

Business Comment

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2023

**Sustainability &
the Just Transition**

 Edinburgh
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Sustainability & the Just Transition

Welcome to the latest issue of Business Comment magazine.

The focus of this issue is Sustainability and the Just Transition, with the city's 2030 net zero targets high on the agenda of the business community even at a time of significant economic challenges. Businesses want to "do the right thing" but they need help to get there, particularly the small and medium sized businesses which make up such a significant part of our economy. As a Chamber we are committed to supporting businesses on their net zero journey and have a range of support available for SMEs. Please **contact** our team to find out more.

In this issue, we hear about the work that is going on across all kinds of sectors to tackle climate change and make our world more sustainable. For example, Alan Laidlaw, Chief Executive of the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, talks us through some of the innovative things that are happening in our food production sector. What we eat is important to all of us, and we take an increasing interest in the provenance of our food and the impact its production may have on our environment and Alan poses some interesting questions and some very illuminating answers.

We also hear from Charles Hammond, Chief Executive of Forth Ports Group and interim chairman of Forth Green Freeport about the work being carried out by the nation's leading ports operator. The Green Freeport is itself a potential game changer in terms of the region's transition to a more sustainable economy, but the strategic and pioneering approach of Forth Ports covers a multitude of facets, from creating its vision through to transforming infrastructure, investing in renewables and creating collaborative leadership.

Elsewhere there is advice for SMEs on net zero, and we hear from organisations as varied as the award-winning environmental charity Changeworks through to the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland about how they are each making a difference.

As ever, our members continue to innovate and inspire in equal measure.

Enjoy the magazine.



Liz McAreavey
Chief Executive,
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce

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Balfour Beatty secures Scottish Government funding to drive innovative hydrogen retrofit project

Balfour Beatty recently announced that it has become the first construction company to secure funding from the Scottish Government's Emerging Energies Technology Fund to retrofit carbon intensive vehicles to run off both hydrogen and diesel, also known as dual fuel.

As part of the innovative project, the Scottish Government has provided over £240,000 with Balfour Beatty match-funding the scheme. The funding will allow Balfour Beatty to retrofit two gritters and two operations and maintenance vehicles. Once retrofitted, the vehicles will be trialled on the Connect Roads M77/Glasgow Southern Orbital project.

The trial is expected to deliver a 40% reduction in carbon emissions from each of the four retrofitted vehicles, with the aim of providing a blueprint for the conversion of all Balfour Beatty owned fleet in the future.

The Connect Roads M77/GSO depot in East Renfrewshire will also become Scotland's first 'Hydrogen Construction Hub', where Balfour Beatty will facilitate quarterly sessions during the first year of the trial to allow customers, supply chain partners and other key stakeholders to hear about the progress and performance of the four retrofitted vehicles and see them in action.

Hector MacAulay MBE, Balfour Beatty Regional Managing Director of Scotland, said: "Reducing emissions from plant on sites is a key challenge faced by the entire construction and infrastructure industry. It is a challenge that must be faced collectively if we are to drive down our emissions and play our part in reaching the Scottish Government's net zero by 2045 target.

"Whilst electric solutions are starting to enter the market, they are not yet a realistic option for heavy plant. Dual fuel represents an alternative solution, and we are looking forward to seeing the benefits that this trial will deliver, as we look to develop a practical solution for our industry, alongside the Scottish Government."



Hector MacAulay
Managing Director,
Balfour Beatty

In response, the Scottish Government said: "We are pleased to note today's announcement by Balfour Beatty, following their successful funding bid into our Emerging Energy Technologies Fund - Hydrogen Innovation Scheme. As confirmed by the First Minister in May, we have so far awarded grant funding of over £7m from the HIS to 32 innovative projects that will support the development of the hydrogen economy in Scotland.

"The projects supported through this funding call will progress innovative solutions to address and overcome key challenges related to scaling up hydrogen production, storage, and distribution. The awarded funding will also enable the

development of hydrogen innovation centres across Scotland that will act as hubs of ongoing hydrogen innovation activity, providing facilities that will support skills development and the incubation and development of hydrogen technologies across the value chain; Balfour Beatty's project is a prime example of this activity."

The hydrogen retrofit project will support the bold targets and ambitions set out in Balfour Beatty's sustainability strategy, Building New Futures, and is aligned to the company's recently published fuel hierarchy, which looks to educate people on the most appropriate, sustainable energy sources for plant, equipment, vehicles and buildings.

Reducing emissions from plant on sites is a key challenge faced by the entire construction and infrastructure industry.

-Hector MacAulay MBE, Balfour Beatty Regional Managing Director of Scotland

Changeworks records biggest impact yet but more needs to be done to achieve net zero

Changeworks, Scotland's leading environmental charity, has achieved its biggest impact to date in reducing carbon emissions and helping people in need of energy advice. In the context of the accelerating climate emergency and energy crisis, Changeworks' goal to decarbonise Scotland's homes has never been more important.



Josiah Lockhart
Chief Executive,
Changeworks

Changeworks works with partners and organisations to deliver more energy efficient housing and tackle fuel poverty. In the past year, the charity expanded its services to support more than 67,000* people in Scotland to take actions that will reduce the carbon emissions from their home; a 22% increase on those reached in the previous year. By providing energy advice, Changeworks supported householders to save £4.06 million on their energy bills, or through income maximisation. These savings make a crucial difference to householders at a time when more and more people are in fuel poverty in Scotland.

Working with councils and social landlords across the country, Changeworks installed over 7,700* energy efficiency measures on homes. It is estimated that 370,000* tonnes of carbon savings will be made over the lifetime of the measures installed. Scotland has some of the leakiest homes in Europe, and as much as a third of a home's heat is lost through the walls.

Reducing emissions from our homes is key to meet Scotland's net zero targets. Focusing on improving energy efficiency through low carbon heating and renewable technologies

allows for a reduction in carbon emissions, whilst also making homes warmer, more comfortable and lowering energy bills. Over 1 million homes in Scotland need to convert to zero or low emissions heating systems by 2030 to meet our net zero targets.

Changeworks' Chief Executive, Josiah Lockhart said:

"The past year has seen us provide invaluable levels of support to householders across Scotland. While these are incredible achievements, we all need to do more, faster to tackle the climate emergency and ensure a just transition to net zero. At Changeworks, we will continue to invest in our growth and expand our services to maximise our ongoing impact."

Looking ahead, Changeworks is developing new services to support householders and will continue to work with even more partners to drive innovation to accelerate the decarbonisation of Scotland's homes.

CHANGeworks.



2030 strategy pledge to reverse habitat loss and extinction caused by climate change

At the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS) we are fully aware of the climate crisis and the impact it has on life around the world. As climate change threatens more and more species with problems such as habitat loss and even extinction, our 2030 strategy pledges to reverse the decline of 50 species by the end of the decade.

David Field

CEO, Royal Zoological Society of Scotland

We have also committed to reducing our carbon footprint by 60% by 2030 and becoming net zero by 2040. To achieve this objective, we are keen to develop and demonstrate innovative best practice in sustainability across all our charity's operations.

Nature and nature-based solutions must be utilised, and we are very pleased to have appointed E.ON to build a new solar meadow at the top of Edinburgh Zoo which will feature 1,556 solar photovoltaic panels that could potentially generate more than one megawatt of power. Excitingly, the solar meadow is expected to generate around 24% of the zoo's electricity consumption, making us the most sustainable zoo in the UK, and the third greenest in Europe, in terms of energy generation.

To show that solar panels and wildlife can exist in harmony we will encourage native species to use the site with the planting of wildflowers and hedgehog, bat and bird boxes, insect hotels and log piles. One of our wildlife conservation charity's main focuses is helping to save rare invertebrates such as the dark bordered beauty moth and pine hoverfly from extinction in Scotland, so we know how important it is to provide habitats for these smaller fauna and flora to flourish.

As a charity we have been hit particularly hard by rising energy prices. Many of the species in our care need habitats that are kept at a constant, warm temperature throughout the year. For example, to heat our chimpanzee enclosure, Budongo Trail, it takes more energy each year than our entire operations at Highland Wildlife Park.

Our solar meadow is an important step on our journey to becoming a net zero carbon zoo. It is projected to save over 200,000kg of carbon dioxide a year, which is equivalent to the emissions of 62.5 homes or 106 return flights from London to New York a year.

Achieving net zero carbon emissions is one of the most significant commitments in our strategy and we want to influence and encourage other organisations to do the same. Creating a solar meadow at Edinburgh Zoo is a major step in this programme, alongside assessing and supporting an appropriate carbon offsetting programme which is linked to positive biodiversity objectives.

It is vital that we inspire people to protect, value and love nature, and that starts with ensuring we are reducing our own carbon footprint. Our new solar installation is a huge step forward in setting RZSS as an exemplar for biodiversity and sustainability.

