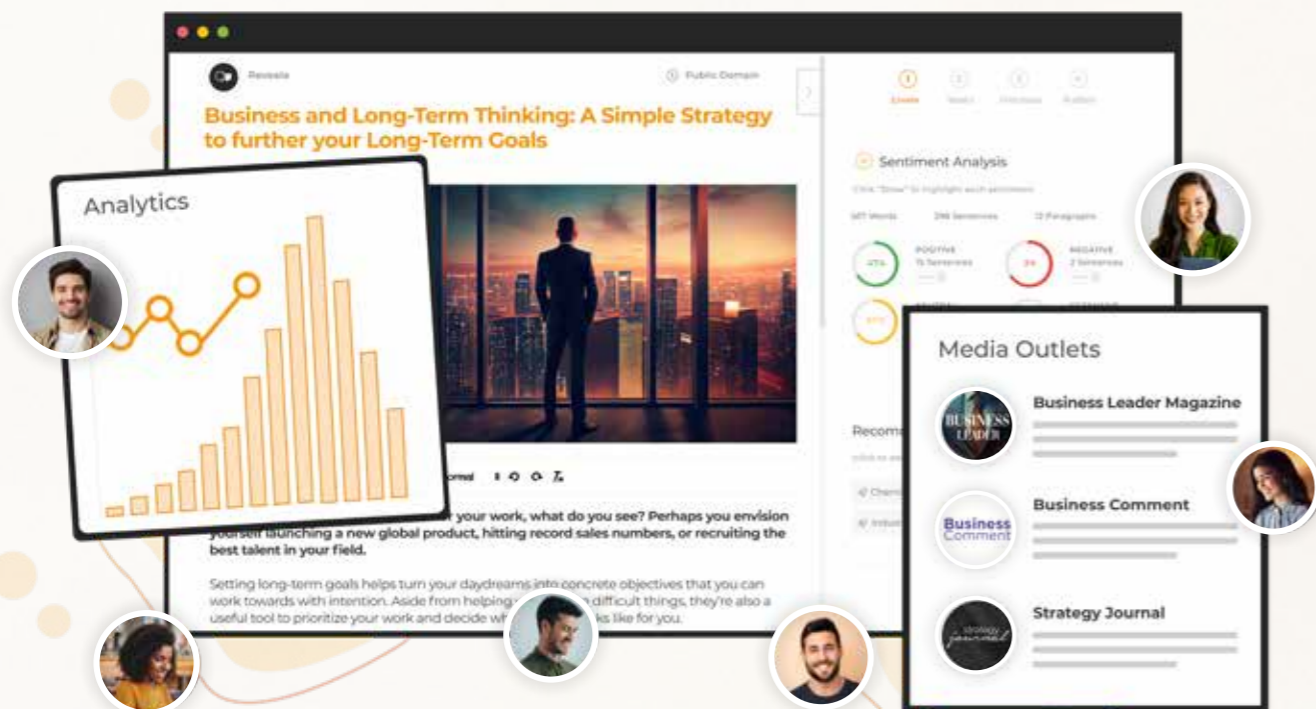


Business Comment

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023

**Economy and
Resilience**

 Edinburgh
Chamber of
Commerce



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Economy and Resilience

Welcome to the latest issue of Business Comment magazine.

In the magazine, we are focusing on our Economy, and in particular its resilience. It is a huge topic and, while it is one that is currently in the news in many guises, it does not always get the serious and open debate it merits. After all, so much of what we view as important in Scotland hangs from our economic success (or failure) – our health, our wealth, our education, our jobs and opportunities.

That is why, in this issue the Chamber continues to beat the drum for a Modern Scottish Industrial Strategy – a vision to take us forward and remove us from the current short-term nature of our policy cycle. The economy is quite simply too important to be subject to the vagaries of party politics, and that is why the Chamber is calling for a Strategy that is created with Cross-Party support, that takes a medium to long-term view, and that can withstand changes in political hues.

Not only does the Chamber advocate the desirability and necessity of this approach, it also intends to play an important part in the process. We will use our convening power to bring together business leaders and innovative minds to look at how such a strategy might look and what it should contain.

One key indicator of the city's economic resilience has always been the performance of our dynamic city centre. It is therefore heartening to read the positive steps forward outlined by Essential Edinburgh Chief Executive Roddy Smith from the Business Improvement District. The city centre continues to outperform almost every other UK city outside London in myriad ways – and while that is encouraging, there remains no room for complacency. Like other business organisations, we will seek to ensure the interest of our businesses are reflected as decisions are taken to invest the new revenue of the forthcoming Visitor Levy, or tourist tax. Like others, we believe the money must be spent wisely and with a real focus on ensuring our essential tourism and hospitality sector enjoys a growing, sustainable and successful future.

We are also delighted that council leader, Councillor Cammy Day, has expressed his desire to have a more constructive and close relationship with business in the city. It is to be welcomed, and we are delighted he has provided a positive update for readers of the magazine.

Elsewhere, and as ever, the magazine showcases the innovation, creativity and leadership of our business community.

Enjoy the read.



Liz McAreavey
Chief Executive,
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce

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Centre of transition – exciting times could lie ahead



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Doree Bonner International helps transform Dundee University Library

The Commercial division of Doree Bonner International, who are one of the leading removals and storage companies in Scotland were delighted to be involved in the first phase of an ambitious project at the Dundee University library.

The university library is having a comprehensive refurbishment during the summer break to provide students and staff with a refreshed learning environment.

Doree Bonner were tasked with the removal of all the books and furniture whilst the works take place.

The dedicated team at Doree Bonner worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth transition for this significant undertaking. The first element of the project was to pack and transfer 2,000 books and cantilever shelving to create a temporary collection within the library for the summer period.

The team then managed the packing and removal of the main collection amounting to 80,000 books which required sequential

packing, inventories and the safe removal of the collection to Doree Bonners secure containerised warehouse.

At the same time over 400 library study desks, tables and chairs were dismantled, along with all the IT monitors and equipment which were then wrapped and moved to secure storage.

Colin McGregor - Special Projects Director of Doree Bonner commented: "This project took the team just two weeks to complete and we would like to extend our gratitude to the Dundee University team for entrusting us with this important task. It has been a privilege to contribute to the university's commitment to providing an exceptional learning environment for its students. We are excited to be part of this transformative

journey, and we eagerly anticipate the return of the books, furniture, and IT equipment to the refurbished second floor later this year."

Doree Bonner International are proud to offer specialist commercial services that cater to unique projects like this. Our expertise in managing large-scale relocations and complex logistics enabled us to execute this operation with precision and efficiency. With a careful inventory process and sequential packing, we ensured the safe handling of every book and piece of furniture involved.

If you would like to learn more about the specialist commercial services offered by Doree Bonner, please contact our local team. Visit our website for further information: www.doreebonner.co.uk/office-removals

Anthesis and Charlescannon merge to drive brand value through credible and creative purpose-led communications

Anthesis, the largest group of dedicated sustainability professionals globally, has announced its merger with impact-led creative change agency, Charlescannon.



This strategic agreement responds to the rise of regulatory and stakeholder pressures for credible communications on sustainability goals and the risks surrounding greenwashing and ESG misrepresentation.

Located in Geneva, Switzerland, close to the global headquarters of many of its corporate clients, Charlescannon was established in 2007 to conceive, build and drive sustainable brands. Under the leadership of founder and CEO Ben Pankhurst and COO Katja Wagner-Pankhurst, Charlescannon has grown to 40+ multi-talented strategists, copywriters, designers, project managers, photographers, videographers, and developers.

Building on an existing relationship nurtured through joint client collaborations, including Nestlé, the merger blends Anthesis' decade of experience addressing the reality of the climate crisis and the complex ESG reporting market with Charlescannon's talent to translate the science and analytics into a brand strategy that drives impact and changes behaviours.

International in diversity and mindset, the Charlescannon team prides itself on creating purpose-led branding, campaigns and reporting for consumers, society, customers, and employees. Delivering brand messages accurately and confidently to maximise brand effectiveness, Charlescannon's clients range from multi-national brands to health-related charities, including the World Heart Day campaign, which was activated in 170 countries and 48 languages.

