

SEPTEMBER 2026 | ENERGY

BUSINESS BULLETIN

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North-east pays tribute to
greatest ever business leader

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Thirty years after the Spice Girls changed pop music forever, **Melanie C is coming to Aberdeen to celebrate one of the most iconic eras in British music.**

As Sporty Spice, Melanie C helped redefine a generation, selling more than 100 million records worldwide and becoming part of the biggest girl group in history. But her story is about far more than chart success.

It is a story of ambition, resilience and reinvention – from global superstardom and the pressures of unprecedented fame to building a successful solo career, overcoming personal challenges and remaining one of the music industry's most respected performers.

Thirty years on from their breakthrough hit Wannabe, Melanie C will reflect on the extraordinary rise of the Spice Girls, the lessons learned from life at the very top of global entertainment and the mindset required to sustain success over three decades.

Join us for an unforgettable evening reflecting on one of the biggest musical movements in pop history, with one of the women who helped define a generation.

AN EVENING WITH MELANIE C

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www.agcc.co.uk

Affiliated Chambers
Moray



Bulletin Team



Editor

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



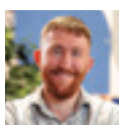
Advertising

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



Design & production

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



Journalist

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



Editorial

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

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We cannot afford to miss the next great North Sea opportunity

For generations, the North Sea has powered our economy, supported hundreds of thousands of skilled jobs and helped establish North-east Scotland as one of the world's foremost offshore energy capitals.

Today, we stand at another defining moment.

This edition of Business Bulletin rightly focuses on energy because the decisions being taken over the coming months will shape our economy for decades. They will determine not only how we produce the energy Britain needs, but whether Scotland captures the industrial opportunity that comes with it.

Much has been written about the future of oil and gas in recent months, and rightly so. The UK will continue to need significant quantities of both for many years to come, and it makes little environmental or economic sense to import resources we can produce more responsibly ourselves. Supporting domestic production remains essential if we are serious about energy security, protecting skilled employment and delivering a just transition.

But there is another decision, perhaps less well understood outside the energy sector, that deserves equal attention. Later this year, UK ministers will be asked to choose the preferred pathway for Britain's first Strategic Spatial Energy Plan. On the surface, it sounds like another technical planning exercise. In reality, it could become one of the most important energy policy decisions of the decade.

The pathway ministers select will help determine how Britain's electricity system develops between now and 2050. It will influence where investment flows, where infrastructure is built and, crucially, the role Scotland's offshore wind resources will play in our future energy mix.

At the heart of that debate sits ScotWind. With almost 30GW of planned offshore wind capacity and around £79billion of potential investment, ScotWind represents one of the biggest industrial opportunities Scotland has seen in a generation. Together with subsequent leasing rounds, the prize is even larger.

But seabed leases alone do not create jobs. Developers need confidence that the grid will be built, ports expanded, supply chains developed and investment supported over many years. Without that confidence, projects slow, investment stalls and opportunities move elsewhere.

That is why the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan matters so much.

There is a real risk that ministers could favour a pathway which appears cheaper on paper because it relies more heavily on existing infrastructure or technologies located closer to centres of demand. Yet focusing solely on short-term system costs would ignore the much greater long-term prize.

ScotWind is about far more than electricity generation. It is about creating manufacturing opportunities, securing supply chains, supporting our ports, attracting inward investment and providing the next generation of work for the highly skilled offshore workforce that has made Scotland a global energy leader. That workforce is one of our greatest assets.

Research from Robert Gordon University shows that around 90% of the North-east's offshore energy workforce still works in oil and gas, while renewable employment has not yet grown quickly enough to offset declining activity in the basin. The good news is that more than 90% of those skills are readily transferable into adjacent sectors, including offshore wind.

That is precisely why we have consistently argued that this should be a transition, not a replacement.

Our offshore industries are not competitors. They are part of the same industrial ecosystem, built on decades of engineering excellence, innovation and operational expertise. The companies, people and communities that have delivered energy security for Britain over the last half-century are exactly those best placed to deliver it over the next.

The UK has already committed hundreds of millions of pounds towards Scottish ports, manufacturing facilities and offshore wind infrastructure. Those investments now need to be matched by strategic decisions that give industry confidence the full ScotWind pipeline will proceed.

If we get this right, Scotland has the opportunity to strengthen its position as Europe's offshore energy capital, supporting oil and gas where it remains necessary while building one of the world's most significant floating offshore wind industries.

If we get it wrong, we risk repeating mistakes of the past: creating ambition without delivery, announcing investment without projects and allowing other countries to capture opportunities we helped create.

Scotland has the workforce. We have the expertise. We have the natural resources and the global reputation. Now we need policy decisions that match that potential.

The North Sea has always evolved. It has adapted through new technologies, changing markets and different energy sources. There is every reason to believe it can do so again. But only if we provide industry with the confidence to invest.


Russell Borthwick
 Chief Executive

“

Scotland has the workforce. We have the expertise. We have the natural resources and the global reputation. Now we need policy decisions that match that potential.



OUR PREMIER PARTNERS

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

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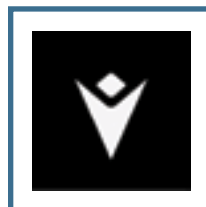
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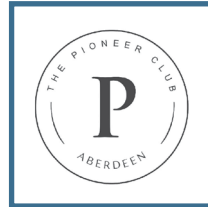
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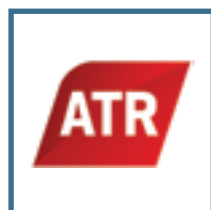
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Tymor Marine completes digital survey aboard world's largest hospital ship

Scottish maritime technology company Tymor Marine has completed a lightweight survey and inclining test aboard the Global Mercy using Tymor's own digital survey technologies, building on a decade-long partnership with global humanitarian charity Mercy Ships.

With 7,000 square metres of medical facilities, six operating theatres and 200 hospital beds, the Global Mercy is the world's largest purpose-built civilian hospital ship. The work took place during the vessel's annual maintenance period at the Port of Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, ahead of its next healthcare service in Ghana.

The Global Mercy provides free surgery and healthcare services to people with limited access to safe medical care, while also supporting training and capacity building in the countries it serves. Mercy Ships also operates the Africa Mercy hospital ship, currently on deployment in Madagascar.

Tymor Marine Managing Director Kevin Moran said: "An inclining experiment takes weeks to plan and a long day to run, and what usually survives it is a report with a number in it.

"On Global Mercy the readings behind that number sit in DeadW8 with the lightship figure, and every subsequent change is recorded against them. That is a continuous record through the five-year statutory period, and it means the next survey starts from what is already known instead of being rebuilt from scratch."



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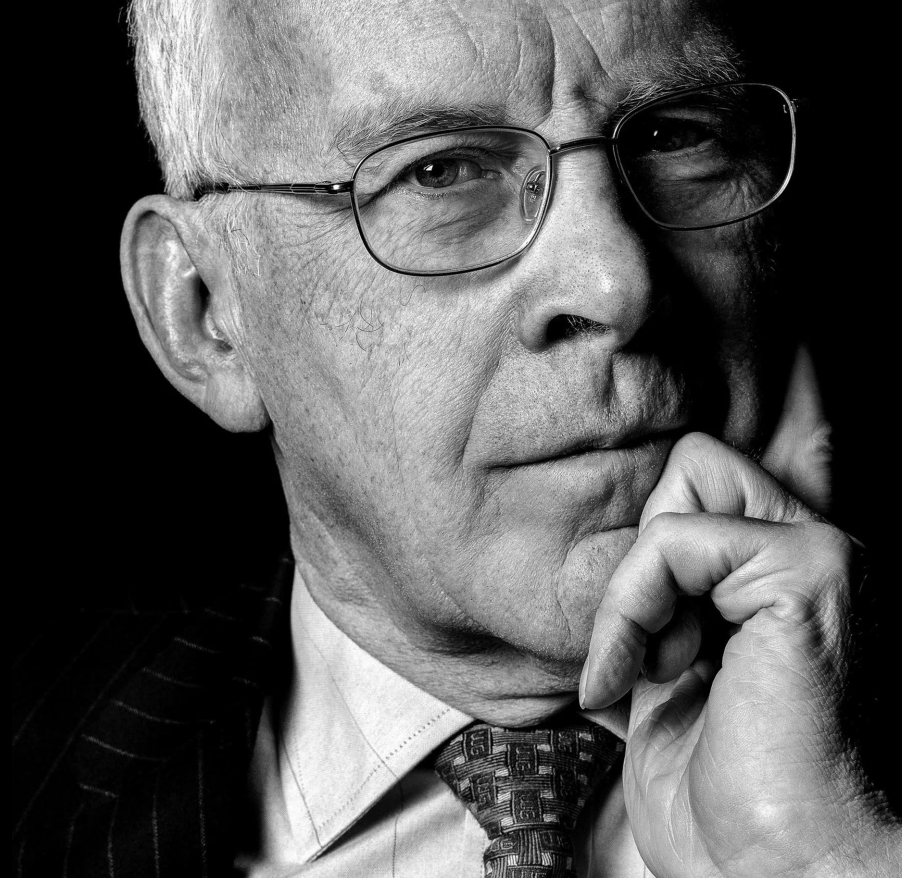
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Sir Ian Wood: Aberdeen's greatest businessman

July marked the sad passing of the North-east's greatest ever business leader and philanthropist, Sir Ian Wood, just days after his 84th birthday.

The Aberdonian passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his family.

Over more than six decades, Sir Ian transformed a family-owned Aberdeen marine business into the global engineering company Wood Group, helping shape the UK's energy industry while establishing Aberdeen as one of the world's leading centres for offshore energy.

In later years, he devoted much of his time to philanthropy and initiatives designed to create opportunities for young people and support the North-east's economic future.

Following his death, senior politicians, business figures and philanthropists praised Sir Ian's lasting contribution to the economy, the North-east and communities around the world.

First Minister John Swinney described Sir Ian as "one of Scotland's most influential business leaders and philanthropists" whose leadership transformed Wood Group into a global energy services company while helping establish Scotland as "a world-renowned centre of energy expertise".

Former Prime Minister David Cameron hailed Sir Ian as "one of Scotland's great entrepreneurs and

industrial leaders – a true titan of Scottish industry".

Russell Borthwick, Chief Executive of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, said Sir Ian was "one of the most influential figures in the modern history of the North-east of Scotland".

He said: "Sir Ian believed passionately that business should be a force for good. Alongside his extraordinary commercial success, his philanthropy, support for education and commitment to economic development have transformed communities and created opportunities for generations."

He added: "The North-east has lost one of its greatest champions, and his contribution to our region will never be forgotten."

Martin Gilbert, founder of Aberdeen Asset Management and chairman of Revolut, said: "Sir Ian Wood was a giant of Scottish business. I had the privilege of knowing and working with him for more than 40 years, and his extraordinary work ethic, attention to detail and natural charisma always stood out.

"He was an exceptional businessman and an amazing man."

Entrepreneur and philanthropist Sir Tom Hunter said: "I learned a lot from Ian – firstly don't show off; he wore his wealth lightly.

"From humble beginnings to building

a global empire, to being a great philanthropist, Scotland was lucky to have him."

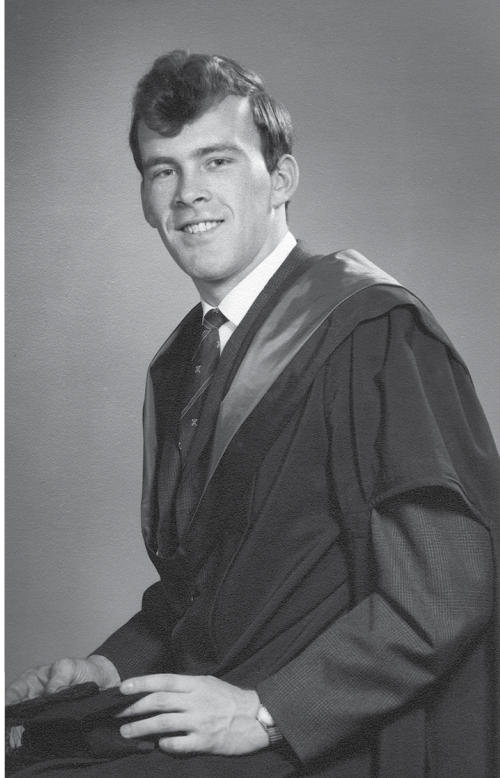
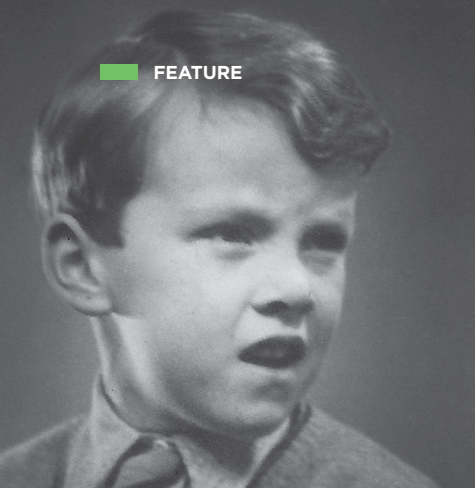
In a statement, the Wood family said: "While many knew Sir Ian as an entrepreneur, philanthropist and one of Scotland's most influential business leaders, those closest to him will remember above all his kindness, generosity, determination and unwavering commitment to his family.

"He dedicated his life to building opportunities for others. Through the growth of the business that bore his family name and through decades of philanthropic work, he sought to create lasting positive change both in Scotland and around the world."

The family added: "His commitment to education, enterprise and social impact led to the creation of The Wood Foundation and numerous other initiatives around the world, which have helped young people, communities and families realise their potential.

"He believed in finding the right balance between what you do for yourself, and what you do for others; he felt deeply that good fortune in life carries with it a responsibility to help others realise their own full potential."

The statement concluded: "Sir Ian's legacy will live on through the countless lives he touched, the organisations he helped build and the values he championed throughout his life."



Sir Ian Wood:

July 21, 1942 –

July 26, 2026

Sir Ian Wood was a visionary business leader, industrialist and philanthropist, instrumental in Aberdeen's emergence as a major international energy hub.

Born in Aberdeen in 1942, Ian Clark Wood was the second of John and Margaret Wood's three children. He grew up alongside his sisters Meg and Lorna in a family steeped in the city's fishing and maritime heritage, but it was in Aberdeen's nascent North Sea oil and gas industry that he made his mark.



He was educated at Robert Gordon's College and the University of Aberdeen where he excelled at rugby, playing lock forward for North & Midlands District XV. After graduating with a first-class degree in psychology in 1964, he joined the family fishing and marine services business, John Wood & Son.