Now is the time to adapt and use nature as our solution.



Renewable energy seminar to discuss future of Scotland's energy sector

In the quest to combat climate change, Scotland stands at the forefront of renewable energy innovation.

Legal firm Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie LLP is set to hold its annual renewable energy seminar on November 9 in Glasgow – a vital platform for developers, industry leaders, experts and stakeholders to convene and deliberate on the path forward. Andy McFarlane, Partner, gives a preview of what delegates can expect.

"Onshore wind has always been a key focal point of our annual renewables seminars and we look forward to examining what the industry can do and needs in order to achieve the Scottish Government's ambitious targets of deploying 20GW of onshore wind by 2030.

"This year has been a particularly significant one for the sector, particularly given we are now a year on from the announcement of NPF4 – Scotland's National Planning Framework. Our seminar last year stimulated much debate and speculation about the potential impact of NPF4, a cornerstone for sustainable development.

"Now we will be in a position to examine its impact to date and how developers

might adjust their approach. It will also provide an opportunity to look at the latest post-NPF4 guidance from NatureScot, Scotland's nature agency.

"There has never been a more important time to take stock of the dynamic landscape of renewables, so we'll also address other critical topics including the grid, green hydrogen, and battery storage.

"The standout features of this event remain an opportunity to engage with WJM's renewables team and our external experts with the chance for a proper networking session with fellow developers and industry stakeholders.

"We look forward to bringing together industry leaders from across Scotland and beyond for this pivotal seminar exploring Scotland's energy future and journey to net zero."

To confirm your free place and join the conversation, [email events@wjm.co.uk](mailto:events@wjm.co.uk). Keep an eye on WJM's events section at www.wjm.co.uk for more updates.



Andy McFarlane
Partner, Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie LLP

2030 REACHING THE TARGETS

RENEWABLE ENERGY SEMINAR
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Our annual renewable energy seminar this year will focus on the journey to Net Zero, and in particular the progress towards 2030 targets.

Book your free place at our seminar now!
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WJM Wright, Johnston & Mackenzie



Bringing stakeholders together for a more economically resilient and sustainable Scotland

Scotland's legally binding goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 is an ambitious but achievable step towards addressing the climate crisis.

Adrian Johnson

Executive Technical Director, Stantec

To support the net zero transition over the next couple of decades, we need careful planning and co-ordinated action to bring about fundamental changes to our communities, our built environment, and our utilities networks. Whether via more active travel routes, energy storage schemes, new wetlands or urban greening, climate change resilience requires widespread adaptation alongside emissions reduction targets.

The government has said that "a collective effort from all corners of society is needed" and that "all groups must be bought-in to Scotland's climate ambitions". At Stantec, we wholeheartedly agree. Throughout this journey, the best results will come when communities and businesses support changes and fully understand the context behind them.

According to the Scottish Government, around 40% of the country's adults believe it's difficult to find opportunities to get involved in climate action. By better conveying the link between new resilience schemes and their impact on climate change, we can generate excitement about these changes.

Climate change can be the single biggest

long-term threat or an opportunity to businesses and our economy, and we need to hammer this message home. Scottish habitats, food supply, energy security, water quality, droughts, flooding, and community health and wellbeing are all linked directly to the meeting of these targets.

The solutions are out there, and we must collectively embrace them. Active travel schemes mean healthier communities, less pollution, and more reliable public transport options. Upgrading our transmission network allows for efficient growth and storage of cleaner, renewable energy sources; and more nature-positive water treatment methods can support better water quality and habitat creation. For businesses, this transition represents a growth and investment opportunity.

At the core of Stantec's approach is leveraging our ability to bring different sectors, businesses and local people together. When this happens, we can bring about solutions that are fit for the 21st century and designed with communities in mind.

Because we touch every corner of the built environment – from infrastructure, transport and building design, to cutting-edge water and renewable energy and storage solutions – we can see how to create places where communities thrive. In Scotland, we've used this interdisciplinary approach to facilitate positive discussions between the people

most impacted by resilience efforts, and the decision-makers bringing about sustainable change.

For example, we have been involved in the majority of grid scale pumped hydroelectricity storage facilities infrastructure consented in the last decade in Scotland. We've worked closely alongside communities, energy companies and local authorities to move these forward and pave the way towards Scotland - and the UK's - low-carbon future.

In Glasgow, we've helped connect local people, businesses, and the City Council to reimagine a more economically resilient city centre. And this September we will bring stakeholders together in our Edinburgh office on Morrison Street to host a public panel discussion with the Transport Planning Society on meeting the challenges of Scotland's Transport Strategy.

The journey towards a more resilient future has its challenges, but with an integrated approach that unites people, businesses local authorities and other stakeholders under a common cause, we can succeed in creating a truly sustainable Scotland.

If you want to know more about Stantec's work, then visit our website at www.stantec.com/uk. Learn about our work around Edinburgh by using the QR code.



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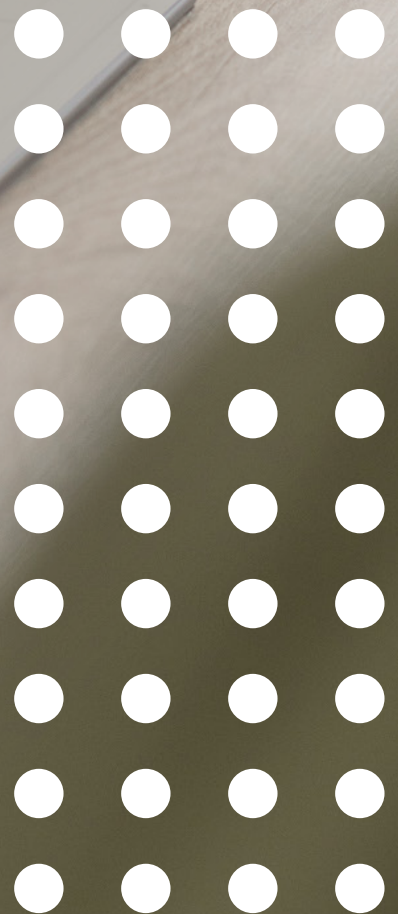
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Collaboration and Learning Fundamental for SMEs to Become Net Zero

RoslinCT is a rapidly growing international cell and gene therapy CDMO (Contract Development & Manufacturing Organisation) based in Edinburgh with locations at BioQuarter, Shawfair and Technopole, and recently expanded to include facilities just outside Boston, US.

The company was spun out of the Roslin Institute in 2006 and was one of the first companies to translate the cutting-edge technology behind Dolly the Sheep and manufacture stem cells to a grade that is designed for human diseases. RoslinCT is one of the world's first companies to manufacture this type of stem cells, and as technology accelerates and demand grows it is crucial that we grow our business to help our clients get these treatments to patients quicker.

The question, for any rapidly growing business in an emerging industry, is how do we ensure we do so sustainably, in a way that positively contributes towards a net zero future?

From the perspective of leading sustainability at RoslinCT, taking the time to understand the connection between our own business operations and global macro issues such as climate change and sustainable development is fundamental. The climate emergency is also a global health crisis, and if our business is constantly innovating to find newer and faster healthcare solutions, we cannot add to the problem by failing to mitigate our climate impact. Understanding these synergies and juxtapositions is fundamental for businesses to take meaningful climate action.

At RoslinCT we are at the beginning of our company's sustainability journey. As we take time to establish our short-term priorities and longer-term strategic goals, we find that the principles of what we need to do to become a more sustainable business are not dissimilar to what many other SMEs are grappling with. In Scotland, around 55% of employment and around 40% of turnover comes from either small or medium-sized businesses, so it is absolutely clear that SMEs are critical to achieving net zero, and there must be support available – either in the form of platforms or networks to foster collaboration and learning, or in the form of technical, strategic and financial resources to help deliver solutions.

All businesses have to take time to understand their biggest impact areas – an assessment of materiality. For a business like RoslinCT whose operations are rooted in manufacturing in a high-spec clean-room environment, we have to take responsibility for climate change mitigation through the reduction of our scope 1, scope 2 and scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions and we are in the process of baselining our value chain emissions and developing effective carbon reduction strategies. Just the process of baselining is complicated enough for an SME but learning

what to do next and how to implement successful implementation plans is even more so, which makes collaboration and learning so important.

We have recently begun working with the Sustainable Production Group (part of the Life Sciences Scotland Industry Leadership Group) which focuses on the areas of Digital, Innovation and Leadership to create positive impact and progress towards net zero. The group has set itself milestones for the year ahead that include publishing tools and resources to support businesses' work towards their sustainability goals, understanding the skills gap to achieve that, and publishing case studies of sustainable innovation within Scotland for others to learn from.

RoslinCT is at the forefront of creating innovative cell and gene therapy treatments that currently do not exist, but we also want to lead and support others in creating a healthier world by being the most sustainable business we possibly can.