Stuart McLachlan, CEO of Anthesis, comments, "Organisations progressing their sustainability goals deserve to be rewarded in brand value and positive stakeholder engagement, however growing nervousness around greenwashing accusations drives reluctance to communicate. By blending Anthesis' deep technical and scientific expertise with the creative and strategic approaches of the Charlescannon team, we're providing our clients with the necessary platform to communicate confidently, delivered by one team who can guide

them throughout their sustainable performance journey."

Ben Pankhurst, Founder and CEO of Charlescannon, said, "Creativity is the catalyst that inspires the 'doing' in sustainability. Together, we have the potential to accelerate transformative change and make sustainable performance a habit."

This strategic deal further establishes Anthesis in the Swiss market and bolsters its established communications capabilities beyond impactful corporate narratives and positioning, education and stakeholder engagement strategies, and best-in-class sustainability and ESG reports. Furthermore, the deal provides Charlescannon clients with access to Anthesis' full suite of advisory, digital and carbon projects solutions and experts across its global network. The collective offering brings Anthesis Group to 1,250 sustainability specialists with offices in 23 countries.



Balfour Beatty partners with RENAISSI to support refugees into employment

Balfour Beatty has teamed up with RENAISSI – an independent social enterprise committed to challenging the root causes of economic exclusion– to provide skilled refugees with lifelong, safe and fulfilling careers on some of the most significant and innovative construction and infrastructure schemes in the UK.



Balfour Beatty has already offered 11 positions to refugees, nurturing their existing knowledge, and building on the skills developed in their country of origin, across various roles ranging from engineering and planning to software engineering.

Following a successful pilot in Balfour Beatty’s Transport, Energy & Power Major Projects business, the company is now rolling out its partnership with RENAISSI more widely across the UK.

This latest partnership further demonstrates Balfour Beatty’s commitment to providing individuals with access to lifelong careers and attracting the next generation of talent, whilst also contributing to the company’s drive to tackle the industry’s skills shortage by breaking down the barriers that minority groups face to widen the existing talent pool.

Paul Raby, Human Resources Director at Balfour Beatty, said: “Our collaboration with RENAISSI marks another step forward for Balfour Beatty as we strive to offer individuals – no matter their background – the opportunity to develop and hone their skills whilst working on some of the largest and most important infrastructure schemes

in the UK.

“Through our partnership, we hope to lead the charge in inspiring others and hope that by providing secure employment opportunities for refugees, we will welcome a new pool of talent to the construction and infrastructure industry.”

Hannah Brooke, Head of Partnerships at RENAISSI, said: “RENAISSI takes great pride in collaborating with Balfour Beatty. They provide refugee professionals with opportunities that truly harness their skills and expertise, bringing immense advantages to Balfour Beatty while transforming lives. Together we are continuously learning from our successes and challenges to expand our impact. We encourage employers from every sector to follow their example.”

Promotions and ‘step’ success at Scottish law firm

Leading Scottish law firm, Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie LLP (WJM), is celebrating a successful month as the promotions of two staff members and STEP qualifications of three colleagues are announced.

Leanne Follan, a valuable member of the firm’s renewables team in Glasgow, and Ben White, who has been working with the CRG team in Edinburgh, have both been promoted from the position of Senior Solicitors to Associate following their continued contributions to the firm’s success.

Additionally, three of WJM’s team members have successfully obtained full qualifications from the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP), further enhancing the firm’s capabilities in trusts, executries, and taxation.

Associate Solicitors Alison Reid and Hannah Prentice, based in the firm’s Inverness office, and Senior Solicitor Nicola McGorm, based in Glasgow, have all successfully passed their respective examinations and obtained their STEP Diplomas.

STEP is the worldwide professional association for lawyers, accountants, and other trust and estate specialists who have completed additional STEP qualifications to become trusted expert advisers to families on private client matters.

It comes as Alison demonstrated exceptional prowess by securing the award for the best result in Taxation of Trusts and Executries for 2022.

Fraser Gillies, Managing Partner at WJM, said: “We’d like to extend our warmest congratulations to the outstanding accomplishments of each of these individuals for their recent successes.

“These promotions and STEP qualifications represent a significant milestone in the professional development of our hard-working team members, demonstrating their expertise and dedication to providing esteemed legal services to our clients.



“We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone and look forward to many more to come in future.”

For more information on WJM and its services go to www.wjm.co.uk.

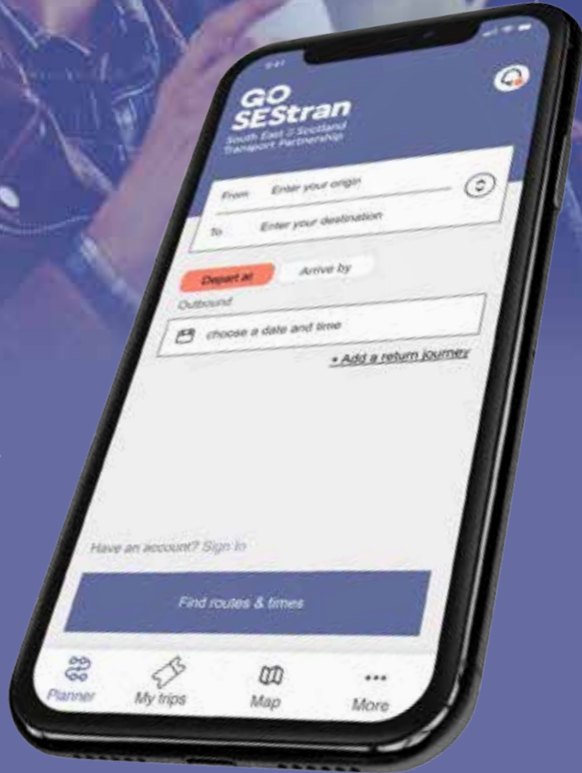
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No room for complacency if Edinburgh is to unlock future growth

Historically recognised as Scotland’s economic powerhouse, with strong financial services, retail and tech sector presence, Edinburgh is often seen as an attractive prospect for those looking to invest, study and live in Scotland.

Richard Spilsbury
Edinburgh Market Senior Partner, PwC Scotland



So, it was no surprise to see the capital fare well in the latest PwC UK Good Growth for Cities Index. The Index ranks 50 of the UK’s largest cities based on the public’s assessment of 12 economic measures, including jobs, health, income and business start-ups. It also includes work-life balance, income distribution and travel-to-work times – meaning the Index measures the ‘liveability’ of each city, beyond purely economic performance.

An improving picture

Edinburgh ranked in 15th place, in comparison with 19th last year – behind cities like Oxford, in first place, Bristol, Belfast and York – and it’s heartening to see it demonstrate year-on-year improvements in terms of its overall place.

Key to stimulating economic growth in the capital is the ability for those who want to live and work here to be able to afford to do so, alongside a thriving jobs market to retain our strong pool

of talented people. It’s particularly important that Edinburgh tracks above the UK average for skills across all age demographics, jobs, work-life balance and house-price-to-earnings ratios.

However, to paint a truly accurate picture of the opportunities and challenges the city faces, one must look at where the city tracks below the UK average.

Beyond the main rankings

There’s no doubt that Edinburgh’s lower performance in attracting new business, and in health outcomes (compared with cities like Brighton, Milton Keynes and Northampton which tracked above the UK average for both) is a factor. Edinburgh’s performance on the remaining economic factors like income, owner occupation, transport and income distribution is broadly in line with the UK average.

Additionally, the report found that while Edinburgh ranks 20th of 50 cities for expected economic activity in 2024 - with cities like London and Belfast leading the way - it is expected to see a slow-down in economic activity in 2023 which in turn could see a reduction in resources available to the Government and councils.

Economic activity and access to talent drive the resources and tax revenues on

which our goods and services are so reliant. Therefore, these need to be a priority of both the Scottish and UK Government and other policy makers.

Unlocking growth

Undoubtedly, the city cannot be complacent and must focus on improvements to unlock growth that benefits everyone. As well as building on existing strengths like financial services and insurance there’s a need for business, academia and local government to work together on attracting business investment and talent. How do we capitalise on the opportunities presented by green financing and the city’s proximity to the Green Freeport at the Firth of Forth in order to create green jobs – and how do we ensure we have the skills to flourish in these areas to stimulate growth?

The opportunities are there for the taking, and we must take the necessary steps to ensure we grab them with both hands for the future growth of the capital.

www.pwc.co.uk/goodgrowth



What role will innovation play in the journey to net zero?