By 1967 he had become Managing Director, overseeing significant expansion. He remained Chairman of the legacy business, The Don Fishing Company Ltd, until his death.

However, it was Wood's reorientation of the family business towards the needs of the emerging North Sea oil industry that was to define his own career and shape his city's fortunes over the following decades. His father expressed reservations, but Wood saw the opportunities and the business flourished under his leadership.



In 1970 he married Helen Macrae and they welcomed three sons in the years that followed. Wood worked extremely long hours, but he cherished family life, making time to watch his sons' rugby matches and giving them his undivided attention during holidays.

Meanwhile the business continued to thrive. Wood Group became a stand-alone company in 1982, delivering engineering, oilfield logistics and drilling services to domestic and global markets, and anchoring development of Aberdeen's world class energy supply chain.

His most difficult times came in 1988 with the Piper Alpha

disaster in which 39 Wood Group employees were among the 167 men who lost their lives. Wood was deeply affected by the tragedy. He spent weeks making personal visits to bereaved families and became a champion of improved offshore safety.

In 2002, Wood Group went public, joining the FTSE 100 a few years later. When Wood stepped down as Chief Executive in 2006 and as Chairman in 2012, Wood Group plc was operating in over 50 countries worldwide and employed over 42,000 people. Recognition followed his achievements. Wood was appointed CBE in 1982 and knighted in 1994. In 2009, he was inducted as an Industry Pioneer in

the Offshore Energy Centre's Hall of Fame in Houston, Texas.

Business success freed him to devote time and energy to philanthropy and public service in his later decades. In 2007, with his wife, Lady Helen, he established The Wood Foundation. Together they pioneered an approach to venture philanthropy that combined long-term investment, practical expertise and high expectations to help people build better futures for themselves.

Projects in Scotland included the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative, working with young people across Scotland to improve their skills and employability, as well as major

gifts to youth sport initiatives, NHS Grampian, Robert Gordon's College and Robert Gordon University, where he served as Chancellor from 2004 to 2021.

In 2015, Wood joined the Giving Pledge, publicly committing to donate more than half his wealth to philanthropic causes. He became a driving force in efforts to invigorate Aberdeen, chairing two not-for-profit private-sector-led economic development companies; Opportunity North East and Energy Transition Zone Ltd, enabled by over £100 million of support from The Wood Foundation. These initiatives were built on his experience chairing Scottish Enterprise from 1997 to 2000. Wood also played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Net Zero Technology Centre.

Accepting a Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy in New York in 2019, Wood stressed that "charity must not end at home", highlighting The Wood Foundation's work with partners in East Africa to provide the finance, skills, operational and marketing support to build sustainable industries and improved



livelihoods for more than 100,000 smallholder tea farmers in Rwanda. Wood described this ongoing project as among the most rewarding of his career.

Public appointments in his later years offered further opportunities to share his expertise. In 2013, for the UK Government, he led a review of UK oil and gas recovery and its regulation. The Wood Review (2014), a huge

personal undertaking, led to a new strategy for maximising economic recovery from the UK continental shelf and the establishment of what is now the North Sea Transition Authority. Also in 2013, Wood was invited by the Scottish Government to chair the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, which called for improvements to vocational education to strengthen the relationship between education and employers and continues to shape opportunities for young people across the country.

Further honours were bestowed. He was made Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire in 2016, and in 2018 became a Knight of the Order of the Thistle, personally granted by Queen Elizabeth II in recognition of his distinguished service to national life.

Sir Ian Wood died at home in Aberdeen on Sunday July 26 2026. He is survived by his wife, Lady Helen, their sons Nicholas, Graham and Garreth, and seven grandchildren.

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What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Slow down, it's a marathon and not a sprint. Business is a long game with many bumps in the road. It's too easy to pop onto Instagram and believe everyone is an overnight success. That's simply not true. As soon you realise that it becomes fun without the urgency.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

I'm still a new member so show me what you got! But I joined because, more than ever just now, it's important for us all to champion each other in business. The Chamber shout loud and I like that, still no danger you'll get me speed networking though!



Dr Abiola Abimbola, PhD

Manager
Influence Charity

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Influence Charity amplifies lived experience to shape fairer systems. We champion inclusion through INFLUENCE Magazine and co-design projects like Belonging Begins With a Journey, a multicultural storytelling initiative capturing diverse experiences to inform inclusive

practice, cultural understanding and future strategy across Scotland.

Who are your customers?

We work with the NHS, public and third-sector organisations, and communities whose voices are often unheard. Our audiences include policymakers, professionals and the wider public engaging with lived experience through projects and publications such as INFLUENCE Magazine.

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

Our challenge is addressing inequalities across regions and services for diverse communities. Our opportunity is scaling Belonging Begins With a Journey, a multicultural storytelling project shaping inclusive practice, alongside INFLUENCE Magazine, our annual e-publication amplifying minority voices and community insight across Aberdeen and beyond.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Listening to members' lived experiences — it's essential for better decision-making. When organisations work with people, not just for them, inclusive and effective solutions emerge. By centring lived experience and collaborating with openness and purpose, organisations can build fair, resilient services.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

Being part of a network that supports collaboration between business, civic and community sectors, helping organisations like ours amplify impact, share learning and build lasting relationships across the region.

MEMBER MEET *the* ME



Mark Reynolds

*Business Development Manager &
General Manager (Katoni B.V.)
Katoni Engineering*

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Katoni Engineering is an award-winning, independent EPC specialist based in Aberdeen, delivering multidisciplinary engineering solutions for the energy sector. We optimise late-life assets, boost production, execute brownfield modifications, and drive emissions reduction across offshore platforms and FPSOs - making operations safer, greener, and more efficient.

Who are your customers?

Katoni Engineering's customers are primarily North Sea oil and gas operators, secured through repeat business, word-of-mouth, and long-term partnerships. We also serve clients in regulated industries like whisky, water, and onshore industrial plants, plus emerging low-carbon/renewable projects.

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

Our biggest challenge is navigating uncertainty created by current government policy, rising costs, and a lack of long-term clarity for UK industry. The opportunity is for resilient, well-run businesses to step up, adapt quickly, and win work by being dependable when others hesitate.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Business is more connected than ever. Keep talking, keep listening, and stay close to what's happening beyond your own sector. Those who share knowledge and stay engaged tend to spot change earlier and adapt faster.



Nicole Walker

*Business Development Manager
Munro's Travel*

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Munro's Travel is an Aberdeen-based, specialist travel management company for the global energy sector. With over a century of expertise we support companies with complex global travel needs offering them 24/7 operational support, building strong, trusted partnerships that keep crew moving safely and efficiently.

So, who is your typical customer?

We work with a wide range of clients, including operators, drilling contractors, service companies and more. Our energy sector expertise spans oil, renewables and marine industries, supporting businesses with tailored travel solutions.

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

Attracting top talent is a key challenge in the energy travel sector, it requires highly skilled individuals

who can manage complex, high-pressure travel needs. We invest heavily in developing our people through our in-house Travel Academy, an intensive training programme designed to equip travel and tourism graduates with the skills required to excel in their field. Learning everything from operational logistics to client management, this ensures our clients always work with the very best.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Be unapologetically yourself! People do business with people they trust, and that means being genuine, even if it ruffles a few feathers...

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

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AISUS develops bespoke Clamshell inspection tool to solve complex North Sea riser challenges

AISUS has successfully developed and deployed a new bespoke Clamshell Inspection Tool, designed specifically to overcome a complex riser inspection challenge on a North Sea offshore platform.

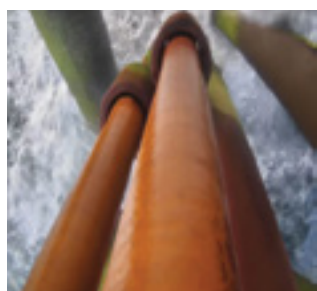
The Aberdeen-based inspection specialist created the new technology following a client requirement to inspect two 6-inch OD risers through the splash zone, where restricted access, heavy marine growth and thick passive fire protection (PFP) coating presented significant operational challenges.

A North Sea operator tasked AISUS with externally cleaning and inspecting the risers while maintaining the integrity of the existing 50mm PFP coating. Conventional inspection techniques were unsuitable for the application, requiring the company to engineer an entirely new solution.

The project highlights AISUS' approach to solving complex asset integrity challenges through in-house innovation, combining engineering design, manufacturing and operational expertise to deliver a tailored inspection system.

Developing a Solution for a Unique Challenge

The inspection scope involved cleaning and assessing two splash-zone risers positioned in close proximity to both one another and a carrier caisson. Limited clearance around the structures meant any deployed technology needed to maintain an extremely compact profile while still delivering both cleaning and inspection capability.

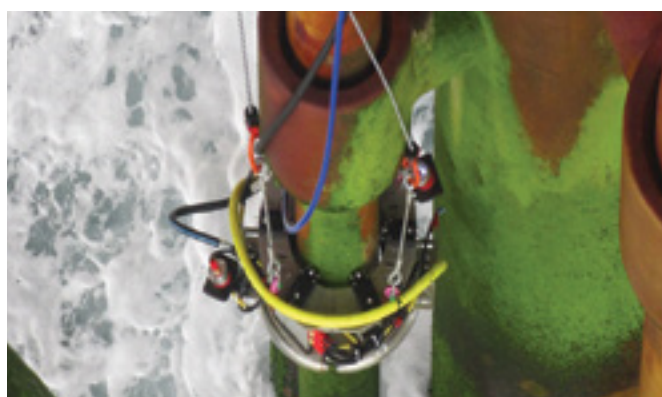


The challenge was further compounded by thick marine growth on the risers, which prevented equipment from travelling along the structures, and by the presence of 50mm of passive fire protection coating that ruled out conventional ultrasonic testing methods.



Recognising that existing inspection systems were not optimised for the application, AISUS engineers developed a completely new Clamshell Inspection Tool designed specifically around the project's requirements.

Designed, modelled, manufactured and tested entirely in-house, the new system was engineered to fit around the coated risers while remaining compact enough to avoid clashes with surrounding structures. The lightweight design also enabled safe installation and removal by Rope Access technicians operating offshore.



Combining Cleaning and Inspection in a Single System

The Clamshell tool incorporates high-pressure dual spray bars that provide 360-degree cleaning coverage, removing marine growth while maintaining carefully controlled jetting pressures to protect the underlying coating.

Alongside visual inspection capability, the system was equipped with a multi-probe Pulsed Eddy Current Testing (PECT) payload, allowing AISUS to perform a full inspection through the existing coating without requiring coating removal or intrusive preparation work.

The modular design also allows the platform to accommodate alternative inspection payloads, providing flexibility for future applications and asset types.

Successful Offshore Deployment

The newly developed technology was successfully deployed in the North Sea, completing both cleaning and inspection operations across the two risers. Marine growth was removed sufficiently to allow uninterrupted deployment down to the first subsea guide, while a full 360-degree PECT inspection was completed through the splash zone on both structures.

Inspection results identified no areas of concern, with corrosion rates aligning closely with measurements previously recorded elsewhere on the client's subsea pipeline system, providing additional confidence in the findings.



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Landmark Aberdeen office building enters new upgrade phase as The Capitol welcomes Shepherd & Wedderburn



Leading independent commercial property consultancy Ryden has announced that prominent law firm Shepherd & Wedderburn has secured a 5,000 sq ft suite on the third floor of The Capitol, 431 Union Street, Aberdeen.

This significant letting coincides with a new programme of improvement works launched by the building's new owners, DS properties, aimed at enhancing both the building iconic street presence and its premium working environment.

As a core element of these improvement works, the landlord is investing capital into creating dedicated "plug-and-play" suites tailored to accommodate occupiers of various sizes. This strategic investment ensures immediate turnkey solution for businesses seeking high specification, flexible workspaces.

The targeted renovations include the cleaning and restoration of the building's striking 1930s Art Deco exterior. Rich in local heritage, the Category B listed building originally opened its doors on February 4, 1933, as a grand theatre and cinema.

In 2016, the property underwent a major, award-winning restoration that seamlessly married its classic features,

including the preserved original Art Deco foyer, with a spectacular, modern Grade A office expansion.

The building now offers occupiers highly flexible floorplates, extensive secure parking, and top tier end-of-journey facilities designed to foster productivity, collaboration and employee wellbeing.

Arron Finnie, Office Agency Partner at Ryden and joint letting agent for The Capitol, said: "This letting reflects the continued demand for high-quality, well-connected workspace in Aberdeen. The Capitol combines a landmark city centre address with the flexibility and specification modern occupiers are looking for.

"As one of the city centre's most recognisable buildings, The Capitol's façade improvements will also have a real impact on Union Street, while its internal features are well suited to support business growth and attract and retain talent."

Following Shepherd and Wedderburn's arrival, availability within this landmark development is now extremely limited. Just one full floor remains available for lease, alongside the remaining half of the third floor, completing the floor already occupied by Shepherd and Wedderburn. This space is being actively marketed as part of the landlord's new plug-and-play offerings.

These final opportunities offer occupiers a rare chance to secure premium workspace against a backdrop of panoramic city views within one of the city's most sought-after business addresses.

Ryden and joint letting agents Savills are marketing the final remaining suites, with flexible terms available to accommodate prospective occupiers. Ryden has also been appointed as the property manager for the building.

Expro completes £145m Enhanced Drilling acquisition

Energy services firm Expro has completed its acquisition of Norwegian technology company Enhanced Drilling in a deal worth around £145million, strengthening its position in advanced offshore drilling services.

The acquisition adds Enhanced Drilling's managed pressure drilling (MPD) and riserless mud recovery technologies to Expro's portfolio.

Enhanced Drilling has an established presence in offshore markets including the North Sea, Caspian and Gulf of America, with Expro planning to deploy the technology more widely across West Africa, Latin America and Asia Pacific.

Michael Jardon, Expro Chief Executive Officer, said: "We are pleased to welcome the Enhanced Drilling team to Expro.

"This is a strong strategic fit that adds a differentiated capability to our portfolio and strengthens our position in technically demanding offshore markets. Their MPD technologies align with our focus on helping customers improve efficiency, manage risk, and deliver wells with greater certainty.

"Together, we are well positioned to expand access to these solutions across additional regions, including West Africa, Latin America and Asia Pacific."

Kjetil Lunde, Chief Executive Officer at Enhanced Drilling, added: "Joining Expro marks an important milestone for Enhanced Drilling. As part of a global organisation with deep operational expertise and long-standing customer relationships, we are well positioned to scale our technologies and broaden their application across international markets."