Roslin^{CT}
your advanced therapy solution



Wide range of qualifications boosts young people's work skills across the capital

Young people across Edinburgh and the Lothians are benefitting from a wide range of locally available SQA qualifications through which they can demonstrate their knowledge and vocational skills.

Since 2019, schools across the City of Edinburgh, Midlothian, and East Lothian have experienced a combined increase of 150% in the number of young people achieving SQA National Progression Awards (NPA). National Progression Awards are aimed at assessing a defined set of skills and knowledge in specialist vocational areas.

National Progression Awards

NPAs are developed in line with National Occupational Standards, which are the basis of Scottish Vocational Qualifications, and in turn many Foundation Apprenticeships. They are available at levels 2 – 6 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and can be delivered in schools, or in partnership with colleges, and employers.

Young learners in Edinburgh are especially keen on NPAs in Business and Information Technology, Cyber Security, and E-sports.

Schools across Edinburgh and the Lothians are increasingly using NPAs and other SQA awards including Skills for Work, National Certificates, and Foundation Apprenticeships alongside more traditional National Qualifications such as Highers, and Advanced Highers. This gives young people as much opportunity as possible to define their own pathways to success, and progress into higher or further education, training, or employment.

Maximising pupils' potential

Craigmount High School in the west of the city is at the forefront of offering its learners

a broad range of qualifications that enable young people to develop their learning across a range of subject and interests.

Head teacher Colin Meikle explains: "Our curriculum gives all young people in S4-S6 the opportunity to study a full range of National Qualifications including Highers, and Advanced Highers, but we also include access to National Progression Awards, Skills for Work Courses, National Certificates, and Foundation Apprenticeships which are delivered in partnership with Edinburgh College.

Colin continues: "Offering a wider portfolio of qualifications allows all of our pupils to deepen their knowledge of different subject areas and helps them develop key skills for learning, life, and work. Year on year the school has seen the popularity of these courses grow as pupils realise how valuable they are in helping them gain practical experience."

As a result of increasing the number of subject and course choices available to young people, Craigmount has seen a rise in the number of young people staying on throughout the senior phase.

Colin adds: "The range of courses pupils can study in S4-S6 has allowed for a more personalised pathway and has resulted in more pupils staying on to study courses which meet their learning needs."

Theresa McGowan, SQA Regional Manager for Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian says: "SQA works with industry, employers, and skills specialists, to provide

qualifications to suit learners at all stages of their education and training. We are qualifying Edinburgh and the Lothians. My colleagues and I can provide the best advice and guidance for qualifications and skills development at a local level."

Find out more about how SQA is qualifying Scotland's workforce with our flexible, innovative qualifications in a wide range of sectors. Visit www.sqa.org.uk/npa.

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. If you would like advice on delivering SQA qualifications, please contact Theresa at theresa.mcgowan@sqa.org.uk.



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How can SMEs tackle the Net Zero transition?

Clare and Angela lead a team responsible for supporting SMEs across Edinburgh with their growth aspirations, with a particular focus on helping businesses reach net zero.

Operating more sustainably is a consideration for most firms - large and small - with many owners and employees recognising that a sustainable business can be more resilient with improved efficiencies, productivity and increasing the ability to better attract and retain talent.

Numerous businesses across Scotland have committed to clear sustainability plans with some making major promises to reach specific environmental goals. These typically fall in line with the country's ambitious plans to become net zero by 2045, five years ahead of the government's target.

Recent data from Bank of Scotland's Business Barometer revealed that in August, more than a fifth (22%) of businesses in Scotland plan to invest in sustainability over the next six months. This is in addition to those already making great progress towards net zero.

It's great to see that so many businesses are eager to take steps to improve their environmental impact. But, it can sometimes be tricky to know where to start.

Bring your team on the journey with you

For businesses to make progress with their sustainability plans, they need to engage with their workforce to make sure everyone is invested, knowledgeable on the subject matter and working towards the same common goal.

One way to support this is to offer environmental training for staff, as this can help to shift the wider cultural attitude across the organisation. All departments and colleagues should be responsible for their own sustainability targets, ideally focused on their job area.

Measure, mobilise, monitor

Measuring and assessing your current environmental impact and putting in place a system to monitor progress is a key driver of long-term sustained change in a business' journey to Net Zero.

At this stage, firms need to be measuring their carbon footprint, using those insights to mobilise their plans and set realistic targets and deadlines that all stakeholders agree on. Next, focus should be given to monitoring the impact going forwards and tweaking plans where necessary.



Clare Richardson
& Angela Smillie,
Joint Area Directors,
Edinburgh & East,
Bank of Scotland

Keep on track

With a roadmap now in place with clear targets that are being monitored, keeping up momentum against your progress is vital. Here you might also consider developments outside your own operations and the wider supply chain.

There may well be challenges, but as each new initiative is introduced on your map to net zero, they will need the same rigour applied as when you first started on this journey, otherwise momentum risks being lost.

Work with the right partner

Finding the right information that is most suited to your goals and sector is key. At Bank of Scotland, we have a host of essential information on how you can get started on Net Zero, including articles on how to build sustainability goals into clear Net Zero plans for your business.

We also offer Clean Growth Finance loans which enable businesses to access discounted lending for green purposes, from small improvements in environmental impact, right through to large-scale renewable energy infrastructure. Through this, businesses also have access to leading sustainability consultants.

We've helped some fantastic businesses through this scheme, including ice cream company Mackie's of Scotland, which has been able to reduce electricity usage and carbon emissions after investing in an efficient low-carbon system due to funding support from Bank of Scotland.

You can read our practical guide for SMEs on going net zero [here](#).

Numerous businesses across Scotland have committed to clear sustainability plans with some making major promises to reach specific environmental goals. These typically fall in line with the country's ambitious plans to become net zero by 2045, five years ahead of the government's target.



It's Awards season!

As we approach the final months of the year, the anticipation for our 2024 Annual Edinburgh Chamber Business Awards is building! We launched the exciting event at the end of September, against the stunning backdrop of the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, and the buzz surrounding the awards is well and truly in the air.

Once again, we're thrilled to host our flagship awards ceremony at the EICC on Thursday 29th February 2024. This event, the highlight of our calendar year, aims to unite Edinburgh's business community, bringing together its leaders, entrepreneurs, and influencers to honour the city's achievements and thriving businesses. Last year's Awards ceremony set a new record, with over 600 attendees gracing the EICC for an evening of celebration. We're hoping to top that success in 2024.

Now in its 13th year, our awards ceremony adopts a unique theme each time. This year's theme is "Grow, Scale, Succeed." Edinburgh boasts exceptional local business survival rates and above-average wages, proudly maintaining its position as the UK's most economically productive city outside of London. This prosperity is a testament to our vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem, nurturing a dynamic start-up scene that has already given rise to unicorns like FanDuel and Skyscanner, with more promising ventures on the horizon.

There are several ways for your business to get involved with event. There are a total of 16 awards handed out on the evening, with 15 of them available to enter. Entries are now open and members can submit for as many categories as they like. We urge you to start thinking about which categories are most relevant, and begin crafting your entry (entries close on 17th January!)

Category sponsorship is an excellent opportunity to position your business at the forefront of the event by aligning with an Award that reflects your values, showcasing your leadership in that domain. Moreover, participating in our awards is an outstanding way to celebrate your organisation's success and gain recognition among Edinburgh's business community and beyond, showcasing your excellence in your respective fields. If you would like more information on our Awards or how to get involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to a member of our team - awards@edinburghchamber.co.uk.

Amidst all the excitement surrounding the awards, our team will continue to bring you a variety of events from our general calendar. In November, we're delighted to welcome Forth Ports to provide a business update on the Forth Green Freeport developments, including plans to accelerate investment, increase trade, and create new green jobs. Towards the end of November, we are collaborating with Our Scottish Future to present a conference on Scottish economic growth titled 'Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Pay'. Featuring speakers like Gordon Brown, former UK Prime Minister, and Lord Sainsbury, Founder of the Centre for Cities, this session promises thought-provoking insights on sustaining Scotland's economic growth.

Finally, as we edge closer to the festive season, keep an eye on our calendar for some delightful holiday-themed surprises - which may even include some special Christmas treats for the furry residents of Edinburgh Zoo!

Keep posted here - edinburghchamber.co.uk/events

Once again, we're thrilled to host our flagship awards ceremony at the EICC on Thursday 29th February 2024. This event, the highlight of our calendar year, aims to unite Edinburgh's business community, bringing together its leaders, entrepreneurs, and influencers to honour the city's achievements and thriving businesses.

Why do more than 70% of Digital Transformation Projects fail?

Pam Shields, a Transformation Mentor and the founder of Evolution Transformation, emphasises the crucial role of change management in the success of transformation projects.