Innovation will play a significant role in supporting businesses to reach their net zero targets. More broadly, innovation is required for economies to improve productivity, resource efficiency and resilience in addition to creating opportunities for new markets and growth.

To meet our ambitious targets innovation will not only need to include the use of new and emerging technologies but will also require us to change the way existing technologies are used alongside behavioural change.

To explore the importance of innovation, in supporting us to achieve net zero, we hosted our Net Zero Innovation event last month. With over 40 attendees in the room, we heard from David Townsend, Founder and CEO of TownRock Energy which is a geothermal energy specialist

consultancy and technology R&D business. David highlighted some of the key innovative projects he has been working on with businesses to help them with their net zero targets.

One project that stood out is the BODYHEAT project which saw Townsend Energy partner with an arts and events venue in Glasgow to install a system that collects body heat from venue visitors and stores it underground in boreholes. This can then be used at a later date to heat or cool the venue. Thank you to David for

providing some fascinating insights and to the team at CMS for hosting us.

We are delighted to support SMEs on their journey to net zero in Edinburgh and have launched a suite of support. Our netzeroedinburgh.org website is packed full of resources, net zero guides, and toolkits so please check it out. If you need any information or support on your net zero journey please contact the project team at netzeroedinburgh@edinburghchamber.co.uk or call the team on 0131 221 2999.



Addressing key challenges to make Scotland's economy thrive

CMS and the Fraser of Allander Institute launched the **International Scotland** report earlier this year, a follow up from a joint initiative between the two organisations and the wider Scottish business community which aims to get to the heart of how we can best help our nation's economy flourish.

The report followed a series of engagements across Scotland with business leaders, Scottish Government ministers and policy groups including Royal Society of Edinburgh's Economics and Enterprise Committee, Scottish Development International, and Women's Enterprise Scotland. It set out the core business priorities, articulated by these groups, to be addressed to support growth across key industry sectors such as sustainable tourism, food & drink, life sciences and renewable energy.

In these times of uncertainty and change, the **International Scotland** report provides a useful focus on the important priority issues and highlights out the potential benefits of Scottish Government ministers implementing focused policies to support these key sectors. This includes considering the reinstatement of tourism as a key remit for the Scottish trade minister. The industry had been at the heart of the former trade minister Ivan McKee's brief but was removed from any form of ministerial representation following the First Minister's cabinet reshuffle in March.

International Scotland also highlighted the need to address barriers in the planning system to ensure Scotland can deliver key infrastructure projects, build more housing and fully maximise the opportunities of the green economy.

Scotland's natural resources and its status as the UK's leader for university students enrolled in green-related subjects per head of the population also presents a major economic opportunity. However, as our report highlighted, there are concerns that more support is required in helping oil and gas workers transfer their skills towards sustainable energy sectors with calls for the Scottish Government to work more closely with the industry to achieve this outcome.

Working jointly with the highly respected Fraser of Allander Institute, our partners



Alan Wernham
Scotland Managing Director
at international law firm CMS

within the **International Scotland** initiative, we have captured a strong sense of what Scotland's business community needs in terms of government policy support. The report reflects both the opportunities that lie ahead as well as the challenges that we need to address in growing our economy. It also provides a useful focus for the Holyrood administration in shaping innovative policies

that will further support business, help escalate investment, and promote economic growth.

The core challenge now is to ensure we can increase the engagement between the business community and government to further address some of the core issues set out in our report. If we can achieve this, I believe we will be able to make strides towards building a more positive perception of Scotland among global investors. Progress on these key priorities will also be essential in enabling Scotland to capitalise on its currently advantageous position to become a world leader in the green economy by progressing the energy transition while also creating essential new infrastructure including the building of more homes that are needed in our communities.

A full copy of the **International Scotland** report is available [here](#)

Working jointly with the highly respected Fraser of Allander Institute, our partners within the International Scotland initiative, we have captured a strong sense of what Scotland's business community needs in terms of government policy support.

Clear Competitive Advantage

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Cammy Day
The City of Edinburgh
Council Leader

Edinburgh's Success and Sustainability

As we launch into the festivals, footfall is picking up week by week, the buzz is returning and we're eagerly anticipating the healthiest summer season since 2019.

It's such a magical time of the year for the city but it's also good news for our local economy, with a recent independent study finding that our festivals were worth £407 million to the Edinburgh economy last year, with a national economic impact of £367 million and this impact created 7,150 full time equivalent jobs in the city and 8,500 across Scotland.

We're also looking to inspire Edinburgh residents to get out and support businesses on their doorsteps through Forever Edinburgh's **Resident Rewards Edinburgh 2023 programme**. It's proven really popular and as of July, the programme has already converted more ticket sales than the full 2022 programme. From August, residents and businesses can also enjoy a wider programme of Rewards, providing more year-round benefits for all. A fantastic new destination Edinburgh website **The Official Guide to Edinburgh** launched this month, providing information to help people plan their visit responsibly, things to see and do and where to stay. It's also one of the first, if not the first, destination marketing organisations in the UK to have a ChatGPT powered chatbox.

We're very proud that Edinburgh is one of the world's most popular visitor destinations, but we're equally aware that this success comes at a cost. Last week I had the pleasure of meeting members

of the Old Town business community to discuss how we can better support them in these situations. It was a good and constructive meeting, with lots of ideas of how we can work together going forward.

But there's more that we can do. That's why we believe it's right to ask visitors to make a small contribution to help us sustain and improve our tourism offer while managing its impact. A **Visitor Levy**, is common practice in other major cities and destinations, so why not here? The introduction of a levy will provide funding stream that would be reinvested in the city and our infrastructure, to the benefit of our visitors and, crucially, the people who live here all year round.

We're also seeing Edinburgh continue to act as a magnet for foreign direct investment, with the city's talent pool, business base, and quality of life all helping attracting companies from around the world.

Among the new arrivals in Edinburgh this year are South Korean luxury car manufacturer Genesis; American technology firm Analog Devices; German energy giant EnBW; Taiwanese bicycle manufacturer Giant; and American aviation services provider Signature Aviation, all bringing new jobs and capabilities to the capital.

When it comes to addressing the environmental challenge, we've set ourselves an ambitious commitment to become a **net zero city** by 2030. To help us reach this target, we've established the Net Zero Edinburgh Partnership Board to promote the city's Climate Strategy and support collaborative development of Edinburgh.

With partners from across the public and private sectors – and Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce to represent business, employment and economic interests – we're leading efforts to create a green, clean and sustainable future for Edinburgh. Together, we are committed to creating real, lasting impact for Edinburgh and its people by expanding knowledge, coordinating efforts, and ultimately delivering the change we need.

This work further echoes the commitments we made with partners when bringing forward Edinburgh's Tourism Strategy and is also in line with Edinburgh's economic strategy, which continues to guide us in becoming a stronger, greener and fairer city.

Together, let's continue to collaborate to develop sustainable and inclusive economic growth – not only in August but all year round.

Invest in West Lothian

Businesses in West Lothian can access a range of new grants to bring forward investment in digital development, low carbon, graduate careers, and upskilling and retraining.



Scan to Learn More

Digital Development – there is up to **£7,500** of grant support available for businesses introducing new digital skills and systems.

Low Carbon – there is up to **£8,000** of grant support available for strategic business change which can evidence a clear link to low emissions.

Graduate Careers – for businesses recruiting for graduate roles, there is grant support of up to **£10,000** against starting salaries of at least £25,000 available. These roles should have a clear plan for career progression.

Upskilling & Retraining – in the current labour market characterised by record low unemployment and high levels of unfilled vacancies, we want to help firms find solutions. We have **50% grants** available to help with upskilling existing staff and/or retraining new staff from outwith your sector.

Jobs Task Force – our highest level of grant support is targeted for firms in sectors including **life sciences, technology, engineering, manufacturing, construction and food & drink**. With an average level of grant award around **£40,000**, we want to hear from firms who are investing in jobs, training or capex.



The Importance of Empowering Scottish Leaders to Thrive in Changing Times



Pam Shields
Transformation Mentor,
Evolution Transformation

I am thrilled to introduce myself as Pam Shields, the founder of Evolution Transformation.

After leaving corporate life, I am embarking on an exciting new adventure here in Scotland. I moved to Dunbar in 2018 and commuted to Birmingham every week, but now I am happy to say that I have made Scotland my permanent home.