Dron & Dickson launches Humberside division to expand onshore high-voltage services

UK electrical engineering services company Dron & Dickson has expanded its onshore engineering capability with the launch of a new engineering division based in Humberside.

The division will provide high-voltage electrical engineering services for projects across the utilities, renewable energy and industrial sectors, with capability covering systems up to 66kV.

The move comes as investment increases in renewable energy, electricity networks and industrial electrification, creating greater demand for experienced electrical engineering teams.

Expanding capability across the UK

With established capabilities across both offshore and onshore environments, the company is well positioned to bring proven engineering standards, a safety culture, and technical competence to rapidly growing land-based markets.

The expansion also aligns with increasing demand from the renewable energy sector, where the business is already supporting projects including industrial HV installations, wind farms, solar installations, and battery energy storage systems.

High-voltage engineering expertise

Dron & Dickson's comprehensive capability, combined with a strong focus on compliance and engineering excellence, positions the business as a key partner in delivering the UK's future energy infrastructure.

With recruitment underway and projects already in development, the Humberside division represents a significant step forward in the company's long-term growth strategy.

The business is now welcoming enquiries from clients seeking specialist HV engineering services, as well as applications from Electrical Project Engineers, Electricians, and HV Technicians looking to join a forward-thinking, expanding organisation.



Investment in people and regional growth

The company is recruiting office-based engineering personnel and field-based technicians in Humberside and across northern England.

Roles will include Electrical Project Engineers, Electrical Construction Leads, LV Electricians and HV Technicians. The new team will deliver project engineering, installation, commissioning, operational support and maintenance services.

Kevin Rooms, Engineering Services Manager England, said: "This is an important next stage development for the business and a very exciting opportunity to build an offering that is dynamic, highly reactive and client-focused.

"Leveraging almost 100 years of engineering expertise and excellence, we are bringing this proven ability to onshore markets, with a particular focus on high-voltage (HV) electrical engineering, where quality, accuracy, and safety are paramount.

"Based from the Hull Office, we are looking to attract skilled electrical project engineers, LV Electricians and HV Technicians and emerging talent who are driven in their desire to actively deliver real impact across the UK energy landscape."

Supporting the UK energy supply chain

The Humberside division will strengthen Dron & Dickson's support for the UK energy supply chain, particularly in renewable generation, private HV networks, energy transition projects and electricity grid modernisation.

Tom Irwin, Engineering Services Director, said: "This expansion marks a natural evolution of our business, building on our strong offshore electrical engineering reputation. We are now bringing the same discipline, capability and safety-first culture to onshore markets. Under Kevin Rooms' leadership, we are well-positioned to grow our LV/HV expertise, including a unique combined wholesale and engineering service offering that delivers real, tangible cost efficiencies without compromising safety or quality.

"Humberside provides an ideal base for growth, and through continued investment in people and capability, we are committed to delivering safe, reliable, high-performance solutions across the full asset lifecycle."





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Powered by Technology. Driven by Passion

WHO IS QA?

QA Travel has been helping businesses travel smarter since 1996. Celebrating 30 years in September this year, we are a people-focused travel management company, powered by technology and driven by passion. QA provide trusted travel expertise, personalised service, and innovative solutions to clients across the UK and around the world.

WHAT DO WE DO?

For 30 years, QA Travel has been delivering seamless travel solutions for businesses across the UK and beyond. From flights, hotels, rail and car hire to complex group and project travel, we provide a complete end-to-end service tailored to every client's needs. No booking is too big or too small. As we celebrate our 30th anniversary, we're proud to continue combining innovative technology, exceptional service, and industry expertise to help our clients travel smarter.

WHEN WAS QA FOUNDED?

Since opening in September 1996, QA Travel has spent 30 years helping clients navigate the world with confidence. This September, we're proud to celebrate our 30th anniversary with a special event for clients, partners, and colleagues, recognising the relationships and achievements that have been at the heart of our success. While we honour our past, we're equally excited about the future and continuing to deliver exceptional travel management for years to come.



WHERE ARE WE?

Based in Aberdeen and the Isle of Man, QA Travel helps clients travel to destinations across the UK and around the world. From major cities to remote project locations, we deliver seamless travel solutions wherever business takes our clients. As we celebrate 30 years in 2026, we're proud of the journeys we've supported, the relationships we've built, and the global reach we've achieved while remaining true to our local roots.

Contact Us

info@qatravel.com
01224 772828

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

By taking the stress out of travel. Whether it's finding the best travel options, managing complex group movements, reducing costs, supporting travellers during disruption, or providing expert advice when plans change, our team is here to help. As we celebrate 30 years in business, we're proud to have spent three decades turning travel challenges into seamless journeys for our clients.



WHY CHOOSE QA?

For 30 years we've built our reputation on expertise, trust, and exceptional service. Our dedicated team combines industry knowledge with a personal approach, supporting everything from individual travel bookings to complex global projects. With long-standing clients, loyal colleagues, and a genuine passion for helping people, we're proud to deliver travel management that's driven by technology, but powered by people.

Aberdeen office take-up hits highest first-half level in more than a decade

Aberdeen's office market has recorded its strongest first half in more than a decade, driven by a surge in demand from the energy sector.

New figures from Savills show 289,695 sq ft of office space was taken up during the first six months of 2026 – the highest H1 total since 2015 and 78% ahead of the same period last year.

Activity accelerated sharply in the second quarter, when 221,213 sq ft was taken up across 14 transactions – 118% higher than Q2 2025 and the highest Q2 figure on record.

Demand for higher-quality space was particularly strong, with Grade A take-up reaching 181,517 sq ft, accounting for 63% of the total.

There were seven Grade A transactions during the period, including three deals above 20,000 sq ft, with Grade A activity 97% higher than a year earlier.

The largest deal saw Petrofac Facilities Management, now CB&I, take space at Caledonia House at Prime Four Business Park – the biggest office transaction in Aberdeen since 2017.

Dan Smith, Director at Savills, said: "Take-up has been

bolstered by a number of larger deals in the first half of the year, signalling improving occupier activity in the city."

Overall office availability stood at 1.84 million sq ft at the end of June, up 6% on the previous quarter, taking the vacancy rate to 17.8%.

Grade A availability increased to around 218,000 sq ft as space returned to the market, although Savills said supply of the best-in-class accommodation remained constrained.

Prime rents remained unchanged at £32.50 per sq ft, but Savills expects the shortage of top-quality space and lack of new development to drive rental growth, forecasting rents of £33.50 by the end of this year and £36 by 2030.



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SCAN ME



TO SIGN UP

University researchers secure funding for net zero projects



Three collaborative projects involving researchers from the University of Aberdeen have secured support through the latest Scotland Beyond Net Zero (SBNZ) Seed Fund, helping to advance innovative approaches to climate and sustainability challenges in Scotland.

The projects span three key areas of net zero research – renewable energy, sustainable diets and the circular economy – and bring together expertise from universities, policymakers and external partners to address some of the most pressing environmental and societal challenges facing Scotland.

Scotland Beyond Net Zero is a coalition of climate and sustainability experts from Scotland's universities that aims to accelerate the country's transition to a more sustainable future through research, innovation and collaboration. The SBNZ Seed Fund supports interdisciplinary projects that align with themes including food, energy, transport, natural systems, finance and the built environment, while encouraging partnership working across institutions and sectors.

In the Energy category, the 'Warming Up Aberdeen' geothermal heating project has been awarded funding.

Led by Professor Clare Bond and Dr David Cornwell from the University of Aberdeen, alongside Professor Phil Hassard from Robert Gordon University, the research team will investigate how the region's geology could help deliver low-carbon heating. The project builds on existing city-wide initiatives and will generate new subsurface data and drilling models aimed at reducing risk and improving confidence for future geothermal developments.

Funding has also been awarded in the Sustainable Diets category for the project 'Fairness, Feasibility and Acceptability of Dietary Transition Policies in Scotland'.

The research, which is led by Dr David McBey of the University of Aberdeen and Dr Stuart King of the University of Edinburgh, will examine how people across Scotland perceive potential policy measures designed to reduce consumption of red and processed meat, which are significant contributors to greenhouse gas emissions.

Working alongside policy stakeholders, researchers will conduct a survey of 2,000 Scottish adults to explore which interventions are considered fair, practical and acceptable. The project combines quantitative analysis with qualitative insights and novel LLM analysis techniques, drawing on expertise from the University of Aberdeen's Rowett Institute and the University of Edinburgh.

Finally, in the Circular Economy category, funding has been secured for a project exploring sustainable funeral provision.

Led by Professor Vikki Entwistle and Dr Arnar Árnason from the University of Aberdeen, and Dr Racheal Adedokun from Robert Gordon University, the research will bring together stakeholders to develop a future research agenda focused on reducing the environmental impact of funeral practices while ensuring funeral provision remains respectful, inclusive and responsive to diverse cultural, religious and personal values.

Professor Ben Tatler, Vice-Principal for Research at the University of Aberdeen, said: "These awards demonstrate the breadth and quality of the university's contribution to addressing Scotland's climate and sustainability challenges. From unlocking the potential of geothermal energy beneath our feet, to supporting more sustainable food systems and exploring innovative approaches within the circular economy, they bring together researchers, policymakers and communities to deliver impactful, interdisciplinary solutions.

"We are delighted to see our researchers playing leading roles in collaborative partnerships through Scotland Beyond Net Zero, helping to generate the evidence, innovation and engagement needed to support a just transition to a more sustainable future."

The three projects highlight the University of Aberdeen's commitment to delivering research that addresses real-world challenges while supporting Scotland's ambitions to achieve net zero and build a more resilient, sustainable society.

Asset55 secures new contract award from MODEC for Gato Do Mato FPSO Project

Asset55 is delighted to announce a new contract awarded by MODEC for the deployment of Asset55's Validate & Execute software on the Gato Do Mato Floating Production Storage and Offloading (FPSO) project.

The Gato Do Mato FPSO, anticipated to come online in 2029, will be deployed at the Orca field offshore Brazil and is expected to produce up to 120,000 barrels of oil per day.

Asset55's Validate software will be deployed on Gato Do Mato to ensure robust data integrity throughout the entire project lifecycle. By creating and maintaining a trusted and consistent data foundation, Validate will support efficient workflows and enable accurate, reliable decision-making throughout the project.

In line with this, Asset55's Execute software will provide powerful multi-discipline, multi-phase visualisation and analytics tools, giving project teams enhanced visibility across fabrication, integration, and commissioning phases.

A key focus of Execute's deployment will be integration planning, supporting MODEC's "30-day integration" philosophy, through the creation of detailed installation

work packs aligned with commissioning priorities.

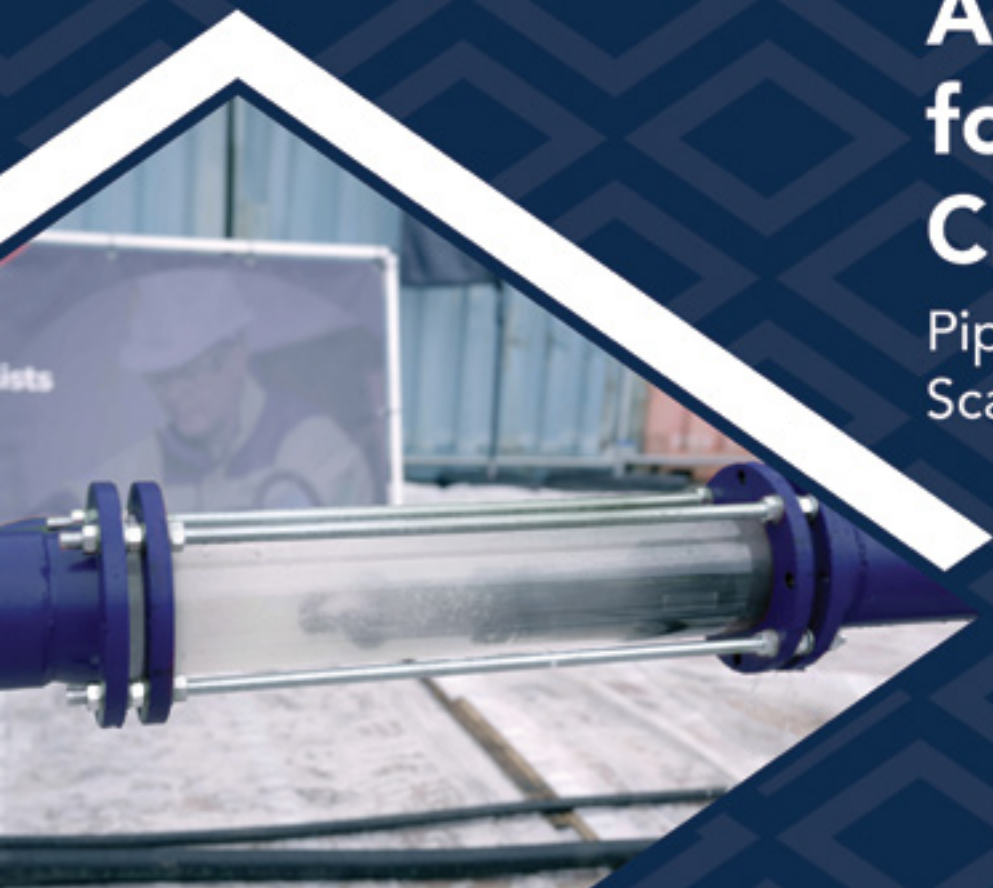
This latest contract award marks the 20th major capital project supported by Asset55's software solutions. Asset55 continues the ongoing deployment and support across a portfolio of high-profile projects with leading operators such as ExxonMobil, Shell, and Equinor.

This new contract award reinforces Asset55's commitment to delivering innovative digital solutions across the asset life cycle, empowering complex energy projects and supporting clients in achieving operational excellence.

Daniel Cahalarn, Regional Director, Asset55, said: "We are delighted to have been selected by MODEC to support the Gato Do Mato FPSO project with our Validate & Execute software solutions. This award reflects the confidence MODEC has in Asset55's ability to deliver trusted data, enhanced project visibility, and digital workflows that improve execution across fabrication, integration, and commissioning. We look forward to building on our successful track record of supporting major FPSO developments and contributing to the successful delivery of Gato Do Mato."

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS of Stena Drilling.

Three decades of Care, Innovation and Performance



This year, Stena Drilling proudly celebrates 30 years of Care, Innovation and Performance — a milestone that means far more than the passage of time. It represents three decades of expertise, teamwork, resilience and, above all, the people who have shaped our company and continue to drive it forward.