Pam Shields
Transformation Mentor,
Evolution Transformation

"Humans are the problem. And the solution," Dr. Corrie Block's words aptly capture the paradox of humans and change. Businesses have faced the challenge of managing change for centuries. Industrial and technological advances have spurred innovation, and methodologies like lean manufacturing have optimised efficiency. These changes, though transformative, often occurred gradually, allowing employees to adapt.

Yet, recent years have ushered in a new era. Transformational change is now the norm, demanding exceptional change management. The rapid pace of change affords little time for employees to adjust. Additionally, new workflows created during these transformations must not only be efficient but also user-friendly for customers. There's no longer space for workarounds to accommodate your team's resistance to adopting new technology.

To thrive in this dynamic landscape, businesses must craft and implement robust

strategic change programs. These programs must align seamlessly with the organisation's purpose, environment, and culture. Crucially, they must be flexible enough to cater to the diverse needs and preferences of employees, regardless of their personality or learning style.

Transformational change is no easy feat. It demands meticulous planning, adaptability, and a profound understanding of the human element. Change management isn't just a component of transformation projects; it's the very heart and soul of their success.

Evolution Transformation can help you be one of the 30% of projects that succeed.

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60 Seconds

Name: Charlie Fitzgibbon

Company Name: Edinburgh Construction

Website: www.edinburghconstruction.com

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

A: Construction Contracting and Property Development

Q How long have you been in your current role?

A: 6 years

Q What does a week in your job look like?

A: No two days are the same, but mostly a mix of site visits, team meetings, & touching base with clients and stakeholders

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

A: Our win of mid-size business of the year (of course!) at the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce awards 2022

Q Your favourite top tip or quote in business?

A: You must understand your businesses finances at all times.



"Accounting is the language of business" – Warren Buffett

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

A: Two and a half years. We joined to find likeminded peers to learn from, share ideas with, and gain inspiration from

Q Where do you read your copy of Business Comment?

A: Via the Chamber of Commerce Website

GET WITH IT

By Bill Magee

Scottish Business Technology
Writer of the Year



Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) sustainability considerations are a must for organisations. Especially now as many are spending up to half of their hard-earned revenues on new tech solutions with their digital eye on Net Zero.

Such a commercial necessity means implementing ESG into much earlier stages of a company's IT strategy along with other key areas such as the issuing of tenders. This is not always easy to pull off.

According to computing.co.uk those with the responsibility of buying technological solutions are faced, at times, with a quite daunting prospect.

Computing's associate editor Penny Horwood points out Microsoft's ESG report runs to 80 and Amazon 100 pages respectively. Hardly an easy read. Things to look out for:

A vendor's summary document for key statistics on its sustainability website: whilst there is no accusation of greenwashing - be

aware of the "increasing meshing" of ESG and marketing which it can be difficult to extract the full picture.

Tech buyers should check what are a potential solution's targets and timescales for carbon and waste reductions and water use.

Also, has the potential vendor signed up to The Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi) and/or Climate Disclosure Project - CDP is voluntary but provides strong indications that standards and policies are in place, as a genuine marker of intent.

Ask the prospective vendor about their carbon/GHG intensity ie amount of emissions produced per defined unit of output. This represents a key metric and useful measure

if you're in the market for any kind of cloud service and need to know how much renewable energy is powering the vendor's servers.

Also, how much of the vendor's electricity consumption is from carbon free sources; can they provide detail of carbon offsets; how much water do they withdraw; their waste metrics; and how innovative are they.

One thing is clear: there's more to sustainable/net zero tech buying than first thought and it's crucial to get it right.

As for the likes of the opaque Microsoft and Amazon mega-report snag - probably best to engage a respected MS and AWS cloud solutions digital partner.

High demand for flexible office space for Inigo Business Centres

Scotland's Capital City is known for its rich history, stunning architecture lively cultural scene. But it's also a vibrant business hub and a great place to start or grow a business. Inigo Business Centres at Rutland Square in the heart of the city is experiencing high demand for its flexible office space.

So why do more and more companies choose serviced offices over the traditional leasehold office solution?

Cost-efficiency

In today's challenging and ever-changing business landscape, it's more important than ever for small businesses to operate flexibly and cost-efficiently.

Where workspace is concerned, a flexible workspace offers businesses the flexibility they need to adapt to changing market conditions. If your business needs to grow or shrink, you can easily adjust your office space to accommodate your needs.

Flexible workspace typically includes all rents and rates – from cleaning to receptionist support – within one simple monthly bill which can save businesses a significant amount of money and offer much-needed control and visibility over their costs.



Business Network

Another significant benefit of a flexible workspace is that it provides a readymade business network. The workplace isn't just a place of work; it's where friendships and business connections are made. Workspaces are home to all types of businesses and entrepreneurs. Businesses can use an office space full-time or on a flexible hour-by-hour basis and become part of a vibrant

community of business professionals, such as marketers, designers, accountants, franchising specialists, law firms, and much more.

Collaboration:

Rather than being a 'place to go' to sit and work, the office has become a place of collaboration. Businesses in flexible spaces use their offices to 'touchdown' with their teams, sometimes both in-person and over video calls, to fire up creativity. For a change of scene, Inigo also offer access to meeting rooms by the hour or day.

If you've not used flexible workspace and want to get a feel for the environment, contact Centre Manager Cristelle for a free day pass on **0131 221 6500**.



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Can we call our food systems sustainable?

At this time of year, the general public cannot escape the level of food production that is happening across Scotland. Whether you are driving, taking the train, or strolling in the countryside, you will see combine harvesters in fields, tractors on roads, and potato harvesters out in force all over the country. It is a time to pause and reflect on how our food is produced, and there has never been more discussion around the origins of the food that we eat, and how sustainable it is.

Sustainability itself is difficult to describe and quantify - for example, are tomatoes grown in Spain more resource efficient, including transport to the UK, than growing tomatoes in Scotland? If you are growing tomatoes in Hawick and use waste heat from biogas and CO₂ to heat a greenhouse, is that more sustainable than growing a tomato entirely ripened in the Spanish sunshine? None of us have the time to question every one of these sustainability loops every time we reach for a product in a shop or a local farmers market. We therefore need to have trust in our food systems and trust that our growers, farmers, cooperatives, and their processes are making good decisions on our behalf.

There are many initiatives across Scotland's agricultural sector with the aim of increasing the sustainability of on-farm processes. Innovation is everywhere - for example, the

use of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on dairy farms to provide on-site electricity generation.

One much-debated topic asks if a meat-free diet is more sustainable. However, livestock production is a key part of a regenerative food system. If there is a demand for good quality, fresh, organic produce, it is actually very difficult to produce this type of food without inorganic fertiliser, such as bagged nitrogen, and most of this comes from livestock.

Many of our food systems create waste - in particular supermarkets, as most of the general public does not want wonky vegetables. But this waste can often find another use - this quality food, that is perfectly fine to eat, instead gets fed to animals. Another example of this is in the barley industry. If barley does not make

the grade for whisky, it is often fed to pigs or other animals and their manure is then used to make the replacement crops more sustainable. In the brewing and beer industry, spent grains and other byproducts of brewing are also fed to animals.

As an industry, we need to make sure that those interested in food provenance can understand these systems. However, we



As an industry, we need to make sure that those interested in food provenance can understand these systems. However, we also need to celebrate that in Scotland we have an effective, linked-up food system, with farm businesses constantly innovating to make this more sustainable. We can provide confidence to the consumer that our food systems are operating effectively and represent good management of not only our food, but our landscapes, air and water quality too.