Throughout my career, I have gained extensive experience in leading and managing growth and transformational change strategies for large teams and high-revenue business units. Now, I am eager to share my insights and lessons learned with fellow leaders who are facing similar challenges. I believe in the power of strong mentors to guide and support leaders through the complexities of changing markets and competitive environments. This belief has led me to launch Evolution Transformation, a business offering mentoring services to leaders across Scotland, either individually or in groups.

The name "Evolution Transformation" might seem like a contradiction, but it embodies my core belief: while markets, systems, and processes transform, people evolve. I understand that designing and implementing successful strategic change programs is no easy feat and there are no shortcuts. However, enabling your people to evolve and engage with new structures, systems, or processes is the key to real transformation—a vital and worthwhile investment.

Having attended a few of the Chamber events already, I must say I am impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication of the leaders and entrepreneurs I have met. I am eager to learn more and build stronger relationships with all of you. If you believe that my experience and mentoring services could benefit your business or you personally on your journey, please don't hesitate to reach out.

www.evolutiontransformation.com

**EVOLUTION
TRANSFORMATION**

Guiding your office furniture into the circular economy

Businesses are increasingly recognising the importance of sustainable practices and reducing carbon footprint in today's rapidly changing world. By embracing the principles of the circular economy, businesses have a unique opportunity to minimise waste, reduce environmental impact, and make a positive contribution to the planet. Here are four key reasons why you should guide your unwanted office furniture into the circular economy:

Decreasing Emissions

We know that reducing our carbon emissions is key in the modern world. It's simple – if the life of existing furniture is extended, the need for manufacturing new furniture is significantly reduced, and this means fewer raw materials are extracted, less energy is consumed in production, and transportation-related emissions are also minimised.

Reducing Waste

Disposed office furniture often ends up in landfill, meaning valuable resources



are wasted, and harmful emissions are released. A more sustainable approach involves guiding that furniture into the circular economy as opposed to landfill and focusing on extending its lifespan through reuse, refurbishment and repurposing.

Commercial Benefits

We thoroughly evaluate excess or redundant workplace furniture and then

determine its potential resale value based on its quantity and quality. By assigning a value to the furniture, we ensure that not only will it find a new buyer, but businesses will also reap the economic benefits of guiding their furniture back into the economy.

Working Together

When furniture is passed on to another organisation, it helps create a more sustainable and interconnected business ecosystem. It fosters collaboration, reduces waste generation, and strengthens the bond between businesses committed to sustainable practices.

As a division of Space Solutions, Recycle Scotland provides sustainable and environmental furnishing strategies within the workplace. In 2022, we worked with businesses across Scotland to save 255,000kg of furniture from landfill, repurposing, re-engineering or recycling over 97% of the furniture we received.

recycle-scotland.co.uk

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2022 we relocated over **3000 pieces** of quality furniture from one business to the next.

**Recycle
Scotland**

If you are looking for a solution to your redundant furniture or seeking a cost-effective, sustainable alternative to buying new, then **get in touch**.

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hello@recycle-scotland.co.uk



Dentons relocates to Edinburgh's Haymarket

Since the end of the pandemic, there has been a lot of discussion about office use and whether in fact people will return to their desks given the new world of hybrid working.

At Dentons, albeit we are embracing hybrid working and employing flexibility in terms of where people work, we are committed to providing high-quality office space with a modern and sustainable working environment for our colleagues when they do venture to the office. Our recent move to 9 Haymarket Square is an example of this.

An exciting development right in the heart of the West End, the Haymarket development has enticed law firms, investment managers, coffee shops and a hotel. With excellent transportation links to connect Glasgow and the rest of the country, easy access to the airport and highly recommended restaurants and bars on the doorstep, the attraction to this part of the City is clear to see. However, that is just the setting for this new state-of-the-art development.

A collaborative effort between M&G Real Estate and Qmile Group, the development prioritises sustainability and offers a wide range of amenities that promote eco-friendly practices. For example, there are more than 100 bicycle spaces to encourage employees and clients visiting the development to choose more environmentally-friendly transportation options, thus reducing the carbon footprint associated with daily commuting. The development boasts impressive sustainability credentials, including BREEAM Excellent and EPC A ratings, which further reinforce the dedication to environmental responsibility.

Specific to Dentons, we are on the first floor and enjoy watching the bustle at Haymarket, with a unique view to Haymarket station. Colleagues enjoy facilities with plenty of space for mingling and chatting, many different types of spaces for team break-outs and collaborative discussions and, of course, a good coffee machine. As a construction lawyer, I am personally captivated by the fast-paced construction work continuing in the square.



Linzi Hedalen
Partner at Dentons'
Edinburgh office

The office is designed to foster a productive and supportive hybrid working model and gives reason for people to come to the office. In a world where the needs and wants of the workforce are changing, it is essential that "the office" also changes to meet those needs.

Further, with Dentons' operations in Scotland

growing, it is crucial for our office in the capital to reflect our values and commitment to assisting individuals and organisations across the country in reaching their full potential.

The feedback from colleagues and clients has been extremely positive and we eagerly look forward to welcoming more through the newly painted doors.

For Dentons, this strategic relocation solidifies our presence in the heart of Edinburgh's business landscape. For Edinburgh, this new business district is set to become a hub of innovation, growth and creativity for all types of businesses, whether local or international.

It will also inject much interest into the surrounding spaces and it is expected that investment in the West End will continue. Those involved will hopefully welcome their new neighbours. We certainly will.

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60 Seconds

Name: **Fiona Melvin-Farr**

Company Name: **Fiona Melvin-Farr Consulting**

Website: **www.fmfc.co.uk**



Fiona Melvin-Farr

Q In five words or less, what does your organisation do?

A: Strategic Marketing Consultancy.

Q How long have you been in your current role?

A: 22 years.

Q What does a week in your job look like?

A: Setting up a digital marketing campaign, drafting a marketing strategy, chatting at a networking event, hopping on a zoom... escaping on a dog walk.

Q Your proudest moment with your organisation, or biggest 'win'?

A: My recent proudest moment was completely unexpectedly being awarded the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Lifetime Achievement Award.

Q Your favourite top tip or quote in business?

A: 'People do not buy goods and services. They buy relations, stories and magic.' - Seth Godin

Q How long have you been a member of the Chamber for and why did you join?

A: 20 years. The Chamber is at the heart of the business community, I was keen to make connections, add value and learn from others.

Q Where do you read your copy of Business Comment?

A: Grab a coffee, curl up on my sofa and enjoy.

GET WITH IT

By Bill Magee

Scottish Business Technology
Writer of the Year



Edinburgh and Scotland have been put on notice. A significantly greater computing science expertise uptake is urgently needed to help ensure a thriving digitally-led economy.

Scottish Teachers Advancing Computing Science (STACS) represents one of the key recommendations made in the Scottish Tech Ecosystem Review by Professor Mark Logan.

The new educational body is centred on removing barriers to ensure a greater uptake in the key subject, and simultaneously close the gender gap. It has just staged a sold-out virtual festival.

The STACS inaugural report emphasises every pupil/student (and teacher) should have a basic understanding of the subject, integral towards democratising the "superpower" of computer technology.

Along with discovering how to create apps and make games and websites along with the learning process it's also a lot of fun!

STACS has started to nurture what it describes as a vibrant computing science community "full of incredible talent, ideas and experience."

The focus is now on creating more opportunities for knowledge-sharing and networking among teachers. To come together, exchange ideas and learn from one another through constant collaboration.

"Best practice" lessons learned from such a sharing of knowledge will enhance the learning environment and experiences for pupils.

Since the STACS launch in November 2022 a central website-based hub has taken off. This one-stop-shop offers schools free, high-quality resources tailored to the Scottish curriculum.

It includes pick-up-and-play materials, over 180 computing science-related videos, classroom tools, and coding websites plus a collection of books for library research and pedagogy with relevant courses updated and maintained.

It's evident such a computing science upskilling programme is vital to the future of the tech industry and economy.

Also, ultimately it must be all about engaging with and employing digital tech across the board to ensure a better future for the next generation.

This chimes with a World Economic Forum edict on how by securing shared values and global partnerships, this will ensure a resilient economic future for one and all.