Since its earliest days, Stena Drilling has grown and evolved in a constantly changing industry. We have delivered complex projects in demanding environments, built lasting relationships with clients and partners, and developed a reputation for capability, safety, and performance. The journey has not always been straightforward. Like every business, we have faced downturns and challenging operations. What defines us is not the challenges themselves, but how we have responded: by learning, adapting, improving and moving forward together.



**What defines us is not
the challenges
themselves, but how
we have responded: by
learning, adapting,
improving and moving
forward together.**

WE CARE | WE INNOVATE | WE PERFORM



Our People

At the heart of this anniversary are our people. Offshore and onshore, across the fleet, satellite offices and support functions, colleagues have contributed professionalism, skill and commitment to building the company we know today. Their shared focus on safety — looking out for one another, speaking up and doing the right thing — continues to underpin everything we do. This anniversary is a moment to shine a light on the dedication that too often goes unseen—the commitment, effort and pride behind the scenes that have been fundamental to our success.



Celebrating Together

Our celebrations are already under way. At the start of July we held a hybrid Townhall to launch the anniversary year, bringing colleagues together from our offices, vessels and locations around the world to reflect on our journey and to look ahead to the future.

Recently, teams across our offices and fleet came together for a global anniversary lunch, creating a shared moment to pause, connect and celebrate this milestone—wherever in the world they were.

A special video marked the occasion by exploring what makes Stena Drilling such a great company: the commitment of our people, the care they show for one another and the pride they take in delivering excellence safely and well.



Looking Ahead

Throughout the year, our "30 Stories for 30 Years" initiative will bring colleagues' voices and experiences from around the world to the forefront, celebrating the people, teams and stories that have shaped Stena Drilling.

Our "30 Charities for 30 Years" initiative, supports causes that matter to our people and communities. In addition, we launched our 30th Anniversary Awards, recognising and celebrating employees whose commitment, professionalism and dedication have gone above and beyond to leave a lasting mark on our company.

For our clients, this milestone reinforces our commitment to being a dependable, quality-focused partner that listens, learns and evolves.

As we celebrate our proud legacy, we look ahead with confidence to the next chapter of the Stena Drilling story.



Stena IceMAX



Stena DrillMAX



Stena Carron



Stena Evolution



Stena Don



Stena Forth



Caledonia can turn offshore wind ambition into real jobs for the North-east

Author: Mark Baxter, Project Director, Caledonia Offshore Wind Farm, Ocean Winds



The Scottish Government's decision to grant offshore consent for the Caledonia Offshore Wind Farm is an important moment for the project and a major opportunity for the North-east.

For communities and businesses here, the value of offshore wind has to mean investment, contracts and skilled jobs that people can see. Ocean Winds already has a track record of delivering that in the Moray Firth.

Our Moray East and Moray West projects are operating offshore wind farms, backed by long-term operations and maintenance bases in Fraserburgh and Buckie. Those facilities support highly skilled jobs which will be required for decades. They also support a much wider network of businesses. Independent analysis found that the development and construction of Moray East and Moray West together created more than 8,000 full-time equivalent employment years and contributed over £700million in GVA to the UK economy.

That impact can be seen much closer to home too. North-east-based companies including Balmoral and Seaway7 have secured work from our projects, while North-east construction firm CHAP delivered our operations bases in Buckie, while Scottish firm Muir delivered our Fraserburgh base. Ocean Winds has worked with more than 360 UK companies across development, construction and operations.

Each project gives businesses and workers experience they can take into the next one.

That is particularly important for the North-east's energy transition. Many of our operations and maintenance employees have come from oil and gas backgrounds. The skills developed in the North Sea over generations are directly relevant to offshore wind, but retaining those skills in this region requires a sustained pipeline of projects and work. Caledonia is the opportunity to build on that track record.

The multi-billion-pound ScotWind project, around 40 kilometres off the Moray Firth coast, could generate

enough clean electricity to power the equivalent of two million homes. Alongside Moray East and Moray West, it would take Ocean Winds' long-term operational workforce in the Moray Firth to more than 200 skilled roles, with further opportunities throughout the supply chain.

But consent is not the finish line. Caledonia must now secure a Contract for Difference and reach final investment decision. Transmission charging remains one of the biggest challenges to overcome, with the current regime placing a disproportionate burden on projects in northern Scotland. If we want the jobs, investment and supply chain opportunities represented by Caledonia and other major Scottish offshore wind projects to be realised in full, that barrier needs to be addressed.

For the North-east, that means another major energy project capable of supporting businesses, creating work and sustaining skilled careers. The focus now must be on getting Caledonia from consent towards construction and delivering those benefits here.



Buckie O&M Base delivered by CHAP

OPINION
OPINION



Scotland's Largest Offshore Wind Operator

*Ocean Winds is a joint venture
dedicated entirely to offshore wind
energy, owned equally by
EDP Renewables and ENGIE.*

19
PROJECTS
WORLDWIDE

Around
21 GW
GROSS CAPACITY

OW in the UK

5 projects with 7+ GW (gross)



Moray East

Capacity: 150 MW
In Operation
(Generation commenced 2021)



Caledonia

Capacity: 2,000 MW
Under Development
(Site awarded January 2022)



Moray West

Capacity: 882 MW
Under Construction
(First Power reached in 2024)



Arven*

Capacity: 1,800 MW
Under Development
(Site awarded August 2022)



PDA2 - Celtic Sea Site

Capacity: 1,500 MW
Under Development
(Site awarded February 2026)

(*) The additional 500 MW Arven South site is in the process of
being handed back to Crown Estate Scotland

SCAN
ME!



Moray East Offshore Wind Farm

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40+ | Offshore Client Assets

4000+ | Employees



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Bedrock Ocean Exploration and First Marine Solutions announce strategic partnership

Bedrock Ocean Exploration (“Bedrock”), the intelligence infrastructure powering the ocean economy, has announced a multi-year strategic partnership with First Marine Solutions (“FMS”), an established leader in survey and positioning services to the offshore energy sector.

The partnership establishes a UK and European operational hub for Bedrock’s autonomous ocean intelligence technology at FMS’s Aberdeen headquarters, creating an integrated offering that pairs Bedrock’s intelligence stack with FMS’s offshore experience, regional presence, and consultancy services.

Under the agreement, Bedrock will station a complete kit of its autonomous underwater vehicles at FMS’s facility in Aberdeen, strategically positioned to support UK and European operations. Bedrock will provide data processing expertise and comprehensive training for FMS personnel, enabling FMS to perform the majority of operations and maintenance locally without the need to ship equipment back to the United States.

FMS, in turn, will provide the operational infrastructure to deploy and deliver services at scale, including dedicated facilities for Bedrock, logistics support, marine consultancy services, and a dedicated team of survey engineers trained in collaboration with Bedrock.

The combined offering is designed to give clients in offshore energy and subsea infrastructure a vertically integrated solution. The partnership brings together autonomous data acquisition, in-region operational support, and decades of industry-leading survey, processing, and reporting capability.

“FMS has built a reputation in the North Sea and beyond for being exactly the kind of partner the offshore energy sector relies upon; experienced, adaptive, and operationally excellent,” said Matthew Tirman, Chief

Executive Officer of Bedrock. “Pairing our autonomous technology with FMS’s regional infrastructure and personnel allows us to deliver Bedrock-quality data to clients across the UK and Europe at the speed and cost the market needs. This partnership is a major step in how we bring the future of subsea insights to the operators building offshore energy infrastructure for the next century of the ocean economy.”

“Bedrock represents a step change in how subsea data is collected, processed, and delivered as insights at a pace the industry hasn’t seen before. We are pleased to bring that capability to our clients, complementing the survey and consultancy services for which we are known across the offshore industry,” said Steven Brown, CEO of First Marine Solutions. “Hosting Bedrock’s AUV systems in Aberdeen, with our team trained to operate and maintain them, will result in faster response times, increased flexibility, and the opportunity to offer the offshore energy sector a genuinely differentiated service.”

Beyond field operations, the two companies will collaborate to raise awareness of the new capabilities available to customers, and how they will shape maritime industries in the years to come. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the ocean economy would have been the world’s fifth largest economy if it was considered a country in 2019. The same report anticipates the ocean economy will quadruple in size between 1995 to 2050, driven in part by digitisation and autonomous technologies.

With presence in the North Sea, the partnership between Bedrock and FMS further demonstrates the value of autonomous ocean intelligence to the ongoing growth of the ocean economy, even in the most demanding environments on the planet.



We can't outsource reality... If the UK needs oil and gas, we should produce it here

By Ryan Crighton, Director of Policy

Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce recently welcomed First Minister John Swinney to meet leaders from across Scotland's offshore energy sector. It was a constructive, candid discussion at an important moment for an industry facing profound uncertainty following bp's decision to put its North Sea business up for sale.

What struck me most wasn't simply the concern around the table. It was the remarkable consensus.

Businesses involved in oil and gas, offshore wind, hydrogen, carbon capture and the wider supply chain all made essentially the same point. Scotland needs a stable, long-term energy policy that recognises economic reality as well as climate ambition. We cannot continue lurching from one policy position to another if we expect companies to invest billions of pounds over decades.

There is a tendency in political debate to frame this as a choice between producing oil and gas or achieving net zero. It isn't. The real question is much simpler.

Will Britain continue to use oil and gas?

The answer, according to the Climate Change Committee, is yes. Even on the UK's legally binding pathway to net zero, Britain will require between 13 and 15 billion barrels of oil and gas between now and 2050. That fact should fundamentally change the nature of the debate. If we are going to consume those resources anyway, where should they come from?

We have three options. We can produce them ourselves. We can import them. Or we can pretend there is another answer.

Increasingly, we appear to be choosing the second while talking as though we are pursuing the third. Domestic production is declining naturally. As a consequence, Britain's dependence on imported gas has already doubled since 2019. Those imports increasingly arrive as liquefied natural gas from countries such as the United States and Qatar.

That matters for three reasons.

First, energy security. Recent years have demonstrated how dangerous it is for nations to become dependent on international energy markets. Producing more of our own energy leaves us less exposed to geopolitical shocks and price volatility.

Second, the economy. Hundreds of thousands of highly skilled jobs depend directly or indirectly on the North Sea. Those same engineers, technicians and specialist companies are also building Scotland's offshore wind industry, carbon capture projects and hydrogen economy. Weakening one inevitably weakens the other.

Third, and perhaps most surprisingly, the climate. This is often overlooked, yet it is arguably the strongest case of all.

The North Sea Transition Authority estimates that imported liquefied natural gas generates around three times the upstream emissions of UK-produced gas. Replacing imported LNG from the United States with production from the Jackdaw field alone would save around four million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Producing cleaner gas at home instead of importing higher-emission gas from overseas is not abandoning climate ambition. It is a practical way of reducing global emissions while maintaining secure energy supplies.

That is why projects such as Jackdaw and Rosebank matter. The debate should not be about whether we use oil and gas. We know we will.

It should be about whether Britain is prepared to produce the resources it still requires under some of the world's highest environmental and regulatory standards, or whether we simply offshore production — and the jobs, investment and tax revenues that come with it — to other countries.

I was encouraged during our discussion by the First Minister's continued support for replacing the Energy Profits Levy with the proposed Oil and Gas Revenue Levy, providing greater certainty for investors. I also welcomed his willingness to examine planning delays affecting both renewable energy and offshore developments.

The next step is recognising that supporting responsible domestic production is entirely consistent with supporting the energy transition.

This should never be presented as a contest between oil and gas and renewables. Scotland needs both.

The North Sea has powered our economy for half a century. It is now helping build the technologies that will power the next fifty years too.

But transitions are built, not wished into existence.

If Britain still needs oil and gas — and every credible forecast says it does — then the responsible course is not to import ever more from overseas. It is to produce as much as we responsibly can ourselves, while investing the skills, revenues and expertise that industry generates into delivering the low-carbon future we all want.



BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Tanya Harley
Product Manager
Onboard Tracker

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

It's hard to single out one person, but in product management and design I've learned a huge amount from Graeme Miller, System Architect at Onboard Tracker, and Kevin Coll, Managing Director. Graeme taught me to think through the trade-offs behind every feature request, while Kevin has shown me how to balance customer needs with commercial realities. Together, they've reinforced that the best product decisions come from listening carefully, understanding constraints, and being honest about what can be delivered.

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

I've always found people management training the most valuable. I'm naturally curious about what motivates people and how teams perform at their best. As our team at Onboard Tracker has grown, developing these skills has become increasingly important and has helped me build stronger relationships, support colleagues more effectively, and create an environment where our team can thrive.

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

Everyone is trying their best. I find that collaboration almost always

delivers better results than working alone. The strongest outcomes come from bringing different perspectives together and working towards a shared goal.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

Becoming Product Manager at Onboard Tracker. I'm incredibly passionate about our software and the impact it has on the people who use it every day. While I'm proud of the product itself, what gives me the most satisfaction is hearing directly from users about how it has made their jobs easier, saved them time, or removed frustrations from their daily processes. Seeing people genuinely enjoy using something we've worked hard to create is hugely rewarding.

One of the highlights of my year is our Onboard Xchange user forum. It brings customers together to share ideas, showcase successes, and help shape the future of the platform. The collaboration, enthusiasm, and relationships that have developed through our user community are something I'm incredibly proud to be part of. It might sound cheesy, but there really is a strong sense of the OBT family.

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

Aberdeen has a strong and connected business community.

There are always opportunities to learn, network, and reconnect through events, workshops, and business breakfasts. While the region is renowned for its energy sector, it's exciting to see increasing diversification across industries, creating new opportunities for businesses like ours.

What was your first job?

Children's party host at Codona's.

Who or what inspires you most?

Travelling the world and seeing new places.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

You're on mute.

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

All travel in the world would be free of charge.

QUICK-FIRE ROUND



Transforming the grid to secure our energy future

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

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

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

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

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



Powering the future: Aberdeen's Heat Network leads the way

Author: Martin Whiteford, Partner, Anderson Strathern



“To call upon the sun for peace and gaiety... is the cowardice of idleness,” observed Samuel Johnson after experiencing the Scottish climate firsthand. Few cities embody that resilience more than Aberdeen. Long shaped by harsh weather and energy innovation alike, Aberdeen is now emerging as one of Scotland’s leading examples of large-scale heat network development — and a key test case for the UK’s evolving regulatory framework.

At the centre of this transformation is the network, a major district heating scheme using recovered heat from the East Tullos energy-from-waste facility to supply homes and public buildings across the city.