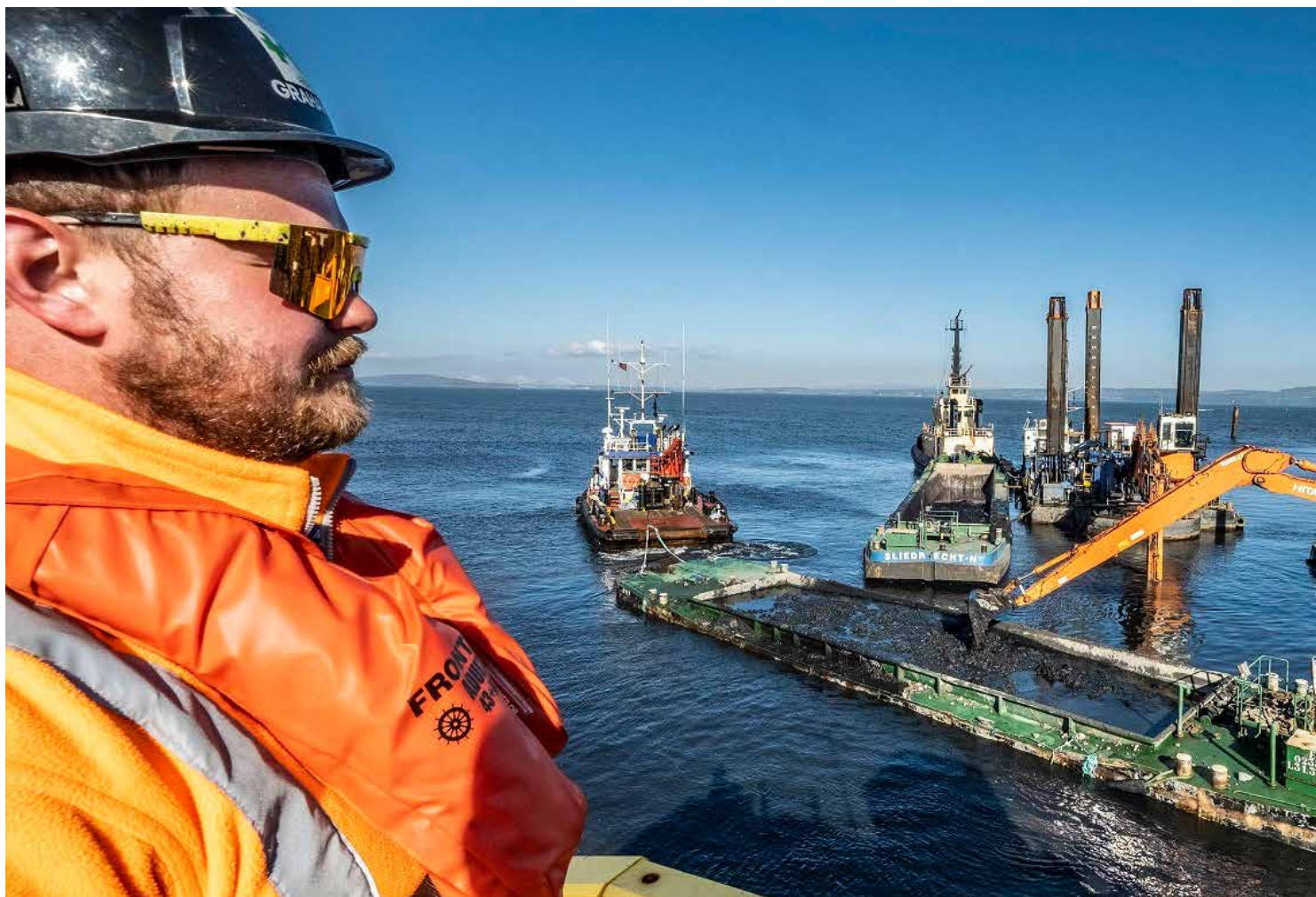
also need to celebrate that in Scotland we have an effective, linked-up food system, with farm businesses constantly innovating to make this more sustainable. We can provide confidence to the consumer that our food systems are operating effectively and represent good management of not only our food, but our landscapes, air and water quality too.

This topic is far too big for one article, but it's vital that people are given an opportunity to explore our food industry up close – which is where the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET), the Royal Highland & Agricultural Society of Scotland (RHASS), and in particular the Royal Highland Show, come in.

In the meantime, we should pause to appreciate those throughout our food system, whether they be a chef in a restaurant, a crofter out on a hillside, or a farmer in their field for all that they do for us. We must as a society remember to value the food and drink these systems and people produce – we would soon notice if they stopped!



Alan Laidlaw
Chief Executive of the Royal
Highland & Agricultural
Society of Scotland (RHASS)



Forth Ports' Bold Commitment: Leading the Path to Net Zero

Scotland's Premier Port Operator Sets Targets for Carbon Neutrality. As the world grapples with the pressing challenge of climate change, Forth Ports, Scotland's largest port operator, has taken a pioneering step toward a sustainable future.

With a firm commitment to carbon neutrality by 2032 and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2042, Forth Ports is driving forward progressive change in the maritime industry and beyond.

The company's ambitious goals reflect its dedication to environmental stewardship and its crucial role in propelling the UK towards a decarbonised economy.

A Vision for Carbon Neutrality

Formally launched at a high profile event in October, Forth Ports' comprehensive strategy aims to transform its operations, ensuring that carbon emissions become a relic of the past.

The company's interim objective is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2032, tackling Scope 1 and 2 emissions head-on.

This target sets a clear marker for progress and signifies the organisation's determination to play a pivotal role in addressing climate change.

Greening Infrastructure

Central to Forth Ports' journey towards carbon neutrality is the overhaul of its infrastructure.

The ambitious initiative involves the electrification of machinery, the adoption



Charles Hammond OBE
Chief Executive of Forth Ports Group & Interim Chair, Forth Green Freeport

of low-carbon fuels, and the significant expansion of on-site renewable energy generation.

By embracing innovative solutions and sustainable technologies, the ports are setting a new standard for eco-friendly operations.

Embracing Sustainable Alternatives

Forth Ports recognises that a cleaner future requires a paradigm shift in transportation.

In line with this philosophy, the company is championing low-carbon delivery alternatives such as rail and barge.

These alternatives not only reduce emissions but also promote efficiency and innovation in the transportation sector.

Investment in Renewable Energy

A cornerstone of Forth Ports' strategy is its substantial investment in renewable energy infrastructure.

Forth Ports' significance in the offshore wind sector is undeniable.

Its substantial investment programme, totalling £150 million, has provided crucial support to offshore wind development.

The creation of bespoke renewables hubs in Dundee, Burntisland and the city's port

of Leith are poised to fuel the offshore wind revolution in the North Sea.

This strategic move underlines the company's commitment to nurturing the growth of clean energy sources that can power the future and deliver the ScotWind.

This investment not only facilitates the transition to net zero but also lays the groundwork for emerging technologies like floating offshore wind, which holds promise for deeper sea installations, and the hydrogen economy.

Collaborative Leadership

The path to a greener future is paved with collaboration.

The company actively supports the clean maritime, net zero and green energy strategies of both the UK and Scottish Governments.

This cooperative approach extends to customers, peers and suppliers, with Forth Ports leading by example and championing innovation for sustainable solutions.

The commitment to carbon neutrality by 2032 and net zero emissions by 2042 demonstrates Forth Ports' dedication to shaping a brighter, cleaner future.

By setting aggressive targets and implementing tangible actions, the company is proving that sustainable operations is an attainable reality.

A Blueprint for Sustainable Success

Forth Ports' efforts to achieve carbon neutrality and net zero emissions are a testament to its leadership in the maritime sector.

The company's investment in renewable energy, embrace of sustainable alternatives and collaborative approach underscore its commitment to driving the transition to a decarbonised economy.

As other industries look for guidance on reducing their carbon footprint, I would hope that Forth Ports' journey serves as an inspiring blueprint for achieving meaningful and lasting environmental change.

The company's interim objective is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2032, tackling Scope 1 and 2 emissions head-on.

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Richard Ellis Head of Membership, Richard.ellis@edinburghchamber.co.uk

Policy Matters: Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce's Latest Developments



As we head into the autumn this will be a busy time for our Policy Team, with party conference season meaning a raft of new policy papers and announcements, soon to be followed by the UK Chancellor's Autumn Statement, and the Scottish Government budget in December.

Through British Chambers of Commerce we will continue to engage with all the major UK political parties during conference season, as well as feeding into the Autumn Statement to push for policies that will benefit our members. To this end, the Chamber network has produced a short policy prospectus, setting out an action plan to foster innovation, investment, and growth, entitled "The Power of British Business: A Framework for the Future". This sets out 16 key policy asks, in the areas of economic growth, skills and employment, trade and net-zero. A flexible apprenticeship levy, tax incentives to boost growth, strengthened UK-EU co-operation and upgrading the national grid are just some of the policies we are asking UK and Scottish Governments to take action on, in partnership with business, so that businesses can reach their full potential.

At Holyrood, Humza Yousaf MSP announced his first Programme for Government, for the 2023-24 parliamentary term. While it was encouraging to see the First Minister build on his intent to reset the relationship with the business community a great deal of

work remains to be done if genuine progress is to be made. In particular, we await the outcome of discussions around improving the business rates system, to see if long-awaited changes will go far enough to show that the Government is really listening to the business community. Other welcome announcements were investment in housing and infrastructure, the establishment of a dedicated Investment Unit, and the promise to develop a Green Industrial Strategy, setting out how the Scottish Government intends to help businesses and investors realise the economic opportunities of the transition to net zero.

As well as policymakers at Westminster, Holyrood, and the City Council, we have also been engaging directly with the Bank of England – with inflation and interest rates being two of the main concerns of members, we invited the Bank's Agent for Scotland to come and speak to some of our members. Hosted in the impressive Royal Bank of Scotland St Andrew's Square boardroom, this was a great opportunity for our members to engage directly with the Bank of England,

who use feedback from these kinds of sessions when making decisions around monetary policy. It was reassuring to hear from the Bank that, whilst there is a short-term target to reduce inflation down to 5% by the end of the year, they are still focused on bringing inflation down to a sustainable 2% over the medium-term.