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Street Assist operates every Friday and Saturday from 22.00 to 04.00 providing a non-judgemental welfare & first aid service to help people who have become vulnerable during the busy night time economy hours.

- A dedicated phone line to answer calls and support those in need quickly and effectively.
- Reducing pressure on the emergency services and providing cost savings.
- Providing volunteers with experience of working with the public supporting career progression.
- Promoting a vibrant and safer night time economy through partnering with venues and public bodies.

Visit our website to see all the ways you can donate to Street Assist Edinburgh including corporate support and partnerships

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Centre of transition – exciting times could lie ahead

Edinburgh is a city world-renowned for its stunning architecture, its leading cultural and arts offering, its quality of life – and a vibrant city centre in which people live, work and play.

By Roddy Smith
Chief Executive,
Essential Edinburgh



Every year, millions of visitors come to our city to enjoy all that our city, and in particular our city centre, has to offer. In turn, that influx of people – some 5 million overnight visitors a year and growing – helps our city attract investment and creates jobs and opportunities for our citizens.

So the future of the city centre should be a vital subject for everyone concerned with the health and prosperity of the city – there won't be a vibrant Edinburgh without a vibrant city centre.

The good news is that we continue to punch well above our weight in almost every way – we continue to attract higher levels of Foreign Direct Investment than other UK cities outside London; we are the UK's second most visited city behind London; our retail sector continues to benefit from higher than UK average footfall and our hospitality sector continues to be top-class.

And there are plans in the pipeline to create further improvements. For example, the redesign of George Street which is planned – which will make it a much more pedestrianised street – is broadly impressive.

We have been advocating, as you would expect from a business improvement organisation, that the needs of businesses in the street should be front of mind.

George Street changes with the time of year, the time of day and the weather and now is adapting to flexible working practices in our offices, and changes to the tenants within the street. It is evolving and will continue to evolve but the plans going forward must be flexible and reactive to changes.

So, in all the planning, we believe that to be successful, a city centre needs to be vibrant day and night, it needs to be easy to get to and from, and it needs to be of a quality to attract residents and visitors. If we can't get people easily to George Street to enjoy all it has to offer, for example, then we need to adapt.

It is also my hope that a new, exciting and mixed-use Princes Street becomes a reality over the next few years, and we are already seeing progress towards this.

Top quality hotels, more evening economy destinations and exciting and varied retail, living side by side with office workers and with residents. Princes Street, so long solely a retail destination, now needs to fit into the rest of the city centre, complementing it. It can no longer be seen as "the city centre" but as part of the city and centre's wider amenities.

That will require investing in supporting the Street's infrastructure – be it further



improvements to cleaning, fixing the public realm, enhancing the digitisation of the visitor experience now expected in "smart" cities around the world, or creating better facilities for Edinburgh's residents and visitors.

In terms of the physical city centre, the elephant in the room remains Rose Street. It needs an identity, investment, and attention from planners as it does not fit neatly into debates about the future of George Street or Princes Street, the two main thoroughfares which sandwich it.

Of course, the now widely anticipated introduction of the Visitor Levy, or tourist tax, is set to provide a new and significant source of revenue for our city council following the introduction of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill which was introduced earlier this summer.

This allows local councils the ability to impose a tax on visitor accommodation, but the legislation stipulates the monies raised should be used to enhance a sustainable

visitor economy. Helping deliver a more sustainable visitor economy – largely in the wider city centre – would be a major step towards securing a strong future. These new funds should be additional, in other words not simply used to finance those services already offered by a strained public purse.

City centre businesses are facing many challenges on top of the current trading conditions. On the near horizon is a low-emissions zone, which will regulate what type of vehicles can come into the city centre without incurring significant costs. Change may be constant in life, but it can feel at times that we are faced with many seismic changes all at one time.

However, in general I am hugely excited and optimistic for the future of our much-loved city centre, and we are in a much better position than almost anywhere else in the UK. But let's be realistic, it is fair to say we are in for a difficult and uncertain period of transition as we move from the current city centre model to the future.





A Vision for Scotland's Economic Future

Liz McAreavey
Chief Executive,
Edinburgh Chamber of
Commerce



Joanne Davidson
Policy Director,
Edinburgh Chamber of
Commerce



In an era marked by political uncertainty and frequent changes in leadership, it is evident that both local and national Government have faced significant challenges in recent years. The memories of 2022 linger – a year that witnessed four Chancellors and three Prime Ministers, a revolving door of Cabinet Ministers, and even the birth of new Government Departments such as the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Against this backdrop, the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce is calling for a Modern Industrial Strategy for Scotland, advocating for the Scottish Government to take the bold and innovative step of removing long-term economic strategic planning from the political cycle.

We are pushing for a Modern Industrial Strategy for Scotland that garners broad cross-party support, and addresses “short-termism and politicisation” that have

often impeded genuine and meaningful progress. More importantly, the Chamber is determined to put its shoulder to the wheel in assisting the process and plans to reconvene influential city business leaders to help gather the views of diverse industries, ensuring that the proposed strategy resonates with the real-world needs and aspirations of businesses.

This initiative follows the Chamber’s successful convening of the Edinburgh Business Resilience Group, which, two years ago, produced the impactful “Prospectus for Growth” document. This document, which has fed into policy-making, was the result of the efforts of approximately 60 business leaders who, over several months, delved into an array of critical topics including economic recovery, talent and skills and key sectors in the city such as hospitality and tourism.

The Chamber maintains that our economy

underpins our country’s ability to offer its people good employment, opportunities, health, education – and is too important to be subjected to short-term thinking.

Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, said: “We need a long-term Modern Scottish Industrial Strategy, developed along cross-party lines to remove short-termism and party politics from the equation. Our ambitions around the wellbeing economy, fair work agenda and net zero targets depend upon a successful economy, and it is too important at this vital time that we make good, sustainable, thoughtful and strategic choices that will ensure the future is bright.

“Such a strategy, conceived and led in partnership with industry, and aligned with existing strategies -such as those focussed on innovation and skills - would bring everything together, creating a cohesive, overarching and long-term aim for the development of our economy and our society.

“But we do not intend to leave our interest there. As before, the Chamber will convene business leaders and key stakeholders from Scotland’s Capital to give their time and enormous expertise to help shape this Industrial Strategy.”

Since the initial Prospectus for Growth was published two years ago, Joanne Davidson, Policy Director at the Chamber, added that the challenge posed by the lack of long-term strategic thinking had become glaringly obvious.

“Inconsistency and instability are the enemies of a successful economy. In the past two years, the UK has had 3 Prime Ministers, 4 Chancellors of the Exchequer; Scotland has had 2 First Ministers and 2 Cabinet Secretaries for Finance and the Economy. We have a Conservative UK Government, an SNP-led Scottish Government, and a minority Labour-led city council.”

The first Prospectus for Growth came off the back of a two-year global pandemic and lockdown, and Brexit.” Only now are the consequences of both these seismic events – allied now to the war in Ukraine – becoming crystal clear.

“Stubbornly high inflation, which risks becoming embedded in the UK economy more than any other leading developed economy; critical skills shortages; rising costs; wages inflation; and what appears to be an ever-increasing burden of legislation and regulation are hampering efforts to

bring the cost of doing business crisis under control.”

In the recent update to Prospectus for Growth, the Chamber made the following key points:

On re-setting the relationship between policy-makers and business the document says: “Some progress on this issue has been made since the publication of Prospectus for Growth. At a city level, a new Cross-Party Edinburgh Economic briefing is being held quarterly by the Chamber and partners and is well attended by politicians and influencers from government at all levels. At a national level, the New Deal Group, announced by the First Minister and Chaired by Neil Gray, Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy, Fair Work and Energy has been convened with Chamber representation. However, much more is needed.

“We would like to see earlier, more constructive meaningful engagement and consultation, and the establishment of a more formal forum at a local level where politicians can engage, hear and better understand the voice of business”

Joanne Davidson reinforced that the Chamber was determined to play a positive


role in the essential need for improved discourse between government and business. She said: “Edinburgh’s economy continues to make progress despite the challenges. This leads us to think that so much more could be achieved if we had greater engagement and co-operation, greater understanding of what businesses need to create opportunities and wealth for our citizens, and the long-term thinking essential to replace the threat posed by short-term political expediencies.

“In the spirit of the Scottish Government’s recent commitments to re-set the relationship with business, which was the underlying theme of the Prospectus, and with a new administration at local government level, we feel that now is the time to re-engage on many of these still valid issues.”