The project forms part of Aberdeen City Council’s wider ambitions to create an interconnected city-wide heat network capable of supporting long-term decarbonisation, energy resilience and reduced reliance on fossil fuels.

Heat networks — systems that distribute heat from a central source to multiple buildings — have long been viewed as an important part of the UK’s net zero strategy, particularly in dense urban environments where individual low-carbon heating solutions can be difficult or costly to deploy at scale.

For cities such as Aberdeen, with a combination of public sector estates, social housing and industrial infrastructure, the model presents a particularly strong opportunity.

The sector, however, is now entering a fundamentally different phase.

From January this year, heat networks across Great Britain formally came under the oversight of Ofgem under powers introduced by the Energy Act 2023 and implemented through the Heat Networks (Market Framework) Regulations 2025.

The move represents a major shift for a sector that has historically operated largely through private contractual arrangements rather than detailed public regulation.

For projects such as the Torry Heat Network, the implications are significant.

Operators are now required to obtain authorisation from Ofgem, with transitional arrangements applying to existing schemes. By early 2027, operating a heat network without authorisation is expected to become a criminal offence.

The reforms are intended to address longstanding concerns around pricing transparency, customer protections and service standards.

Consumers must now receive clearer billing information and gain access to independent redress mechanisms where disputes arise.

Ofgem also has enforcement powers, including the ability to investigate operators, impose financial penalties and require compensation to be paid where standards are not met.

For Aberdeen, these changes arrive at a crucial moment. Plans for wider network expansion continue, including strategic transmission

infrastructure linking different parts of the city and supporting future growth. As networks become larger and more interconnected, the associated legal, procurement and operational issues become correspondingly more complex.

Alongside the UK-wide reforms, projects in Scotland must also navigate the Heat Networks (Scotland) Act 2021, which introduces additional devolved requirements including licensing proposals, project consents and heat network zoning.

Local authorities are expected to play a central role in identifying areas particularly suited to heat networks, potentially creating a stronger pipeline of customers and improving long-term investment certainty.

There remain important questions around implementation, pricing and the pace of zoning. However, the direction of travel is increasingly clear.

Heat networks are moving firmly into the mainstream of the UK energy system, and projects such as Aberdeen’s Torry Heat Network demonstrate both the scale of the opportunity and the increasingly sophisticated legal and regulatory framework that will underpin the sector’s future growth.

OPINION
OPINION

My Career Journey

Michelle Birch
Finance Manager
AquaTerra Group Limited



Describe your early career path.

My career in finance began in 2002 when I joined Consafe Engineering as an Accounts Assistant. This foundational role exposed me to a full range of core accounting processes, including payroll, bank reconciliations, VAT returns and transactional processing. Being hands-on with the fundamentals taught me precision, ownership, and the importance of strong financial controls. These early experiences grounded my approach to finance and set the stage for my progression into more complex and strategic roles.

How did you arrive in your current industry?

My transition into the energy sector evolved organically as I gained experience in project-based organisations. Roles at Oceaneering, Technip and Senergy deepened my expertise in project accounting and corporate finance and strengthened my reputation for analytical accuracy and operational partnership. Over time, I became known for improving processes, driving financial insight, and enabling better decision-making. This track record eventually led to senior leadership opportunities, including Financial Controller and my current role as Finance Manager at AquaTerra.

What's the best thing about your job?

What I enjoy most is the mix of variety and challenge, and knowing the work actually makes a difference. Finance sits across the whole business, and I like being someone people can rely on, making sense of the numbers, spotting ways to improve things and helping move the business forward. I also really value developing people. Seeing someone grow in confidence and step into their potential is one of the most rewarding parts of what I do.

What has been your biggest career challenge or proudest achievement?

One of my biggest career turning points came in 2015 when I was made redundant during a challenging market downturn. Soon after, I accepted a role far outside my comfort zone: Finance Business Analyst within the Oracle ERP team at Technip.

Coming from a finance background, stepping into a more technical, IT-focused environment was a steep learning curve. I had to build new skills quickly and prove that I could add value in a different setting. Over time, I grew in confidence, developed strong cross-functional knowledge and became a trusted member of the team. During that period, I earned two promotions and was progressing toward leadership opportunities.

In 2021, I made a deliberate move back into finance to deepen my technical expertise and keep progressing in my chosen career path.

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

Don't doubt yourself so much. You don't need to have everything figured out straight away. Every job, even the small or junior ones, teaches you something useful. Focus on doing things well, being reliable and staying curious. The rest tends to fall into place.

What does the future look like for you?

The future at AquaTerra feels full of opportunity and I'm really enjoying being part of the business' journey. For me, the future is about continuing to grow and adding value where I can, strengthening the finance function, supporting the wider business and helping the company move forward.

As the company evolves, I'm keen to take on more responsibility, contribute to strategic thinking, support the development of others and play a practical role in continuous improvement. It's a business that's moving forward, and I'm proud to contribute my experience and steady approach to that growth.

For me, it's about playing a meaningful role in the company's growth and knowing I've helped make a difference along the way.

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10 Years Strong: pewag Levo UK Ltd – Home of LMS and AWL



Celebrating 10 years of growth, innovation and investment

LMS marks a decade of progress and is now moving forward as part of pewag Levo UK Ltd, bringing LMS and Aberdeen Web together under one name.

From four people to a growing specialist business

This year marks 10 years since LMS was incorporated. What began with four employees has grown to a team of 37, supported by several site expansions and continued investment in people, products and capability.

Over the past decade, the business has increased its manufacturing capacity, expanded its product range, supplied customers in more countries and built a strong reputation for quality, technical expertise and customer support.

A decade shaped by innovation & investment

Growth has been driven by several key milestones. In 2022, LMS was recognised as runner-up in the LEEA Best Digital Innovation category and acquired Air Skate company Load Moving Systems. In 2024, LMS won the Customer First Award at the Northern Star Business Awards and received the King's Award for Enterprise.

The business also evolved through investment and acquisition. pewag became a majority shareholder in 2021 and took full ownership

Key product milestones

- 2017 – LMS produced its first subsea load pin shackle with 400t capacity
- 2020 – 800t load link produced, 2000t test bed added & launched its own Type Approved load cell for ATEX and IECEx markets
- 2021 – LMS introduces the world's first pad eye tester with onboard display.
- 2024 – Largest load shackle to date at 1550t

in 2024. In 2025, LMS acquired Aberdeen Web Ltd (AWL), with the business becoming pewag Levo UK Ltd later that year.

Specialist expertise, stronger together

While operating within one legal entity, LMS and AWL continue as specialist brands with their own teams and expertise. Customers continue to receive the same trusted products, services and support, now backed by a broader combined business.

LMS delivers specialist load monitoring solutions, with products supplied to more than 45 countries and one of the UK's largest load monitoring rental fleets. AWL adds



more than 30 years of expertise in webbing slings, round slings and ratchet systems, supported by onsite manufacturing and rapid turnaround times.

Together, LMS and AWL provide load monitoring, lifting and load securing solutions across sectors including energy, marine, renewables, construction, aquaculture, transport and heavy industry. The business also forms part of the wider pewag UK group alongside brands including Modulift and pewag UK.

As pewag Levo UK Ltd celebrates its 10-year anniversary, it reflects both on a decade of achievement and its future as the home of LMS and AWL.



10 years strong: the pewag Levo UK Ltd team

**LMS House, Claymore Drive, Aberdeen Energy Park,
Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, AB23 8GD**
Phone: +44 (0)1224 446100 | Email: LMS@LoadMonitoringSystems.com
LoadMonitoringSystems.com

EnerMech secures major topside process services contract for leading North Sea operator



EnerMech has secured a multi-year contract to deliver topside process and shutdown services across a leading North Sea operator's offshore asset portfolio.

The award is the second major contract secured by EnerMech in recent months for comparable topside process services in the North Sea, reinforcing the company's position as a trusted delivery partner for operators seeking integrated technical services, operational certainty and safe, efficient project execution.

The contract strengthens a partnership built over more than a decade and expands EnerMech's role as a provider of topside process services and shutdown readiness activities across the operator's offshore asset portfolio. Drawing on extensive operational experience, EnerMech will provide an integrated delivery model combining embedded engineering expertise, multi-skilled personnel and centralized competency support.

EnerMech CEO Charles 'Chuck' Davison Jr. said: "This award reflects the confidence our customer places in our people, processes and commitment to continuous improvement. It aligns with our strategy of delivering integrated, technically advanced topside process solutions that improve reliability, reduce complexity and provide operators with greater operational assurance across their asset portfolios."

From its Aberdeen base, the company will deploy

a scalable equipment fleet and class-leading digital assurance systems, including EnerMech SIMPro engineering software, to support safe, consistent and schedule-assured delivery of shutdown and maintenance projects. The contract covers nitrogen purging, nitrogen and helium leak testing, bolt torquing and tensioning, cryogenic pipe freezing, on-site machining, system pressurisation and flange management.

EnerMech's right-first-time delivery approach, supported by experienced personnel with extensive offshore operational knowledge, will help minimise rework, reduce downtime and improve planning certainty across a multi-asset program.

Nuno de Sousa, SVP Energy Solutions, added: "Our teams have supported this leading North Sea operator for more than 12 years. That continuity gives us a deep understanding of the operating environment, routines and execution requirements needed to deliver safely and on schedule. Expanding our scope across the portfolio allows us to further strengthen consistency, drive efficiencies and support successful shutdown and maintenance campaigns."

This contract further reinforces EnerMech's strong North Sea capabilities and its commitment to supporting operators with integrated services that enhance asset integrity, optimise operational performance and ensure safe, reliable project delivery.



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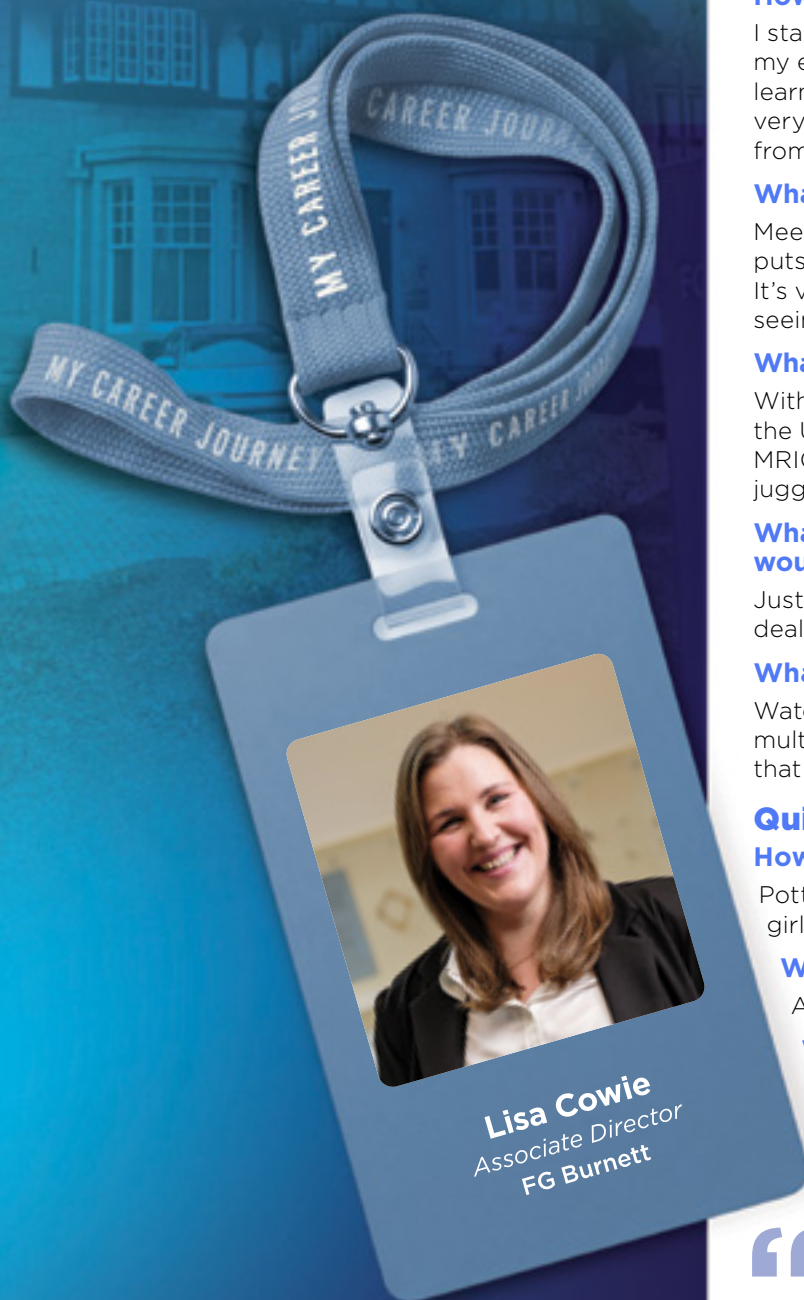
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My Career Journey

Lisa Cowie
Associate Director
FG Burnett



“

I started in 2004 as a Commercial Secretary and built my experience and knowledge by asking questions and learning on the job.

Describe your early career path.

Unconventional. As an early school leaver, I started my career as a Beauty Therapist. A career change in 2004 set me on a completely different path and ultimately led me into the real estate industry.

How did you arrive in your current industry?

I started in 2004 as a Commercial Secretary and built my experience and knowledge by asking questions and learning on the job. I was lucky enough to work with a very supportive individual who has backed my career from the start.

What's the best thing about your job?

Meeting people. I've always loved to talk, and my role puts me in front of a wide range of people across the UK. It's very varied too – no two days are the same. I also love seeing new businesses open and supporting them.

What has been your proudest achievement to date?

Without a doubt, obtaining my MSc in Real Estate from the University of Aberdeen in 2024 while also gaining my MRICS qualification. I did it all while working full time and juggling a household of seven.

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

Just how varied it is – from letting a small corner shop to dealing with national retailers across the UK.

What does the future look like for you?

Watching Aberdeen continue to reshape itself following a multitude of changes and challenges – and being part of that journey.

Quick Fire Questions

How do you unwind in your time off?

Pottering around at home and spending time with my girls and family.

What did you want to be when you were little?

A beauty therapist on a cruise ship!

What was your first job?

A paper girl.

“

I've always loved to talk, and my role puts me in front of a wide range of people across the UK. It's very varied too – no two days are the same.

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NoWrongPath

New UK fisheries minister visits North-east to meet industry representatives

The Chief Executive of the Scottish Fishermen's Federation (SFF) has welcomed a visit by new UK fisheries minister Stephen Morgan MP to Peterhead, where he met fishermen, fish market traders and others involved in Scotland's fishing industry.