We continue to do our best to ensure our members are represented at all levels of policy-making, sharing insights collected during our member roundtables with local elected representatives in our quarterly economic briefings, feeding in to the Scottish Government's call for views on their proposed Visitor Levy legislation, and talking to the leader of the City Council about their Short Term Lets policy. As ever, if you'd like to discuss these or any other issues, please contact the Policy Team at policy@edinburghchamber.co.uk and we would be more than happy to discuss how we can help your business.

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Facilitating International Trade with Edinburgh Chamber

Edinburgh Chamber is committed to supporting Scottish businesses in their quest for growth and expansion into global markets. Our comprehensive suite of services are designed to streamline international trade, ensuring the smooth transit of your goods to their intended destinations.



Our expert team is well-versed in the intricacies of international trade documentation and can assist with a wide range of crucial documents, including:

- UK Certificates of Origin
- Invoices and packing lists
- Egyptian Certificates of Origin
- EUR1 Certificates
- ATA Carnets
- EUR1 Movement Certificates
- Any other essential commercial or legal documents required for international trade, such as Power of Attorney, Distributor Agreements, Health Certificates, Certificates of Free Sale, Trademark Certificates, Commercial Contracts, Articles of Association, Certificates of Incorporation, and more.

Upcoming Trade Missions

We're excited to announce two upcoming virtual trade missions that present significant opportunities for Scottish businesses:

Virtual Mission to Sweden – 29th November

Why Sweden?

- Sweden is a crucial trading partner for Scotland, with exports worth £680 million to the country in 2018, constituting 2.0% of Scotland's total international exports.
- The World Bank ranks Sweden as the 10th easiest country in the world to do business with.

- Sweden boasts a competitive, innovative, and globalised economy, with a stable economic environment, a skilled labour force, and sophisticated consumers.
- Swedish businesses often use English in their operations, making it accessible for international partners.
- Scotland's high-quality products have found favour in Sweden's consumer market, attracting international brands looking to introduce new products.

This mission is open to all Scottish businesses, both members and non-members, operating in the following sectors:

- Food & drink
- Computer and information technology (IT) services
- Financial and business support services
- Machinery and equipment
- Engineering
- Transport
- Energy
- Life Sciences

Virtual mission to Spain – February 2024

Why Spain?

- Spain is a high-priority market for Scotland, with goods exports worth £623 million in 2022.
- The World Bank ranks Spain as the 30th easiest country in the world to do business with.

- Spain offers excellent transportation links, robust information communication technology (ICT) networks, and widespread use of English in businesses.
- UK and Scottish brands are highly trusted in the Spanish market.

This mission welcomes participation from all Scottish businesses, whether they are members or not, operating in the following sectors:

- Chemical sciences
- Computer and IT services
- Manufacturing
- Food & drink
- Transport logistics and equipment
- Financial services
- Green tech

Programme Highlights

Delegates participating in these missions will benefit from a market awareness session led by our expert partners in each respective market. Additionally, you'll have the opportunity to engage in 2 business-to-business meetings tailored to your specific requirements.

If you are interested in joining these virtual trade missions or exploring any of our international trade services, please do not hesitate to reach out to our international team via email at international@edinburghchamber.co.uk or by phone at **0131 221 2999**. We are here to support and facilitate your international business ventures.



Chamber Training Calendar

October/November 2023

October

Monday 9th

Methods of Payment & Letters of Credit

Thursday 12th

Understanding Origin & Preference

Wednesday 18th

Customs Procedures and Documentation

Wednesday 25th

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

Thursday 26th

Imports: Inward & Outward Processing

November

Monday 6th

Focus on Food: Tariff Classification

Thursday 9th

Becoming a Successful Leader

Monday 13th

Focus On: Northern Ireland - The Movement of Goods

Thursday 16th

Mastering the Art of Project Management: Strategies for Seamless Success

Monday 20th

Finance for Non-Financial Managers

Tuesday 21st

A Beginner's Practical Guide to Exporting

Friday 24th

Marketing in the Digital Age: Strategies and Tactics for Success

Tuesday 28th

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)- A Strategic Masterclass That Drives Results

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Strategies for Businesses on the Path to Net Zero Carbon Emissions: Training Staff for Sustainability

As the global community continues to grapple with the pressing issue of climate change, businesses are increasingly recognising the imperative to take action in reducing their carbon emissions.

By Jimmy O'Connell

Head of Operations and Business Support,
Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce

Achieving net zero carbon emissions has become a central goal for many companies, requiring a comprehensive and collaborative approach across all levels of the organisation. One critical aspect of this journey is training staff to understand, support, and actively contribute to sustainability efforts. Here are key strategies that businesses should adopt when training their staff on the path towards net zero carbon emissions.

1. Raise Awareness and Education:

Education is the foundation for meaningful change. Businesses must begin by raising awareness about the urgency of reducing carbon emissions and the potential consequences of inaction. Offer training sessions, workshops, and informational materials that explain the science of climate change, the company's carbon footprint, and the broader environmental context. By fostering a deeper understanding, employees are more likely to embrace sustainability practices and feel motivated to contribute.

2. Set Clear Objectives and Targets:

Establish clear objectives and targets related to carbon reduction. Share these goals with your staff and emphasise their importance. When employees understand the company's commitment to net zero emissions, they are more likely to align their actions with these goals. Regularly communicate progress and celebrate milestones to keep employees engaged and motivated.

3. Integrate Sustainability into Job Roles:

Incorporate sustainability responsibilities into every job role, regardless of department or level. This integration ensures that sustainability is not seen as an additional task but as an essential aspect of everyone's responsibilities. Provide specific guidance on how each employee can contribute to carbon reduction within their role, whether it's through energy-efficient practices, waste reduction, or more sustainable procurement choices.

Achieving net zero carbon emissions is a collective effort that requires the active participation of every employee within an organisation.



4. Offer Comprehensive Training:

Develop comprehensive training programs that provide employees with the knowledge and skills they need to make sustainable decisions. These programs should cover a range of topics, including energy conservation, waste reduction, sustainable transportation, and responsible resource management. Offer both general training for all employees and specialised training for roles directly involved in sustainability initiatives.

5. Encourage Innovation and Collaboration:

Foster a culture of innovation and collaboration where employees are encouraged to suggest and implement new ideas for carbon reduction. Create platforms for employees to share their suggestions, and recognise and reward innovative solutions. Encourage cross-departmental collaboration to leverage diverse expertise and perspectives in finding effective ways to reduce carbon emissions.

6. Lead by Example:

Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the organisation's sustainability culture. Executives and managers should lead by example, demonstrating their commitment to net zero emissions through their actions and decisions. When employees see leaders prioritising sustainability, it reinforces the message that these efforts are a top organizational priority.

7. Provide Tools and Resources:

Equip employees with the necessary tools, resources, and technology to facilitate sustainable practices. This might include

energy-efficient equipment, recycling stations, and digital platforms to track and monitor carbon reduction efforts. Access to real-time data empowers employees to make informed decisions and track progress toward carbon reduction goals.

8. Create Employee Engagement Programs:

Engage employees through interactive programs and initiatives that make sustainability personally meaningful. Establish green teams, organise environmental challenges, or implement volunteering opportunities related to sustainability. Connecting the cause to personal values and experiences can significantly enhance employees' dedication to the net zero carbon emissions journey.

9. Measure and Communicate Impact:

Regularly measure and communicate the impact of employee efforts on the company's carbon reduction journey. Transparent reporting not only demonstrates progress but also fosters a sense of accountability among employees. Sharing success stories and showcasing individual contributions can motivate others to take similar actions.

In conclusion, achieving net zero carbon emissions is a collective effort that requires the active participation of every employee within an organisation. By implementing these strategies, businesses can effectively train their staff to embrace sustainability practices, drive innovation, and contribute meaningfully to the broader goal of mitigating climate change. A well-informed and motivated workforce can serve as a powerful catalyst for positive environmental change, ultimately benefiting the company, its employees, and the planet as a whole.

Plotting a course for Edinburgh's net zero future

Turner & Townsend is working with City of Edinburgh Council and partners to plan how the city's buildings will be decarbonised and how its people and businesses can reap the benefits of the transition.



Hassan Waheed

Sustainability Lead Scotland,
Turner & Townsend



If Scotland is to reach net zero emissions by 2045, we will need to dramatically step up the pace and scale of transformation across our built environment.

How far and fast we have to go is being defined by local authorities. They have been charged by the Scottish Government with the task of developing Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) for their areas by the end of this year, together with accompanying Delivery Plans.

This is a massive undertaking and Turner & Townsend is bringing its expertise to the challenge, working with City of Edinburgh Council to develop a citywide LHEES, alongside engineering consultant Ramboll and environmental charity Changeworks. Each LHEES must chart how every building, from homes to schools, hospitals, offices and shops, can be upgraded to achieve net zero. For Edinburgh, that means creating a retrofit strategy spanning almost 300,000 homes and around 23,000 non-domestic properties.