The Edinburgh Chamber remains committed to engaging with business on this important topic, gathering real-world views and insights we can take to policy-makers. We will continue to advocate for a Modern Industrial Strategy that provides a cohesive, long-term strategy for our economy, supporting businesses by providing certainty which is essential for future planning and growth.

We need a long-term Modern Scottish Industrial Strategy, developed along cross-party lines to remove short-termism and party politics from the equation. Our ambitions around the wellbeing economy, fair work agenda and net zero targets depend upon a successful economy, and it is too important at this vital time that we make good, sustainable, thoughtful and strategic choices that will ensure the future is bright.”


Welcome
Inigo Business Centre




Welcome
Nutrition Research and Communication




Welcome
Creative Edinburgh




Welcome
Thistle Foundation



Welcome
Clean Digital



Welcome
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NEW MEMBER LIST

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Anderson Kilgour Ltd	Clean Digital	Hexagon IT Solutions	Nutrition Research and Communication	Scottish Women's Aid	The Christmas Decorators
Blythswood Care	Creative Edinburgh	Inigo Business Centre	PE Limited	SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations)	The Royal Yacht Britannia
Boom Battle Bar - Edinburgh	Edinburgh Inquirer Ltd	IOM	PIB Group	Shakespeare Martineau (Scotland) LLP	Thistle Foundation
Busy Week Event Services	Erin Rose Financial	Kids Operating Room	Powderkeg Production Limited	Stantec UK Ltd	TridentIT LTD
Cairns Exclusive Drinks Company Ltd	ESC Packaging LTD	Kuoni Edinburgh	Red Evolution Ltd	Successful Learning	W Edinburgh
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Would you like more information on joining the Chamber?
Membership prices start at only £23.00 per month. Please contact us for more information.
Richard Ellis Head of Membership, Richard.ellis@edinburghchamber.co.uk



August		
Friday 18th Beginners Guide to Export Licensing Controls	Tuesday 5th Marketing in the Digital Age: Strategies and Tactics for Success	Monday 18th ICC – INCOTERMS ® 2020 RULES - Half Day Workshop
Tuesday 22nd Virtual Speed Networking	Wednesday 6th Google Analytics 4 For Business – The Complete Guide	Wednesday 20th Networking Lunch at Twenty Princes Street
Thursday 24th Chamber Summer Celebration	Thursday 7th Focus on Food - Export Procedures	Thursday 21st Advanced Facebook Strategies to Increase Sales - Creating more Dynamic Facebook Ads, Groups Messenger & Live
Thursday 24th Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)- A Strategic Masterclass That Drives Results	Tuesday 12th Video Creation for Business	Thursday 21st Rising Star Networking Evening: Murder Mystery at The Royal Scots Club
Thursday 31st Promoting Wellbeing and Engagement within hybrid teams: an overview	Wednesday 13th 60 Really Useful Minutes: Greenwashing	Tuesday 26th Understanding Export and Export Documentation
September		
Friday 1st Focus On: Embargoes, Sanctions and End-Use Controls	Thursday 14th Understanding Commodity Codes	Wednesday 27th Maximising productivity within hybrid teams: an overview
Friday 15th Early Start with Fleurs de Villes at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh		

Visit our website to find out more and book your place.

edinburghchamber.co.uk/training-events/

The logo for the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, featuring a stylized circular emblem and the text "Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce".

Celebrating the creativity of Edinburgh’s young artists



School pupils from across the region have had their artwork displayed in an online gallery hosted by SQA, that celebrates the creativity and expression of school pupils all over Scotland. ‘Flair’ showcases some of the most creative work submitted by learners in the 2021-22 school session, spanning Art and Design, Fashion and Textile Technology, and Photography courses.

The pieces have been produced by learners who were working towards National 4 to Advanced Higher courses and span a range of grades. They include paintings, sculptures, architecture, and fashion pieces. Many of the artworks were inspired by the issues and those facing young people today, such as climate change, mental health, and the pandemic. Students were also inspired by the work of other artists and designers that they have studied.

The full online gallery is available to view at flair.sqa.org.uk until June 2024.



Adam – Portobello High School

“This was the type of car I dreamt of having one day and since almost everyone in my family likes old cars, my brother decided to buy one. When the Reliant came along almost everything changed. I fell in love with it, everyone on the road fell in love with it, my family loved it, my friends and people at school loved it, and of course I started to make art out of it. The art is built on the love surrounding the car itself and the burning passion I have for it. I never seen a car being people together like that.”

Anna – Penicuik High School

“I was inspired by the climate crisis and its damaging effect on aquatic life. I wanted to explore this in a peaceful yet powerful way to create a sensory environment that could soothe and relax those in need of a safe space. I hoped this would raise awareness of how beautiful we imagine the oceans to be and how we must use our voice to keep our oceans safe.”



Amelie – Firhill High School

“My piece is the title sequence for an animated TV show aimed at children aged 8 to 12. The show is set in Edinburgh and follows the story of a trail of murders that are reversing time throughout the city. Sylvain Chomet’s 2010 animated film The Illusionist, which is set in Edinburgh and explores themes of time, inspired my own design choices, especially through its use of light and colour in backgrounds which help create impactful tones.”

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.





Mastering ISO: Elevate Your Team with Internal Auditor Training

In today's rapidly changing business landscape, organisations face mounting pressure to consistently deliver quality products and services while maintaining operational efficiency and adhering to regulatory requirements. To navigate this complex terrain successfully, many businesses are turning to ISO standards.

ISO Standards are a series of globally recognised frameworks that set out best practices for businesses across varying industries. These standards encompass a broad spectrum, including ISO 9001 for Quality Management, ISO 14001 for Environmental Management, ISO 45001 for Occupational Health and Safety Management, and more. Implementing these standards offers a multitude of benefits, such as enhanced credibility, increased customer trust, improved internal processes, and access to international markets.

One pivotal aspect of ensuring ISO compliance is internal auditing, as this helps your organisation to maintain a culture of continuous improvement and ensures that the standards are upheld from within. While outsourcing this requirement can be an option for many businesses, the true power lies in cultivating a culture of internal quality management.

By training staff to become internal auditors, organisations can create a pool of in-house experts who possess a deep understanding of the company's operations, processes, and values.

Having internal auditors situated in your organisation means audits can be conducted more frequently, providing real-time insights into the organisation's performance and adherence to ISO standards. Potential risks and vulnerabilities are identified quicker, enabling proactive risk management, mitigation and control. It eliminates the need to outsource auditors, resulting in significant cost savings for your organisation. This approach cultivates

a culture of quality and efficiency that marks a proactive step towards future-proofing your business and reinforcing its commitment to excellence.

To ensure the success of your internal auditing program, it is essential to invest in comprehensive training for your staff. Here three steps to start your staff on their training journey:

- 1. Identify the Right Candidates:** Look for employees who demonstrate strong analytical skills, attention to detail, and a passion for process improvement. Additionally, candidates should be good communicators who can effectively work with different teams.
- 2. Engage in Formal ISO Training:** Invest in ISO-specific training courses to equip your staff with the necessary knowledge of the chosen standard and the auditing process.
- 3. Hands-on Experience:** Offer opportunities for practical experience through internal audits under the guidance of experienced auditors. This on-the-job training will help them apply theoretical knowledge to real-life scenarios and build confidence in their auditing abilities.

Training your staff to be internal auditors for ISO management systems yields numerous benefits, including the ones listed above. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement and aligning the auditing process with organisational goals, internal auditors become invaluable assets in driving your organisation's success and competitive advantage.

More About Us

QSE Ltd have been working with ISO 9001 Quality Management, ISO 45001 Occupational Health & Safety Management and ISO 14001 Environmental Management for over 20 years. From initial gap analysis and documentation support to implementation and final certification guidance, we are partners at every stage of the ISO journey.

In addition to our consultancy services, our specialised training programs are designed to equip your staff with the knowledge and skills needed to become proficient internal auditors for ISO Management Systems. We believe effective learning goes beyond theory, so our courses are designed to provide practical knowledge and hands-on experience. Using the expertise of our trainers and our virtual reality workplace, trainees are transported into immersive simulations, allowing them to engage, interact and master skills in a risk-free environment making our training unique in the market.