During the visit, hosted by the SFF, the minister experienced the morning sales at Peterhead Fish Market and visited the pelagic vessel Artemis to gain a first-hand understanding of the journey Scotland's wild-caught fish takes from sea to plate.

The visit provided an opportunity to showcase the scale, skill and economic importance of Scotland's fishing sector, from those working at sea to the processors, traders, transport operators and wider supply chains that support coastal communities across the country.

SFF Chief Executive Elspeth Macdonald said: "It was a pleasure to welcome the new UK fisheries minister to the North-east to see for himself the importance of the industry to our coastal communities.

"From the skill of those working at sea to the communities and supply chains behind every catch, the visit was a valuable opportunity to showcase the role of



Scottish fishing in producing natural, renewable, low-carbon and high-protein food.

"It is important that ministers have the opportunity to hear directly from those working in the industry and witness the professionalism, innovation and investment that characterise modern Scottish fishing. We look forward to continuing our constructive engagement with the minister on the issues that matter most to the sector."



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THE Lifestyle SECTION

This month in the Business Bulletin Lifestyle section, Russell sails away on the comfortable and convenient NorthLink ferry to check out some of the spectacular coastlines, cliffs and islands we have on our doorstep up north.

Meanwhile, Wood Group's Steve Nicol took the brand new Porsche Cayanne EV for a weekend-long spin. We're not jealous at all...

Interested in featuring in the Lifestyle section too? Email bulletin@agcc.co.uk or speak to your Relationship Manager.

Our even Northern-er lights

By Russell Borthwick, *Chief Executive*

If I had £1 for every occasion where a visitor to Aberdeen had said to me something along the lines of: "much further and we'd fall off the top of the UK", I could have got close to single-handedly solving the new Prime Minister's budget deficit.

Of course, this region is highly accessible, far from being at the ends of the earth, and there are many hundreds of miles further to travel before we do reach our most northerly places.

These conversations often got me to thinking that, although having visited and briefly worked in Caithness & Sutherland in the 1990s, I had never visited the Northern Isles.

So last month, I eventually made good on an overdue promise to myself- and Stuart and Fiona from long-time Chamber members NorthLink Ferries that I would make my maiden voyage to Orkney and Shetland and did so as part of a wider Highlands tour.

Having spent a few days in Aviemore via Dunkeld and Pitlochry, we re-packed the car and set off for



Scrabster, stopping off in 13th century Dornoch, at Dunrobin Castle and finally John o' Groats where the famous sign told of being 222 miles from Aberdeen, 874 miles from Land's End and, surprisingly just 8 miles to Orkney. This, of course is to the southern most tip of the Islands, Burwick on South Ronaldsay.

The ferry journey from Scrabster to Stromness is a little further, but having boarded NorthLink's MV Hamnavoe, the 90-minute crossing went in a flash as we enjoyed a three course meal and great views (albeit through the mizzle) of The Old Man of Hoy.

Highlights of our two days on Orkney included, learning more about Neolithic Orkney at the Ring of Brodgar, Stones of Stenness and Skara Brae, walking the incredible cliffs at Sandwick and crossing the famous Churchill Barriers to visit the Italian Chapel and strolling around the towns of Stromness and Kirkwall- where we were joined by hundreds of German cruise visitors whose journey would later take them onto Aberdeen...via Iceland!

On the 23.45 NorthLink MV Hrossey and sailing to Shetland, we grabbed a quick night cap in the bar and settled down in our comfortable cabin for a few hours kip before enjoying breakfast to the backdrop of our arrival into Lerwick.

Somehow, the pretty dreich weather added to the mystery and mystique of touring around the west and north of the main island where the beaches, caves, blowholes, cliffs and standing stones around the Eshaness coast were stunning and

our drive took us past a number of cake fridge honesty boxes. Honest!

On the east side, in complete contrast, I got my first in-person look at The Sullom Voe Terminal site, operated by another Chamber member EnQuest, which has played a key part in our oil and gas story over the last half century.

Back in Lerwick, we dodged the showers visiting Fort Charlotte, Clickimin Broch and the Shetland Museum and Archives which offered a fantastic insight to the islands' rich maritime and Norse history before taking in a movie at Mareel Cinema and Arts Centre.

Heading to the south of the island on our final day, the sunshine came out to show off the best of St Ninian's Isle with its famous sand tombolo.

And then, the fairly unique experience of being stopped at a level crossing. But there are no trains on Shetland, I hear your protest...and you are correct!

This level crossing was at Sumburgh Airport as we waited on a Loganair (third gratuitous Chamber member namecheck of the article) flight to land before we could cross the runway to continue our journey to Jarlshof Prehistoric & Norse settlement and Sumburgh Head Lighthouse where the views and colonies of seabirds, including puffins were just breathtaking.

Just leaving time for a stroll around the lovely harbour town of Scalloway with its castle and museum before heading back to Lerwick to be reacquainted with MV Hrossey for the 19.00 sailing to Aberdeen.

This time we had upgraded to the Magnus Lounge (highly recommended) and enjoyed dinner and a few drinks with a wide range of games and complimentary newspapers and magazines available, including Business Bulletin, naturally.

Tracking the east coast of the island as the sun set, we chatted about how we had learned more about how Orkney and Shetland had both played key roles in the very shaping of early society, international trading and keeping German Forces at bay during WW2.

And about how both islands offered a range of great eateries, breweries and distilleries including the Deerness Distillery and Storehouse Restaurant in Orkney and Fjara and C'est La Vie in Lerwick - the latter making the claim of being the most northerly authentic French Spanish restaurant in the world.

And as the wanderers returned, we were afforded great (alternative) views of the Aberdeenshire coastline and the city as we entered North Harbour bang on schedule at 7am.

If you, like me, have had visiting the Northern Isles on your to do list for a long time but never got round to it... what are you waiting for?

Interested in featuring your business in the Lifestyle section of the Business Bulletin?



Email
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Relationship Manager to
find out how you can.



MOTOR MOUTH

When a hero lives up to the hype

"They say never meet your heroes because they rarely live up to the impossible, perfect ideals we project onto them..."

Spoiler alert for those who don't have the time or inclination to read this entire article: I can happily dispel that myth, at least on this occasion. I was completely awestruck by the Porsche Cayenne EV.

So, how did this review come about?

I was very fortunate to be asked whether I would consider taking home the new Porsche Cayenne EV S Edition for a weekend test drive.

Hmm, let me think about that...

Yes.

In fact, it probably took me about the same amount of time to reach that conclusion as it takes the Cayenne EV to reach 60mph. In other words, really fast!

So, here goes my review.

PORSCHE CAYENNE ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV)

By Steve Nicol

*Chief Operating Officer, Operations
Wood Group*



First visual impressions

The Cayenne EV looks big and muscular, yet sleek and sporty at the same time. The Napoli Blue paintwork was striking without being overly loud. The interior oozed class, with more buttons than my current EV, but the satisfying clicks and scrolls enhanced rather than detracted from the experience.

The standout feature inside was the beautifully curved digital instrument display. Pure class, exactly what you would expect from Porsche.

Ride and handling

This was my first time driving a Porsche and, with reference to my opening sentence, it drove like a true sports machine. It was everything I had hoped for and more.

The acceleration, while of course remaining within the speed limits, was instant and relentless without ever feeling overly violent or jarring. Personally, I have experienced that harsher characteristic in some other electric vehicles.



There are several driving modes to choose from, ranging from Normal to Sport+, but unsurprisingly my favourite was Sport+. It even provides a replica engine note through the cabin, creating the sensation of driving a traditional performance car. Who needs Spotify when you can enjoy the satisfying purrs and occasional roar of an electric vehicle?

Despite weighing around 2.5 tonnes, the Cayenne EV genuinely does not feel like a large vehicle on the road. It corners exceptionally well, remains impressively flat through bends, and exhibits very little body roll. The grip and composure inspire confidence at all times.

On Sunday, we took it on a longer drive. I say "we" because even my 16-year-old son suddenly wanted to spend time with me for the weekend!

The Cayenne EV is comfort personified. You feel safe and surrounded by space, yet it still manages to make every mile enjoyable. One feature that particularly stood out was the augmented reality head-up

display. This projects key driving information, navigation instructions, and warning messages directly onto the windscreen, allowing you to keep your eyes firmly on the road while staying fully informed. From a safety perspective, I found it to be a valuable addition.

Range, battery and charging

As an existing EV owner, I have long since overcome the battery anxiety that often accompanies the switch from petrol to electric motoring.

The charger installed on my driveway worked perfectly with the Cayenne EV, and after our longer Sunday drive I plugged it in whilst enjoying some lunch without any drama.

I understand that the Cayenne EV supports ultra-fast charging and was also informed that Porsche plans to offer an optional inductive wireless charging system. This would allow the Cayenne EV to charge simply by being parked over a charging plate embedded in the ground, removing the need for cables altogether.

That sounds pretty cool to me.

My verdict

Luxury vehicles inevitably come at a cost, but if you are fortunate enough to be in a position to consider a car like this, my advice would be simple: go for it.

For business users, there is another dimension to the Cayenne Electric that is worth considering. As a fully electric vehicle, it can offer significant advantages for both businesses and employees, including favourable Benefit-in-Kind taxation, potential tax efficiencies for qualifying business purchases, and compatibility with salary sacrifice schemes.

For companies looking to enhance their employee benefits or transition their fleet towards electric, it makes the Cayenne Electric an interesting proposition beyond simply being an exceptional car to drive.

The Porsche Cayenne EV delivers an impressive blend of qualities. It is sporty yet comfortable, powerful yet refined, luxurious yet practical. Somehow it manages to be both fun and sensible at the same time.

Most importantly, it feels exactly how I imagined, and wanted a thoroughbred Porsche to feel.

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GEODIS designs transport and installation of an offshore energy storage prototype in Italy

GEODIS carried out engineering for the launching, towing, and installation operations of an offshore energy storage tank, the size of an Olympic swimming pool, in Italy off the coast of Calabria, for the company Sizible Energy.

By engineering its launching, transport and installation, the group is leveraging its expertise to support a technology designed to facilitate the integration of renewable energy into the power grid, thereby confirming its position in next-generation offshore projects.

The prototype is installed within the Natural Ocean Engineering Laboratory (NOEL), one of Italy's leading offshore test sites for innovative marine energy technologies, located in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Calabria, Italy.

This system is designed to store electricity produced by offshore wind turbines or other renewable energy sources and then deliver it back to the grid when demand increases. By decoupling production and consumption periods, this technology helps strengthen the stability of the power grid while providing an alternative to conventional battery energy storage systems (BESS).

"This project demonstrates our ability to support innovative technologies well beyond transportation. Thanks to our offshore engineering expertise, we help our clients turn complex concepts into safe and reliable operational solutions. This first achievement opens new development opportunities for GEODIS in the field of offshore energy storage, both in Italy and internationally," said Nicolas Bonnier, Global Manager Offshore Wind Solutions, Project Logistics at GEODIS.

This first reference in the field of offshore energy storage illustrates GEODIS's ability to apply its engineering expertise to next-generation energy technologies and paves the way for future projects in this rapidly evolving sector.



REMIGES V ROWING THE ATLANTIC FOR A CAUSE

**Five Ordinary Guys.
One Extraordinary Challenge.**

Meet The Remiges V:



Will Mackie Brian Smith Stuart Brown Stuart Ward Karl Bainbridge

Remiges V: Atlantic Row 2026

In December 2026, Remiges V will take on one of the world's toughest endurance challenges: rowing more than 3,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean.

Our mission is to raise vital funds and awareness for three outstanding charities:

- Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity
- MND Scotland
- Mind Body & Sole

This challenge is about far more than crossing an ocean. We want to demonstrate that, with the right mindset, resilience, and determination, ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things.

Through our journey, we hope to inspire others to pursue their ambitions, overcome adversity, and realise their full potential. Every mile rowed will be a testament to the power of perseverance, teamwork, and belief in what is possible.

We are also proud ambassadors for the North East of Scotland. At a time when many communities and industries face uncertainty, we want to showcase the strength, character, and spirit that define our region. Built on resilience, innovation, and hard work, these values will guide us throughout every stage of the crossing.

We are five ordinary men from the North East taking on an extraordinary challenge. Among us is Will from Peterhead, proudly representing the people, communities, and values that helped shape who he is today.

Sponsor the Journey

Our sponsorship packages provide businesses with a unique opportunity to support three deserving charities while gaining exposure through an internationally recognised sporting challenge.

By partnering with Remiges V, your organisation will align itself with a story of courage, resilience, teamwork, and community impact, reaching audiences throughout the build-up, the crossing itself, and beyond.

Join us as we row across the Atlantic and help make a lasting difference.

Will Mackie Team Captain, Remiges V

E: remigesv@gmail.com www.remigesv.com

Remiges V Atlantic Row 2026

"Five ordinary guys. Three great charities.
One ocean. One extraordinary challenge."

WORDS OF ADVICE



Mark Le Huray
Managing Director, Simblox

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Simblox helps small and medium-sized businesses run smoothly, surely and with confidence. For nearly 20 years, we've been a trusted IT partner, providing reliable, practical support across day-to-day IT, cybersecurity and cloud systems so business owners and leaders can stop worrying about technology and focus on keeping their teams productive and growing the business.

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

I've learned as I've gone. My management style is about trusting people, letting them do their job, and giving them space to grow. I'm not a micromanager,

I believe in empowering people, supporting them when needed and creating an environment where learning, development and progress happen naturally.

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

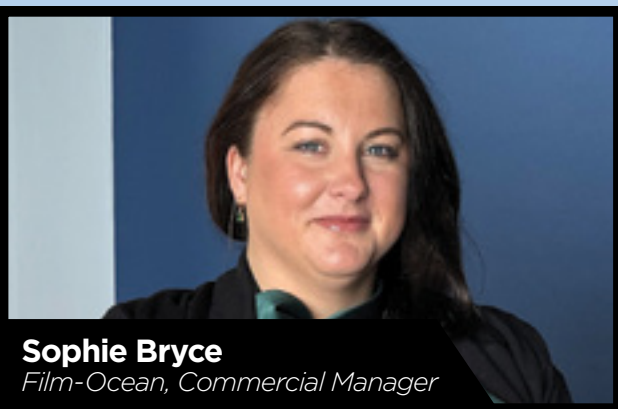
Keeping up with fast-moving technology while growing the business is an ongoing challenge. It's not just about learning myself, but making sure the whole team keeps pace. We've tackled it by staying curious, investing in learning, sharing knowledge and accepting that constant change is part of running a modern IT business.