For Edinburgh, building retrofit will go hand in hand with increased provision of heat

networks, district-wide systems supplying heat from a central energy system via underground hot water pipes. Installing heat networks across the city will not only drive decarbonisation at scale, but also attract investment into major long-term infrastructure assets for the city. Heat networks deliver heat efficiently and cost effectively which also has the potential to dampen customer exposure to price shocks afflicting global energy markets.

Dense demand for heat in towns and cities makes them the most appropriate location for heat networks and Edinburgh already has many small networks in operation. Still, the city has been identified as the third largest in Scotland in its potential to deliver heat via heat networks, and the council is paving the way for major city-wide deployment.

However, Edinburgh's approach cannot just be about delivering retrofit and heat networks in isolation. Realising Edinburgh's net zero potential will call for innovative and collaborative responses. First, the city has 50 conservation areas of special architectural or historical interest. This built heritage will need cost-effective routes to decarbonisation which preserve its character. Second, its buildings have many different owners, who will need to be encouraged to work together to enable the delivery of retrofits and heat networks. Third, the city has buildings of every age and type, all of which need appropriate net zero solutions to deliver warmth in an affordable and suitable manner.

At its core, this transition will be about the citizens and businesses of Edinburgh. The LHEES will seek to deliver social and economic benefits alongside environmental goals. It will focus on the target to eliminate poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty by 2040 and follow delivery approaches which benefit the local people through the economic advantages of a just transition.

A hint of what is to come can be seen in Turner & Townsend's existing retrofit programme with the City of Edinburgh Council, which includes whole-building refurbishment of the authority's directly managed social housing. Currently, our project and cost management teams are delivering the retrofit of the 1950s-built Oxcars and Inchmickery Courts in Muirhouse.

Many more buildings of every age, type, tenure and ownership will need to be retrofitted and connected to heat networks under the bold LHEES ambition. Through our work, we are seeking to establish a best practice approach to LHEES, which may provide useful examples for all local authorities.

The net zero transformation will be extraordinary in its scope and scale and its success will ultimately depend on its ability to benefit the people on whose behalf it is being delivered. With its LHEES, Edinburgh is preparing to seize that opportunity.

Green Certification: Unlocking Competitive Advantage with ISO 14001

Sustainability has evolved beyond a mere buzzword and encompasses a multifaceted approach that includes environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic viability. In today's dynamic and environmentally conscious marketplace, integrating sustainability into business strategy is no longer an option; it is a competitive necessity.

Recent research by American Express found that 65% of UK consumers think about the environmental impact of their purchases and Deloitte found that 40% chose brands that have more environmentally sustainable practices/values in the past 12 months.

ISO 14001, the international standard for environmental management, provides a framework for businesses to proactively manage and reduce their environmental impact. It encourages resource efficiency and waste reduction and provides methodologies for managing legal and regulatory compliance.

In addition to providing organisations with a recognised framework for environmental management, this certification unlocks additional benefits. By optimising energy use, reducing waste generation, and minimising



resource consumption, businesses can lower their operating costs and improve profitability.

This certification signals to customers, partners, and stakeholders that a company is committed to environmental responsibility. This enhances the organisation's reputation, which can attract environmentally conscious consumers and partners. This certification may open doors to new markets and customers, especially in the public sector and international industries, giving an organisation increased opportunities for trade.

Sustainability often drives innovation. Businesses that are seeking new, more environmentally friendly technologies,

processes, and products may have a competitive edge in the marketplace. Many investors now consider environmental, social, and governance factors when making investment decisions.

Companies that prioritize sustainability not only contribute to a healthier planet and society but also position themselves for long-term success, enhanced brand reputation, cost savings, and a resilient future in an ever-changing global landscape. By addressing environmental risks and aligns business practices with evolving societal expectations, businesses can secure their future.

Contact Details

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EICC: Collaborating for a Sustainable Future

In an era where taking care of our planet is more crucial than ever, the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC) has established a series of strategic partnerships to lessen its environmental impact.

In May last year, the EICC signed up to support RSPB Scotland's peatland restoration work, with the key intentions being to mitigate carbon emissions associated with running events and to help restore nature.

The partnership sees up to £1 per delegate per day being ringfenced for RSPB Scotland's peatland restoration work in the north of Scotland. Around 20% of Scotland's landmass is made up of peatland. They are incredibly special habitats, which are home to rare and important wildlife and plant species. When in good health, peatlands act as nature's carbon vaults, sequestering carbon away from the atmosphere. But in recent decades the peatlands have degraded - meaning they have been drained or subjected to altered water flow - so they are releasing carbon instead of storing it.

Peatland restoration has been proven as a far more effective method of carbon-mitigation compared to tree planting, so restoring the natural flow of water to Scottish peatlands could significantly decrease carbon emissions. This is because it typically lasts longer than tree planting benefits and is easier to control. Restoring the peatland also helps native



species of birds, insects and aquatic wildlife to find a home.

Commenting on the partnership with RSPB Scotland, EICC Chief Executive, Marshall Dallas, said: "To make the biggest impact on nature and climate, we need to work together. What we have with RSPB Scotland

is the beginning of what I hope is a powerful, long lasting and transformative partnership with substantial benefits for nature."

On the food scene, the EICC and their food and beverage partner, Leiths, have partnered with Klimato - a leading carbon labelling expert on a mission to reduce the climate impact of food. With the help of Klimato's carbon calculator, the EICC is now displaying the carbon value for each dish on the menu. The intention is to allow clients to make informed decisions whilst presenting more sustainable food choices.

The labelling is presented in a similar way to nutritional facts, but for the environment, so event organisers can quickly see the carbon footprint of delegate food options and make eco-smart decisions to lessen their environmental impact.

The EICC's sustainable collaborations recently extended to travel choices for reaching the venue. In August, they launched a new online sustainable travel planner, which is powered by You.Smart.Thing. Travel is one of the biggest sources of carbon emissions when it comes to events, but there are sustainable alternatives. The You.Smart.Thing. travel tool presents the most sustainable methods of travel from your start point, to the EICC. By saving their preferred journey option delegates can also receive travel updates before setting off.

Through a combination of partnerships, the EICC isn't just hosting events; they're taking responsibility for lessening the impact of their operational outputs, whilst benefiting their clients, the community and nature.



Building resilience for a Net Zero future

Enabling the pathway to Net Zero for the businesses and communities we serve is at the heart of our £7 billion investment strategy.



SP Energy Networks is the Network Operator responsible for keeping power flowing in Edinburgh and to over 3.5 million homes and businesses across Central and Southern Scotland, Cheshire, Merseyside, North and Mid Wales and North Shropshire. Our electricity network is at the centre of the transition towards cleaner renewable energy sources.

The electricity distribution network is a product of almost a century of incremental evolution. When much of the current electrical infrastructure was installed there was, on average, only 20 appliances running on electricity – compared to more than 50 in the average home today. Over the next two decades, we expect to see electricity demand rise significantly as we decarbonise heat and transport.

I know many businesses across Edinburgh have started their own transition to Net Zero with strong green ambitions and the electricity network will be a key enabler in this. With increased demand on the network and increasing implementation of low carbon technologies, such as electric vehicles and heat pumps, we are investing in the future of our network to ensure the continued safe, secure and reliable service for our customers, while supporting you to reach your Net Zero goals.

We are taking decisive steps to strengthen and evolve our network to support the Net Zero transition.

- Over the last five years we have completed a £7 million upgrade of the network in the West End of Edinburgh

to increase network capacity and security of supply to the city.

- We are completing network improvements in Portobello and Bailleyfield of the value of £8 million, which will support the roll-out of more low carbon technologies across the city.
- In the next five years we are starting the construction of a new grid supply point – which is the largest distribution substation to feed electricity into people's homes and businesses – in the Whitehouse area. This will support more capacity on the grid as electricity demand rises.
- We are also undertaking £10 million worth of cable reinforcements to increase network security and reliability from Portobello to Shrubhill, from Gorgie to Whitehouse and on to Shawfair.

Alongside strengthening our network infrastructure, we also have an important role in supporting resilience among our customers, especially during the winter months.

With the support of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, last year we developed the Winter Business Preparedness Guide. This winter, alongside the guide, SP Energy Networks and the Chamber will be hosting on a webinar to talk businesses through what they can do to prepare in the event of severe weather and power cuts.

SP Energy Networks are also supporting local authorities with their own Net Zero

plans focused on Local Heat and Energy Efficiency strategies. We have a dedicated team of 'Strategic Optimisers' that are working directly with local authorities to provide them with network data to help forecast their future needs for network capacity and inform council economic development plans as well.