Contact Details

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Bo'ness, EH51 9EN

www.qse.co

info@qse.co

07529 222 867



Navigating Economic Tides: The Indispensable Role of Business Training in UK's Economic Stability

Business training plays a vital role in fostering a resilient UK economy. In an ever-evolving business landscape, the continual professional development of employees is paramount to ensure businesses can adapt and thrive in response to market changes.



The UK economy, like many developed nations, is experiencing significant shifts influenced by factors such as technological advancements, globalisation, and most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors underscore the need for a well-trained and adaptable workforce. Business training equips employees with the necessary skills to navigate through these changes, fostering resilience and competitiveness.

One key aspect of business training is enhancing employees' digital literacy. As the UK transitions towards an increasingly digital economy, businesses need to ensure their workforce can leverage new technologies effectively. This can lead to improved productivity, operational efficiency, and innovation, all of which are crucial for economic resilience.

Additionally, business training promotes strategic thinking and problem-solving skills. These skills allow businesses to devise effective strategies to mitigate risks and capitalise on opportunities,

contributing to the overall stability of the UK economy. Through strategic workforce training, businesses can proactively address market shifts and maintain their competitive advantage.

Furthermore, business training is instrumental in cultivating leadership and management skills. Effective leadership can drive a company's success and productivity, thus impacting the wider economy. Leadership training can also empower employees to become future leaders, ensuring a steady supply of talent capable of guiding businesses through potential economic downturns.

The value of business training extends beyond individual businesses to the broader economy. Companies that invest in employee development contribute to a well-educated, well-trained workforce. This not only fosters business growth, but also promotes economic resilience by ensuring businesses are equipped to handle unforeseen challenges and adapt to changing market

conditions. However, for business training to yield maximum benefits, it is essential for it to be continual and responsive to market needs. Businesses should regularly assess and update their training programmes to ensure they align with industry trends and changes.

In conclusion, business training is a critical component in building a resilient UK economy. It is not only beneficial to individual businesses in terms of enhancing employees' skills, promoting innovation and fostering growth, but it also contributes to the overall economic resilience by ensuring businesses are equipped to handle unforeseen challenges and adapt to changing market conditions. For maximum benefit, training programmes should be continuous and responsive to market needs.

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce can play a pivotal role in supporting businesses to meet their learning and skills needs. Find out more at [our training calendar](#).

An Eventful Summer

Over the last few weeks our calendar has brought our members a range of events, from panel discussions and business updates, to networking mornings and evenings in some of Edinburgh’s finest establishments.



While networking remains at the heart of what we do, we also continue to bring our members a number of engaging business updates and panel discussions offering valuable insights and updates into the ever evolving landscape of our city.

In late June we were joined by some of Edinburgh’s key voices; Festivals Edinburgh, National Galleries, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo and the EICC to discuss the mammoth contribution that the Arts, Cultural and Tourism sectors play in the success of our city.

With these discussions going on against the backdrop of consultations around Scotland’s National Events Strategy, we hope that outputs generated from this consultation will help to support and continue the position of Edinburgh as a world class location for events.

Towards the end of July members made their way over to the Sheraton for a Business Update with Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Airport.

Our speakers did not stop there, with Marie Owen, Founder & CEO of LS Productions, joining us for our latest Inspiring Women in Business Lunch at the Scotch Whisky Experience. Having founded the company over sixteen years ago, Marie has worked with some of the industry’s renowned stars, from Harry Styles to Zendaya to world renowned footballers like Beckham. Safe to say, guests were treated to some insider scoop and anecdotes on what it’s like to work with some A-list stars.

As usual, our Chamber calendar would not be complete without visits to some of Edinburgh’s favourite foodie hot spots, with The Alchemist and Harvey Nichols providing the perfect location for networking over some good grub. We were also hosted in the gorgeous Virgin Hotels Edinburgh for a networking evening full of fizz and canapés – with our early evening networking events growing more in popularity.

Another highlight of our calendar has been our annual Chamber Scavenger hunt, which saw 15 different companies battle it out around Leith to solve a series of clues, co-ordinates and challenges to be named the coveted champion of the hunt! A massive well done to our winners Tidy Green Clean and the other teams for participating. Another huge thank you to a number of our members for donating fabulous prizes!

We look forward to welcoming you along to an event soon. Keep updated on our upcoming events here - <https://www.edinburghchamber.co.uk/events/>



Prof Bill Buchanan
School of Computing at
Edinburgh Napier University

Edinburgh’s Path to a Tech-Driven Future

To me, the city of Edinburgh is one of the most beautiful and cultured cities in the world, along with being one of the most educated – as measured by the percentage of graduates who live and work here. The city, too, is enterprising and the home to a growing number of technology-related companies. But, overall, it is highly dependent on its economic base of finance, education and health care.

A core part of the city’s success has thus been its base in the finance sector, and we need to build on this base to grow the companies that will scale into the future. This must involve bringing together experience from a range of backgrounds and collaborators, in order to move innovative companies forward.

For this, FinTech Scotland is now playing a core role and enabling the collaboration between existing finance companies, innovators and researchers. But the ecosystem in the city does not stop there, as organisations like Scottish Enterprise, Interface Online and the Innovation Centres (such as The Data Lab) are playing a key role in bringing forward collaborations and new spin-out companies. There is real passion now for technology-driven innovation brought to the fore by people like former Skyscanner COO, Professor Mark Logan.

For us at Edinburgh Napier University, perhaps, our three successful spin-outs

(Zonefox, Symphonic and Cyacomb) may not have been successful in any other city in the world. This is due to the support provided by Scottish Enterprise and in the partnerships developing across the city.

But, for all its beauty, the city must be cyber resilient, too, and support companies that can cope with cyber threats. Luckily, our finance sector has been building advanced cybersecurity teams, and which have seen the growth of companies like SecureWorks, Adarma, and Quorum Cyber.

While Edinburgh has a core understanding of the world of finance, it needs to look to the future, including the move towards a token-based economy, which relates to our existing fiat currency approaches, and in building more trusted finance systems. As part of this, we have set up the Blockpass ID Lab in the University, and which is growing a research base around identity, privacy and building trusted digital systems.

This is already bringing forward two new forthcoming spin-out companies: True Deploy and Lasting Asset, with others set to follow them. Again, it is the city’s infrastructure and the likes of Scottish Enterprise which enables the transition from research work to companies which address real-life problems.

I adored this city from the second I saw it, and I still adore it. It has helped us in every possible way, and I believe our research and innovation have the best opportunities possible to be help it thrive. It is a city of collaboration, enterprise and partnership, and can truly take its place on a world stage and support the innovators of our future. We must retain and attract the best possible talent from around the world, and make the city their home.



Study shows University of Edinburgh generates £7.5bn per year for UK economy



The University of Edinburgh is one of the city’s biggest employers, a major exporter and a key driver of economic success.

Professor Sir Peter Mathieson
Principal and Vice Chancellor



Remarkably, the University contributes over £7.5bn to the UK economy each year. That’s a testament to the hard work of our exceptional staff and students from more than 160 countries and also to the innovation and research which is making Edinburgh a renowned start-up and spin-out city.

Value for Edinburgh

The value and impact of our research is felt globally, from the Roslin Institute’s work on tackling hunger by enhancing the productivity, health and welfare of global food chains, to the vital research on tracking and understanding the Covid pandemic.

However, much of the economic impact is felt closest to home, with Scotland accounting for more than three-quarters of the 32,760 full time equivalent jobs that the University supports across the UK, according to a recent independent financial study by respected policy and economics consultancy London Economics, published earlier this year.

We are also a key partner in the Edinburgh

and South East Scotland City Region Deal, delivering the Data Driven Innovation (DDI) programme which has seen investments from UK and Scottish Government to make Edinburgh the Data Capital of Europe.

DDI has seen the University develop new hubs across the region targeting ten sectors including financial services, space & satellite and tourism & festivals. All of this is underpinned by the University’s expertise and experience in data science and the underlying infrastructure including being the hosts of the UK’s national supercomputer.

Entrepreneurial Edinburgh

One particular area of strength for the University is our staff and students’ entrepreneurialism and our ability to convert that enthusiasm into real world impact.

Edinburgh Innovations, the University’s commercialisation service, provides free enterprise advice to help students and recent graduates to start up, sustain and develop their entrepreneurial ambitions for any business, social enterprise or freelance endeavour.

