various conferences and events in the pipeline including a visit to the FastBlade facility in Rosyth and to attending The Advanced Materials Show in Birmingham.

Lorna says: "I really enjoy seeing the variety of research that goes on at the University, working with academics and external partners to help the translation of research into something that can be applied to solve real-world issues."



**Gillespie  
Macandrew**

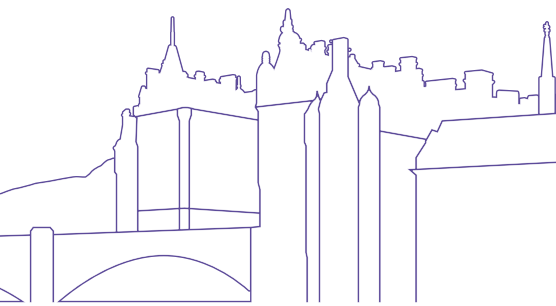
### New appointments at Gillespie Macandrew

Gillespie Macandrew announces the appointment of three Partners and seven further promotions across its legal team. Andrew Leslie, Housebuilder, Ross MacRae, Banking & Finance and Sharon Murray, Family Law have all been promoted to Partner.

Andrew Leslie and Ross MacRae began their legal careers as trainees at the firm and have gone on to become well respected experts in their fields. Sharon Murray, an accredited Family Law specialist joined Gillespie Macandrew in early 2022 and leads the Family Law team.

Furthermore, Lindsay Bryce Mackay, Victoria Curren and Rae Gilchrist are promoted to Legal Director, Gillian Hyams is promoted to Associate, and Ross Baron, Katie Brown and Jamie Seath are promoted to Senior Solicitor.

CEO, Robert Graham-Campbell commented: "I am delighted to announce so many internal promotions within Gillespie Macandrew this year, demonstrating the strength and depth of our legal teams. These internal promotions demonstrate the continued success of our training academy and our commitment to developing our people."



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