Edinburgh businesses are our customers, partners and stakeholders, and effective collaboration will be essential to the success of the journey. Know that my door is open, and our expertise is here to help you reach your Net Zero plans.



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

Building a sustainable digital future

At Openreach, we're undertaking one of the biggest infrastructure projects in the UK, delivering Full Fibre broadband to 25 million homes and businesses by the end of 2026. Doing this sustainably is at the heart of our strategy.

Robert Thorburn

Partnership Director,
Openreach Scotland



Like many businesses, we recognise the urgency of the climate crisis and, given we work all over the UK, we're committed to reducing our operational impact.

In 2021/22, we made sustainability one of the four key principles of our strategy, building sustainability goals into our business plan and creating a Sustainability Steering Committee to oversee progress.

But what does building sustainably mean at a company like Openreach?

Well, for a start, we have the second largest commercial fleet in the UK, with more than 29,000 vehicles.

Our engineers travelled some 280 million miles last year - a huge impact on CO2 emissions.

We need them to be able to travel, to deliver great service and build our new network, but we need to do it in a more sustainable way.

That's why we've pledged to switch our fleet to zero emissions or electric by 2030.

So far, we've bought more than 2,000 electric vehicles, covering 10.4 million miles, and saving more than 1,800 tonnes of CO2 last year.

We've also been working with our partner, Ground Control, to install chargers at our engineers' homes.



This commitment is not without its challenges. Like other large fleet businesses, we continue to face shortages in the vehicle supply chain and there's a general lack of national charging infrastructure. It's also important to collaborate and share learning with others who're leading the way in the fleet transition - from businesses like First Bus to local authorities like Orkney Islands Council.

Another way we're acting sustainably is by embedding circular economy principles across our organisation.

For example, we've introduced an inbound packing policy that requires our suppliers to minimise packing and convert all remaining packaging to

recyclable, reusable and 'made from recycled content' wherever possible.

Our work with suppliers to simplify packaging has saved more than 1500 tonnes of waste from the supply chain already.

Nature has also been added as a strategic focus for sustainability, recognising that we have a unique interface with nature through our daily operations.

We've recently become members of the UK Business and Biodiversity Forum and we've been engaging with other organisations to keep up to speed on the changing requirements and legislation in this area.

In Scotland, we worked closely with agencies like Nature Scotland, Marine Scotland and Crown Estates on our subsea build in 2022, helping protect the wildlife and landscape.

Great care was taken to leave the build locations exactly as they were found. Even the seabed got a spring clean, with 3.5km of abandoned rope, steel wire and other debris picked up.

We'll be building on our progress: reducing carbon emissions in our operations, working towards a circular economy, and addressing our impact on nature, while delivering ultrafast broadband for millions more people, households and businesses across the UK.

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

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



ENTERPRISE PARTNERS



Katherine Planas

Katherine Planas was appointed Director of Development for the Edinburgh International Festival in 2022, a milestone 75th anniversary year and the first full programme in two years following the COVID-19 pandemic. Katherine has been instrumental in transforming the Festival's fundraising strategy to rebuild post-pandemic and mitigate the growing risk resulting from unprecedented public funding cuts faced by the arts sector. Harnessing the momentum of the first year of Nicola Benedetti's directorship and focusing on the role of the Festival as a catalyst for growth, Katherine has set an ambitious course to help ensure that the Edinburgh International Festival has the resources to keep presenting a world-class programme whilst developing children, young people and communities through a growing and ambitious year-round engagement programme.



Katherine Planas

Prior to this appointment, Katherine worked at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC and over the course of 11 years held several roles including leading the Center's \$250 million capital campaign for their first-ever expansion, the REACH, and most recently, serving as Chief Development Officer for the National Symphony Orchestra.

For Katherine, development is about relationships. Her work amplifies the global connections forged through the International Festival, connecting individuals, trusts, businesses and international partners to the instrumental role the performing arts and arts learning play in the social, cultural, economic and reputational transformation of Scotland and the people who call Scotland home. The need for a vibrant and accessible artistic and cultural sector is crucial to our world's collective recovery, reconciliation, and problem-solving—and the need for significant funding has never been more pronounced. While this is not an easy or quick task, Katherine and her team are energised by the breadth of opportunities to connect funders and supporters to projects, initiatives, and artistry which enrich our lives in so many ways.

Paul Forrest

Paul Forrest has recently joined Radox Health's Business Development team in Edinburgh, where he will be responsible for growing the group's Client base.

With his wealth of knowledge in client relationship management, Paul is passionate about delivering exceptional service and building strong trusted relationships.

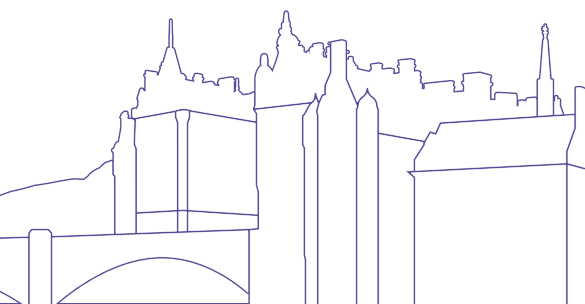
As a previous Radox Health customer, Paul knows firsthand the benefits of preventative health testing and is eager to promote the group's services to Edinburgh's corporate scene.

Paul is actively looking to engage with employers who are interested in learning more about how Radox Health can help improve staff morale, increase employee engagement, and lower rates of sickness and absence.

Outside of work, Paul is very much a family man and enjoys coaching his two sons' local football team.



Paul Forrest



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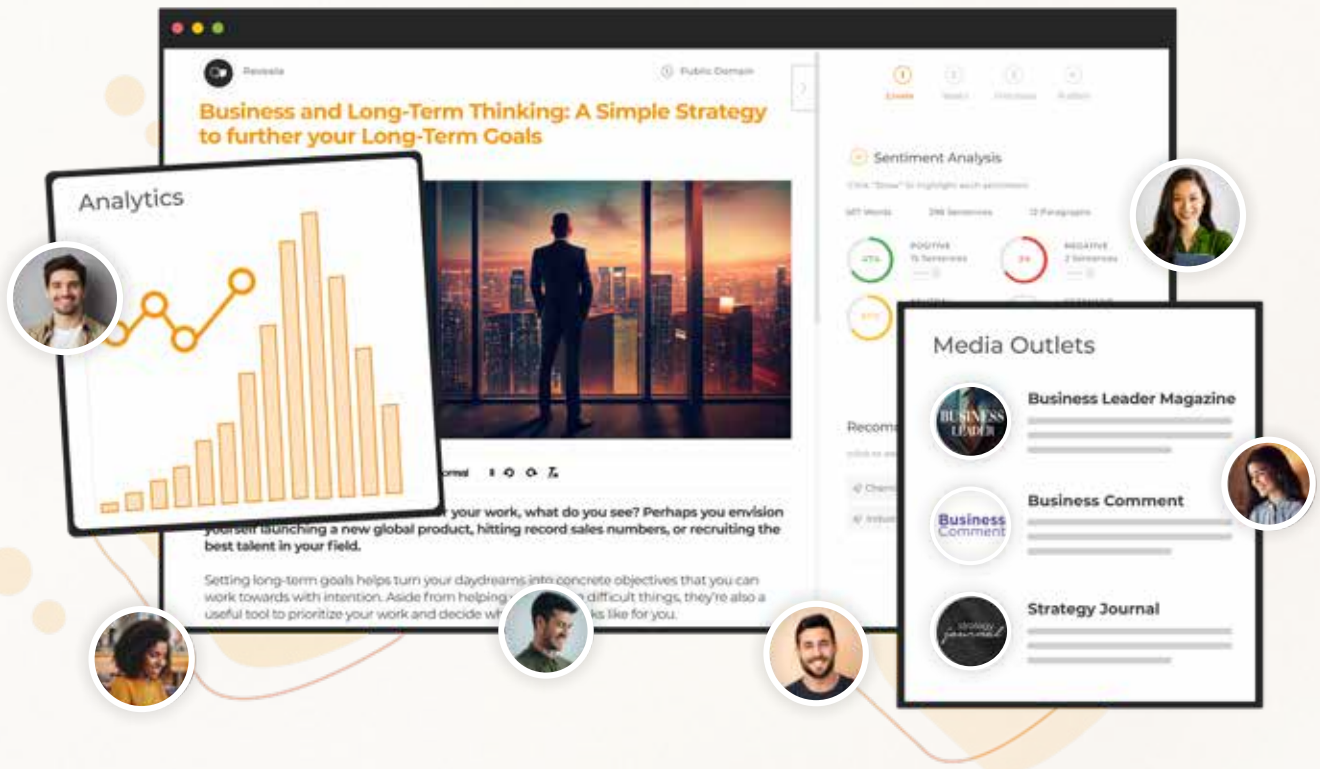
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