They helped a record 105 student start-ups launch in 2021/2022 and in the same academic year, student-led businesses secured record investment of £30.5 million, nearly tripling the £11 million in the previous year.

Our start-ups are working to tackle global challenges, delivering everything from improved tech performance to better diagnostic healthcare. One example, DeepQA, was founded by Artificial Intelligence MSc students to transform website testing from a costly and labour-intensive engineering process into a simple and sustainable business task.

In healthcare, graduate start-up Carcinotech is manufacturing 3D printed tumours to provide a platform for rapid, ethical, sustainable and accurate drug discovery and testing.

Economic resilience

Whether it is the value of our education, our commercialisation of research and student start-ups, our contribution to tourism and the city festivals, or the spending the University does right here in Edinburgh, our impact has continued to grow in recent years.

We are rooted in Edinburgh and at this time of economic challenge, I believe that it is a boon for the city to have the University as a major producer of skills, ideas and new companies. We’re not done yet and will continue to play our part in attracting the investment and people needed to keep our city vibrant, successful and resilient to any challenges ahead.

To read more – www.ed.ac.uk/c/economic-social-impact



Forth Ports commits its operations to be carbon neutral by 2032 and Net Zero by 2042

Forth Ports has outlined its commitment and the actions it is taking to achieve a Net Zero carbon operation by 2042 across the UK.

The company, which is Scotland’s biggest port operator including the Port of Leith, Grangemouth, Rosyth and Dundee, also outlined an interim target of achieving carbon neutral emissions (Scope 1 and 2) by 2032, while creating an infrastructure platform to help accelerate the UK’s path to a decarbonised economy.

To achieve this across the group’s eight ports, the team is overhauling and electrifying equipment and machinery, switching to low carbon fuels, increasing on-site renewable energy generation and promoting low carbon delivery

alternatives such as rail and barge. This is complemented by very significant investment in new port infrastructure including the creation of a bespoke renewables hub in Leith [pictured] and Dundee to support the offshore wind revolution taking place in the North Sea.

Forth Ports is also part of the Thames Freeport and Forth Green Freeport* partnerships which are seeking to accelerate the drive to Net Zero across the country.

Commenting on the announcement, Charles Hammond OBE, Group Chief

Executive of Forth Ports, said: “I am pleased to set out our plans for our operations to be carbon neutral by 2032 and to achieve Net Zero by 2042. We have already achieved a great deal in reducing our day-to-day emissions and enabling our customers to do the same. Our roadmap will aid the UK’s transition to a decarbonised economy.

“Large-scale market-ready port infrastructure is essential for the deployment of offshore wind. We have made significant progress in supporting the offshore wind sector through our initial £150 million investment programme – a key plank to enable the transition to Net Zero – with plans to invest significantly more as this market develops, including the infrastructure required for floating offshore wind as installations go into ever deeper seas.

“A greener future can only be achieved through collaboration. We are a supporter and champion of the UK and Scottish Governments’ clean maritime, net zero and green energy strategies and we continue to collaborate with our peers, customers and suppliers to deliver innovative and sustainable solutions as we transition to a Net Zero economy.”

“I am pleased to set out our plans for our operations to be carbon neutral by 2032 and to achieve Net Zero by 2042. We have already achieved a great deal in reducing our day-to-day emissions and enabling our customers to do the same. Our roadmap will aid the UK’s transition to a decarbonised economy.”

Charles Hammond OBE, Group Chief Executive of Forth Ports



The trick to securing economic resilience? It's in the data science

According to the Scottish Government's Medium-Term Financial Strategy published in May 2023, the overall size of the economy is forecast to remain relatively flat throughout this year.beyond their own, and reap the benefits of a comparative perspective.

In contrast, recent data released by Beauhurst shows that Edinburgh is the top start-up hub outside London, with 12.3% of its high-growth companies working in AI, digital security, and financial technology. It's no coincidence then that the sectors bucking Scotland's economic trends are intrinsically linked to the application of data science and analytics.

Data science combines maths and statistics, advanced analytics, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to uncover actionable insights hidden in an organisation or business's data. In short, it empowers leaders to improve decision-making, enhance forecasting accuracy and identify opportunities for growth - all of which have a significant impact on a company's bottom line.

The beauty of big data is that it holds a myriad of statistics to inform and mitigate the many risks that businesses, and Scotland, face on a daily basis. Continuous risk assessment and mitigation modelling can identify vulnerabilities in the economy like fluctuating inflation rates.

Data science also enables the collection and interpretation of real time data from a number of different sources that help detect early warning signs of any economic instability or impending changes in market conditions that need to be met head on. Policymakers can also benefit - whether in Government or in business. By utilising the right data sets and retrieving the correct



Jennifer Henderson
Head of Talent Partnerships
at Heriot-Watt University.

data, real time impact can be measured and adjusted as needed to ensure economic resilience.

By analysing historical data, current trends and evolving market conditions like, for instance, the current cost of living crisis, companies can optimise their resource allocation, giving more attention where these are lacking or superfluous, reduce waste and maximise productivity. The same applies to using data science to identify growth opportunities. Here, analytics can inform various economic factors like market trends and consumer preferences, and adapt strategies or introduce new ones as needed.

Perhaps one of the most important attributes that data science can offer is an enhanced crisis response - vital to ensuring resilience in the economy. By analysing data in real time,

governments and organisations can quickly assess any situation and allocate resources effectively to aid recovery.

There is one more crucial cog in the wheel of data science. More competent employees to further boost these professions.

Scotland's universities are playing an important role in delivering the skills that are needed to meet the growing and evolving demands of Scotland's economy by working collaboratively with organisations and individual businesses.

The Scotland-wide Graduate Apprenticeship (GAs) programme is one such example that combines work-based and academic learning to provide digitally skilled and degree qualified employees, vital to Scotland's digital economy. At Heriot-Watt University, we offer a range of sector-specific GAs, including Data Science. GA's work for employers and employees because they're a cost effective way to upskill existing personnel, attract new talent, retain key staff and future proof businesses with effective succession planning.

Building on our strengths and skills and creating opportunities in new growth markets - whether that be data science or others - is vital to delivering resilience and stability for our nation's economy. The need for agile educational ecosystems that support those ambitions, can adapt to changing circumstances, and help deliver recovery from economic shocks more effectively has never been clearer.

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Judi Revett

Judi Revett

Judi Revett recently joined the Phoenix Group's public affairs team where she will be responsible for the Group's engagement with political stakeholders in Scotland. In addition, she will support the work of other areas including the social affairs team and Phoenix Insights and will manage the local political relationships for all of the Group's office sites.

She joined from NatWest Group where she spent five years as a social policy manager. Prior to that, she worked in the public affairs teams at Tesco Bank and Lloyds Banking Group.

She is based in Edinburgh. In her spare time enjoys running and recently completed the Edinburgh half marathon.



Joyce Juma-Phiri

Joyce Juma-Phiri

South West Edinburgh will be getting a boost in skills and training opportunities as Space @ The Broomhouse Hub appoints Joyce Juma-Phiri as Employability Project Manager to oversee projects which help people into paid work.

Joyce has always been committed to supporting the local community and comes to Space armed with a wealth of knowledge on how people are affected by a lack of access to job opportunities. She is passionate about helping people reach more positive destinations and her person-centered approach to support – allowing people to take charge of their progress while staff walk alongside them on their path to employment – will aid in the delivery of two of Space's Training Academy projects, Pick 'n' Mix to Employment and Space Station: Catering & Hospitality.

Joyce is actively looking to engage with the business community and speak with employers who can offer work experience placements to proactive, hard-working young people.



Rosy Candlin

Rosy Candlin

Hello! My name is Rosy and I am the new Partnerships and Philanthropy Manager at Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home. My role is a new one for the Home and focusses on corporate relationships, trusts and foundation funding and event fundraising. My experience previous to this role has focused primarily on building relationships with businesses with the purpose of supporting charities such as The Salvation Army, Maggie's and The Campaign Against Living Miserably. I love working with businesses to support them with their charity work as the difference that a business can make to a charity by offering their support is phenomenal. In this new role at the Home, I hope to build relationships with funders so that any support they offer the Home goes along way. Key to my approach to fundraising is ensuring all relationships are mutually beneficial and truly serves every stakeholder involved.



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