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

Making mistakes is okay. You don't learn or improve without them. The important thing is to keep moving forward, adapt, and not be afraid to try. That mindset has helped me grow, solve problems, and keep progressing, even when the path ahead isn't completely clear.

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

Our industry is fast-paced and feeling overwhelmed at first is completely normal. You're not expected to know everything or keep up from day one. Ask questions, take things step by step and keep learning. With the right attitude, you'll grow quickly and be well supported by the team.



Sophie Bryce
Film-Ocean, Commercial Manager

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Film-Ocean is a global provider of subsea ROV services. We deliver tailored solutions with fully crewed systems ranging from rapid deployment micro ROVs and specialised observation class spreads for platform inspections to heavy duty Work Class ROVs, including our two latest Quantum systems, ensuring reliable execution across any operational scale.

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

My management style is based on trust, collaboration and leading by example. I believe in giving people ownership while providing support and guidance when

needed. This approach has helped me build strong relationships, encourage open communication and create a team environment where people feel valued and motivated to deliver.

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

One of the biggest challenges has been balancing commercial objectives with operational realities. I overcame it by building strong relationships across the business, listening to different perspectives and focusing on solutions that deliver value for both our clients and our team.

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

"Every day's a school day." It's something I've always lived by. Every conversation, challenge and project is an opportunity to learn and improve. Being curious, listening to others and staying open to new ideas has helped me grow professionally and build strong relationships throughout my career.

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

Be curious, ask questions and get involved. Film-Ocean is full of knowledgeable people who are always willing to share their experience. Building relationships across the business will help you learn faster, understand the bigger picture and make a positive impact from day one.

OEG wins major subsea corrosion protection contract for Germany's Gennaker offshore wind farm



OEG, a leading energy solutions business, has secured a major contract from OWP Gennaker GmbH to deliver a subsea corrosion protection solution for the Gennaker Offshore Wind Farm in the German Baltic Sea, a project developed by the offshore wind infrastructure platform Skyborn Renewables.

The contract will see OEG provide Impressed Current Cathodic Protection (ICCP) systems to protect the wind turbine foundations from corrosion throughout the wind farm's operational life, supporting the long-term reliability and performance of one of Germany's flagship offshore wind developments.

OEG's scope of work includes the delivery of a complete end-to-end solution, encompassing detailed engineering, procurement, manufacturing oversight, offshore logistics, installation, testing and commissioning of the ICCP system. The offshore installation campaign will be executed by OEG's experienced project management and offshore teams using proven installation methodologies and specialist subsea equipment.

Working in partnership with cathodic protection specialist CORROSION, OEG will also deploy the ICCP-Subsea Assembly Method (SAM), an innovative remote installation system jointly developed by the two companies. The technology enables the safe and efficient installation of ICCP systems on offshore subsea structures while reducing installation complexity and supporting efficient offshore execution.

The award strengthens OEG's growing presence in

the offshore wind sector and builds on the company's expanding portfolio of projects across Europe, where it provides integrated offshore construction, installation and asset integrity services to developers and Tier 1 contractors.

Rutger Lieveise, Commercial Director for OEG's Subsea division, said: "We are delighted to have been selected by OWP Gennaker GmbH for this important project. It reflects the confidence our clients place in our ability to deliver integrated corrosion protection solutions that combine engineering expertise, innovative technology and specialist offshore installation capabilities.

"By working alongside CORROSION, we're bringing together complementary expertise to deliver a safe, efficient and reliable solution for one of Germany's most significant offshore wind developments. As offshore wind continues to expand across Europe, we're committed to supporting developers with innovative technologies and integrated services that maximise asset performance throughout their operational life."

Engineering and procurement activities will commence immediately, followed by manufacturing support, system integration and offshore installation in line with the overall construction programme for the wind farm.

The project further expands OEG's offshore wind portfolio in the subsea space, which includes offshore construction and installation, cathodic protection, ROV operations, survey and positioning, inspection, repair and maintenance (IRM), cable support and intervention, and offshore project management and engineering services.



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James Fisher Asset Information Services brings asset reality and engineering models together with the launch of 3D Model Viewer



Aberdeen-based James Fisher Asset Information Services (AIS) has unveiled a major enhancement to its R2S platform with the launch of a new 3D Model Viewer, enabling industrial operators to view engineering models alongside reality capture data within a single environment.

Developed to help asset-intensive industries make faster, more informed decisions, the new capability allows users to view full asset 3D models alongside their existing 360° imagery and point cloud data. Users can switch seamlessly between views or display them side-by-side, creating a more complete picture of their assets without the need for multiple software applications.

“Many of our customers rely on both engineering models and reality capture data, but these datasets have often been viewed in separate applications,” said Martin MacRae, Product Line Director at AIS. “By bringing them together in R2S, we’re making it significantly easier for teams to locate equipment, verify asset conditions and plan work with greater confidence.”

The new feature addresses common challenges faced by maintenance, integrity and turnaround teams. While 3D models provide a clear understanding of how equipment and systems are designed and connected, they can become outdated over time. Reality data, including 360° imagery and laser scans, shows what is actually on site. Combining both in a single platform enables users to quickly validate information, identify discrepancies and reduce the risk of planning errors.

Users can search and navigate directly to equipment within the 3D model, isolate components to better understand piping routes and equipment relationships, and compare model data against real-world conditions. The ability to view 3D models side-by-side with reality data is particularly valuable for offshore planning activities, helping teams complete more work remotely and reduce the need for site visits.

Charities fund Scotland-wide testing project to identify inherited cancer risk in people with Westray and Whalsay ancestry

A landmark charity-funded project will offer genetic testing to thousands of people with ancestral links to Westray in Orkney and Whalsay in Shetland, helping identify those who have a higher inherited risk of developing certain cancers.

Eight charities are funding the two-year project, which will cost more than £365,000. The project will be led by researchers from the University of Aberdeen and the NHS North of Scotland Genetics Services based in NHS Grampian, and will offer testing for the specific BRCA gene variants which are more common in people with Westray and Whalsay ancestry.

The project will be funded by a unique partnership of NHS charities across Scotland and Friends of ANCHOR, a cancer and haematology charity based in North-east Scotland.

Friends of ANCHOR is contributing £137,000 towards the programme in the Northern Isles, with NHS Grampian Charity, NHS Orkney Endowment Fund, Shetland Health Board Endowment Fund, NHS Highland Charity, NHS Tayside Charitable Foundation, NHS Lothian Charity, and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde Healthcare Charity covering the remainder.

It is the first time NHS charities have come together to fund a Scotland-wide project. Each charity will fund the costs associated with its own geographic region. Friends of ANCHOR will fund costs associated with the roll-out in Orkney and Shetland.

It is anticipated that around 5,000 tests will be carried out across Orkney, Shetland, Grampian, Highland, Tayside, Lothian, and Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS areas. The screening involves a simple saliva test and will be available to people who may not otherwise have known they were at an increased risk.

There are more than 3,000 variants known in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes which can cause an increased chance of cancer. Around one in 1,000 women across the UK have a BRCA1 variant, giving them a higher lifetime chance of developing breast or ovarian cancer, while men with BRCA2 variants have a higher chance of developing breast or prostate cancer.



North Sea operators back plan to cut £200m from decommissioning costs



North Sea operators have backed a new initiative aimed at tackling a backlog of inactive wells while potentially cutting around £200million from the cost of decommissioning.

The North Sea Transition Authority (NSTA) and 17 operators, including Acura, bp, Harbour Energy, Ithaca Energy, Shell and Serica Energy, have signed a charter committing to greater collaboration on well decommissioning.

Operators will share data, expertise and resources, while identifying opportunities to share vessels for wellhead removal work.

Industry estimates suggest greater use of vessels rather than rigs for the final stages of subsea well decommissioning could reduce the remaining bill for wellhead removals by around 30%, equivalent to approximately £200million.

The initiative comes as new NSTA figures show the industry spent a record £2.6billion on decommissioning in 2025, up from £2.4billion the previous year.

Operators carried out work on 257 wells last year, with 114 progressing to final abandonment, compared with 238 wells worked on and 103 fully abandoned in 2024.

However, around 500 inactive wells are still awaiting final abandonment, with more than 1,000 additional wells expected to require decommissioning over the next five years.

Pauline Innes, NSTA Supply Chain and Decommissioning

Director, said: “This initiative has the potential to be a win-win-win for operators, suppliers and taxpayers.

“By collaborating, we can tackle the backlog, lower the cost of well decommissioning, protect the marine environment, and stimulate the offshore service sector. The North Sea’s biggest operators have come aboard and embraced the principles of the charter, so we’re off to a great start.”

The NSTA said greater use of vessels for removing wellheads could also free up rigs to carry out earlier-stage decommissioning work, including plugging wells with cement.

Mark Wilson, Offshore Energies UK’s Energy Operations Director, said: “Industry’s commitment to this charter shows a shared determination to work collaboratively and responsibly with the NSTA and partners to address inactive wells safely, efficiently and drive down costs.

“By sharing data, providing expertise and engaging the supply chain early, operators can improve visibility, planning and outcomes across the sector while maintaining legal, regulatory and operational standards.”

The NSTA now estimates the remaining cost of North Sea decommissioning at £43.4billion in 2025 prices, down marginally from £43.6billion.

UK companies secured 71% of the value of decommissioning contracts awarded in 2025, significantly above the North Sea Transition Deal’s voluntary commitment of at least 50% local content.



Scottish Sea Farms delivers £170m boost to local businesses

As one of Scotland's leading food companies, salmon farmer Scottish Sea Farms works with businesses across the country, buying local wherever possible.

Last year alone, Scottish Sea Farms invested nearly £170 million in the local supply chain, supporting 573 Scottish businesses across the four regions where the company operates - Highlands, Argyll, Shetland and Orkney - and beyond.

This annual boost enables suppliers, mostly small and medium-sized enterprises, to create and maintain local jobs, and develop new products and services.

From specialist feed companies, marine engineers, equipment manufacturers and logistics experts, to ferry companies, hotels, B&Bs and convenience stores, the benefits are felt far and wide.

And it's not just the companies in the heartlands of the salmon farming zones that see these benefits, but businesses the length and breadth of Scotland, from Shetland and Orkney in the north, to Ayrshire in the south west, and from Aberdeen in the east to Mull on the west coast.

A breakdown of the company's annual expenditure in 2025 shows

an increase in Scottish Sea Farms' economic contribution, up to more than £167.8 million from £167.3 million in 2024, and reflects an ongoing commitment to sustainable growth in the salmon sector.

As well as the local spend, the figures reveal the level of employment in salmon farming in each region where the company farms, plus the championing of community projects and charities.

In total, Scottish Sea Farms employed 642 people last year with salary costs of around £33.8 million. The company invested in the future workforce, employing 61 Modern Apprentices and dedicating 186.5 hours to



32 careers-focused events and site visits in all its farming regions.

And more than 200 local causes benefited from Scottish Sea Farms' Heart of the Community fund, which donated a total of £147,353 in 2025, bringing the total since the initiative was established in 2011 to more than £2 million.

'Salmon farming is embedded in some of Scotland's most remote areas, bringing valuable employment opportunities and an economic lifeline to rural communities,' said Scottish Sea Farms Managing Director, Jim Gallagher.

'Our farming operations depend on

many other businesses and, as these figures show, Scottish Sea Farms invests in an extensive supply chain, from Shetland and Orkney to the east and west coasts of Scotland.

'As we continue to grow our output, we will help retain and create more skilled jobs and contribute even further to the Scottish economy in the years ahead.'

Data for the year also showed that marine survival was at 89.1%, and that 387 audits (internal and external) were conducted.

In all, Scottish Sea Farms sites occupy around 0.021% (5.57km²) of marine inshore waters in Scotland.

The value of salmon farming extends far beyond the socio-economic benefits to Scotland and the UK, with aquaculture identified by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations as key to global food security.

Ten years ago, UN member states adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which recognised fish farming's role in feeding the world's growing population.

Scottish Sea Farms is playing its part in helping to meet worldwide demand for healthy, nutritious protein, delivered with one of the lowest carbon footprints of all food production systems.

One Group, One Strategy:

How Nexos Group is Positioning Itself for Growth

By Ryan Crighton

nexos

A D2Zero company



Nexos Group is entering its next chapter with a clear sense of direction and a growing list of reasons to be confident about it.

When Dan McAteer accepted the role of Group Chief Executive earlier this year, he inherited a business with a strong foundation, a clear opportunity to build on its successes, and more than a few reasons to be optimistic.

After almost three decades leading major engineering and infrastructure businesses across the UK energy sector, he saw a company that knows how to do the heavy lifting. It was also one that had already done much of the hard work, with a strategy taking shape and the in-house capabilities needed to deliver it. His focus now is on helping sharpen that vision and lead its execution across the Group.

“Nexos Group has built an exceptional foundation across its portfolio of companies - I joined at a genuinely exciting moment,” he told Business Bulletin.

“With a clear strategy to bring these businesses together and unite behind a common goal, we are primed for growth. Nexos Group has the track record, the talent and the momentum to be a major force in the energy, infrastructure and power sectors. I’m here to build on that.”

One group, not four brands

That strategy centres on a simple but significant ambition to transform a collection of successful businesses into a single, integrated group capable of supporting clients across the full lifecycle of complex energy and infrastructure projects.

Rather than operating as separate brands, Nexos Solutions, Powerstar, Kelton and OSL Consulting are being brought together behind one proposition, giving clients access to consulting, engineering, procurement, delivery and manufacturing expertise through a single partner.

"It's Nexos Group," McAteer said. "It's not just Nexos Solutions, though that is a crucial part. We've also got OSL Consulting, Powerstar and Kelton's gas metering, engineering and software development capability. It's about pulling that collective group together into one integrated delivery model."

That message will soon be reinforced visually as well as operationally, with Nexos Group putting the final touches on an imminent rebrand, giving the business a clearer platform to take its integrated offering to market.

"We have all the components of a strong offering already," McAteer said. "The rebrand gives us a platform to bring that together and present it to clients in a way that's cohesive and clear."

Oil and gas pedigree, power ambition

Nexos Group's story is rooted in its North Sea heritage, but its ambitions extend well beyond it. Oil and gas remains the backbone of the business, particularly late-life asset management, but it's that pedigree that gives the Group its platform to grow in power, a sector he sees as central to its future.

McAteer said: "Power is our future and it's where we see real growth. For us it is about bringing customers solutions that deliver not only energy security but resilience. We're already seeing that translate into opportunities; our work on a project for Ascension Island is a good example of the kind of power and off-grid contracts we're now winning."

Central to that is Powerstar, the Group's specialist in voltage optimisation, battery energy storage systems (BESS), transformers and off-grid solutions. "That's the future of where we're going, alongside the oil and gas pedigree that remains the backbone of what we do," McAteer said.

Beyond power, Nexos Group sees opportunity across infrastructure, chemicals and utilities, with network spend and industrial clusters around Humber and Teesside high on its target list.

Growth in the UK, then international

Nexos Group's growth strategy starts at home. "Our focus is on growth in the UK, and then internationally," McAteer said - building out from a UK footprint spanning four locations: Aberdeen, Hull, Sheffield and Bromsgrove.

International growth is already under way too and through Kelton, the Group has an established presence in the Middle East, a springboard for wider expansion. "Aberdeen is our home and our foundation, but our ambitions are international," McAteer said. "The skills and capabilities within this Group have relevance and are recognised well beyond the UK."

Strengthening the leadership team

Delivering any ambition requires leadership as well as strategy. Over recent months Nexos Group has strengthened its senior management team to support its next phase of growth.

Professor Steve Petrie has joined as Group Head of Business Development and Strategy, tasked with identifying new markets and shaping the Group's long-term direction.

"Nexos Group's breadth of capability provides a strong platform for growth," McAteer said adding that the appointment reflects the company's determination to invest in strategic capability alongside operational excellence. "Steve strengthens our leadership team as we grow our capabilities and expand into new markets."

The Group has also appointed

Jennifer Shanks as Group Head of Marketing & Communications and Solon Mardapittas as Chief Technology Officer.

Shanks joins after leading marketing and communications through significant transformation elsewhere in the energy sector. "The Group has a clear strategic direction and a strong purpose," she said, "and I'm excited to help enhance our brand and positioning, support market expansion and deliver the long-term strategy."

Mardapittas, meanwhile, brings more than a decade technical and consulting experience in the power sector having previously led the Powerstar business, strengthening the Group's ability to identify new opportunities and deepen its offering to clients.

Solving problems, not just selling services

For McAteer, success will not simply mean growth in revenue or headcount, rather whether clients increasingly view Nexos as the trusted long-term group partner capable of solving complex challenges across multiple sectors.

"We will succeed not by selling services, but by solving problems," he said. "The more clearly we can demonstrate that our success is tied to our clients' success, the stronger our position becomes."

That, for McAteer, is where Nexos Group's real value lies; in the stability and resilience it can offer clients navigating an increasingly complex energy landscape. "It's about energy security, and how we build that from the UK, for the UK," he said. "We've got the capability, the credibility, the facilities and the people to help clients invest with confidence and give them the resilience they need."

With a unified leadership team, a rebrand on the horizon and a growth strategy that starts in the UK and reaches into international markets, Nexos Group is positioning itself for its next stage of evolution. Building on its North Sea heritage, it is well on the way to creating a business designed for the changing demands of the global energy and industrial economy.

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Visitors travelling overnight from London on one of the world's most famous railway services can now seamlessly continue their journey to more than 200 destinations across Scotland, unlocking some of the country's most remote, breathtaking coastlines, Highland landscapes and island communities through a new partnership between Caledonian Sleeper and Scottish Citylink.

Guests stepping off the Caledonian Sleeper can continue their journey by coach to thousands of miles of onward travel, reaching bustling cities, remote Highland communities, dazzling coastlines and island gateways - all without needing a car.

The partnership strengthens Scotland's sustainable tourism offering by offering easy connections to some of the country's most iconic, as well as lesser-known, destinations entirely by public transport.

As part of the partnership, Caledonian Sleeper guests will benefit from a discount on Scottish Citylink single and return fares, making it easier and more affordable to explore Scotland beyond the rail network. In return, Scottish Citylink customers will have access to discounted Caledonian Sleeper train tickets, creating a seamless and great-value travel experience that connects destinations across Scotland by coach and rail.

Steven Marshall, Head of Sales and Marketing at Caledonian Sleeper, said: "Through our partnership with Scottish Citylink, your journey doesn't end at the station - it opens the door to exploring even more of Scotland's spectacular landscapes, towns and attractions. "It's about creating one seamless journey that helps people experience more of Scotland in a simple, sustainable way."

The launch marks the beginning of a wider collaboration between the two operators, with plans to inspire future adventures through competitions, destination content and trip inspiration.

TotalEnergies acquires Shell's renewables business and sells a 50% stake in a portfolio of developed assets to KKR

TotalEnergies has signed an agreement with Shell to acquire its entire onshore renewables business in Europe, including 500 MW of solar and wind assets in operation or under construction, mainly located in Italy and the Netherlands, and a 3.5 GW pipeline of solar, wind and battery storage projects in Italy, the United Kingdom and Spain.

This asset portfolio will be wholly owned by TotalEnergies upon completion of the transaction, which is expected by the end of 2026 and remains subject to approval by the relevant authorities.

This transaction complements TotalEnergies' power generation activities in these four key markets for the deployment of its Integrated Power strategy in Europe, in particular its European renewables asset portfolio, which amounts to nearly 10 GW of gross installed

capacity or capacity under construction and 27 GW under development.

Confirming its ability to execute partial farm-downs year after year in line with its renewables business model, TotalEnergies has signed an agreement with an insurance account managed by KKR, a leading global investment firm, for the sale of a 50% stake in a 1.2 GW onshore solar and wind asset portfolio in Europe. The portfolio's enterprise value amounts to €1.8 billion.

The transaction covers a portfolio of assets in Germany, Spain, France and Poland. The electricity produced by these assets is already sold to third parties or will be marketed by TotalEnergies.

TotalEnergies will retain a 50% stake in the assets and continue to operate them after completion of the transaction, which is expected in 2026 and subject to customary conditions.



WORDS OF ADVICE



Huwel Phillips

Head of Solution Architecture, Solab IT Services

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

We help businesses align and accelerate their goals through IT and digital transformation. Over the past 35 years, we've helped improve our client's businesses through great tech and great people. From strategy and core support to security, we simplify technology, so it works for the business, not against it.

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

I have a collaborative and outcome-driven management

style. I give people the clarity and direction they need, but also the autonomy to take ownership of their work. Development is something I focus heavily on, making sure the team understands what they're doing, but why it matters to the broader business. That tends to build both accountability and engagement, which has worked well for us as we grow as a business.

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

One of the biggest challenges has been helping businesses shift away from legacy thinking around IT. Many organisations still see IT as a cost centre rather than a strategic enabler.

The way we've tackled that is by focusing conversations on business outcomes rather than technology itself. Once you show how IT can reduce risk, improve efficiency, or support growth, it becomes a much easier conversation.

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

Focus on outcomes, not activity. It's easy to get busy, but the real value comes from delivering meaningful results. That mindset has helped me stay focused on what actually drives progress for both the business and our clients.

MDL supports Saipem cable lay in the Med

Maritime Developments Ltd (MDL) has supported Saipem's flexlay campaign in the deepwater Bouri field in the Mediterranean.

A complete MDL back-deck spread, consisting of a Generation 1 Reel Drive System, 2-track tensioner, an overboarding chute as well as a spooler and deck winches, was used for the installation of fibre optic cables and subsea isolation valve umbilicals off the Construction Support Vessel (CSV) Normand Sentinel.

Besides the enabling equipment, MDL also provided engineering services for vessel mobilisation, including sea-fastening design as well as manufacture of bespoke grillages and weld plates.

The project was part of the Bouri Gas Utilisation Project, aiming to recover and process gas from the Bouri oil field to reduce environmental emissions, boost natural gas production and improve supply to the European market via the Greenstream pipeline.

Ramsay Keay, MDL Project Director, said: "It's genuinely rewarding to see our partnership with Saipem thrive and continue to grow - not only in the Mediterranean, but across so many global projects.

"This latest collaboration is proof that MDL is so much more than an equipment supplier. By bringing together



our Integrated Project Services, we're able to deliver tailored solutions and real added value, from engineering expertise to hands-on support throughout mobilisation and installation.

"That ability to tailor our support to each scope is what unlocks efficiencies and helps progress projects at pace. I'm proud of what our teams have achieved and I look forward to the next opportunity to work with Saipem, building on our successes and tackling new challenges together."



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the MEMBER MEET the



Paul O'Neill

Business Development Manager
Panda Rosa Metals Limited

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Panda Rosa Metals is a family-run metal recycling business serving Angus and the North-east of Scotland, with two local sites in

Aberdeen handling ferrous and non-ferrous metals for commercial, industrial, trade and public customers. The company has been trading for over 60 years.

Who are your customers?

Panda Rosa Metals works with businesses and organisations across Angus and the North-east of Scotland, providing practical recycling support for a wide range of metal types, project sizes and operating environments. From routine scrap collections to large industrial material flows, our team supports sectors that rely on reliable collections, accurate grading, efficient processing and clear documentation. Our customers range from construction and demolition, oil, gas and decommissioning, engineering and manufacturing, agricultural and rural businesses, trades and public customers and marine and fisheries.

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

The current economic uncertainty is the biggest concern for ours and many other businesses in the region right now especially in the oil, gas, decommissioning, engineering and manufacturing sectors. However, as we have such a diversity of clients, we remain the one recycling partner for different working environments and as the only importer and exporter of scrap metal we are well placed to continue to grow.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Be active and be seen. The Chamber and other groups offer many opportunities for networking throughout the North-east. Use these platforms as there is nothing better than getting out and about meeting new and existing clients at many conferences available.



Colin Manson

CEO
Proteus

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

Proteus helps engineering consultancies take control of their projects. Instead of juggling spreadsheets and disconnected systems, everything from bid decisions and proposal writing to project controls and delivery lives in

one place. This helps teams work smarter, reduce risk and boost profitability.

Who are your customers?

Our customers are engineering consultancies, predominantly in the energy sector. Their project teams juggle bids, delivery and commercial risk every day. They want to streamline their operations, gain clarity across their projects and make confident decisions that help grow their business.

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

The engineering industry still relies heavily on spreadsheets, it's familiar and comfortable but inefficient and risky. The opportunity is helping consultancies modernise how they work, giving leaders real-time visibility from bid to delivery, better decision-making and stronger margins.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Don't be afraid to challenge "the way it's always been done", small changes in how you manage work can have a big impact on performance and growth. Question old habits, explore new tools and embrace smarter processes. Even minor changes can streamline operations and boost profitability.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

Business is built on relationships. The Chamber brings ambitious people together, creating conversations that lead to partnerships, collaboration and new opportunities that wouldn't happen otherwise.

MEMBER MEET *the* ME



Nikki Walters
Partnerships Manager
VisitAberdeenshire

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

VisitAberdeenshire has been the driving force behind the growth of the North-east visitor economy since it was formed in 2016. Recognised in 2024 as the UK's leading destination

organisation covering both the city and shire, our job is to raise the profile of our wonderful region to stimulate demand for visits and to support our fantastic local tourism businesses to meet those demands.

Who are your customers?

Our customers cover a range of audiences including leisure visitors, conference delegates, tourism industry partners, travel trade, media and local stakeholders. Our overall aim is to have "more visitors who stay longer, spend more, explore deeper and leave happier". Of course, much of what we do benefits us locals who love to call the region home too.

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

VisitAberdeenshire is a not-for-profit destination management organisation, core funded by Opportunity North East,

Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council who are committed to the growth of our visitor economy. We are actively working to diversify our funding base through corporate partnerships that enhance our ability to market the region, support tourism businesses, and deliver strategic initiatives all whilst delivering value for our partners.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

This is your region, and our website offers the inside track of what's happening. Use it as your go-to guide for what's on this weekend, seasonal round ups, impressing your visitors, rainy day plans, school holiday ideas and so much more. Enjoy being explorers, proud advocates and confident hosts.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

We are very lucky to have an extremely engaged, dynamic and indeed award-winning Chamber here in the North-east.



Samantha Wallace
Managing Director
QA Business Travel

Give us the elevator pitch for your business.

At QA, relationships are at the heart of everything we do. Clients have direct access to experienced travel professionals who understand their business and act as an extension of their team. As an independent travel management company we combine innovative technology and

experienced travel professionals to help organisations arrange travel efficiently, safely and cost-effectively around the globe.

So, who is your typical customer?

We support organisations of all sizes across the UK and internationally, particularly within energy, engineering, marine, professional services and corporate sectors. Our clients value expert guidance, responsive service and tailored travel solutions that help their people travel with confidence.

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

The pace of change across travel technology presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Embracing AI, automation and new booking solutions allows us to enhance, not replace, the human expertise that makes great travel management possible. By automating routine tasks, our teams can focus on delivering better

service, stronger client relationships, and more strategic support, which enhances the personalised service and expertise that our clients rely on.

What is your word of advice for fellow Chamber members?

Build genuine relationships and focus on long-term value rather than short-term gains. The strongest partnerships are founded on trust, collaboration and a willingness to support one another through challenges as well as opportunities.

What is the best thing about being a Chamber member?

The Chamber has an amazing, supportive team and provides an invaluable platform to connect with like-minded businesses, share knowledge and raise our profile within the region. It creates opportunities and supports a thriving, innovative business community across the North-east.

Jbs: Global Growth Built on Innovation and Engineering Expertise

Engineering firm Jbs has delivered strong year-on-year growth - driven by international work across multiple sectors.

The company's subsea excavation systems are supporting offshore wind, telecoms and decommissioning projects around the world, while its blast containment and screw conveyor systems are increasingly busy with large project awards both in the energy and space sectors.

Jbs operates across four specialist divisions: Sea Axe subsea excavation, blast containment, screw conveyors and fabrication. Together, they have built the company's reputation for solving engineering challenges for clients all around the world.



70%

Around 70% of revenue is now generated overseas.

Jo McIntosh, Director at Jbs, said: "The past 18 months have been transformative for us. International demand has driven significant growth, and we've been proud to support clients on some genuinely complex projects – from the North Sea to the Middle East, Europe and Asia. It's a real endorsement of the team's capability and the strength of our technology and service offering."

Sea Axe: Subsea Excavation for Energy Infrastructure

At the heart of much of this growth is Sea Axe, Jbs's patented Controlled Flow Excavation (CFE) system, designed and manufactured in-house at the company's Peterhead headquarters. Sea Axe uses controlled seawater flow – with auxiliary jetting capability for harder ground conditions – to safely excavate the seabed around live cables and pipelines, critical infrastructure for both oil and gas, telecoms and renewable energy projects.

The system has recently completed its first full turnkey scope in the Southern North Sea, supporting sand wave correction and cable reburial works as part of a submarine cable repair project. A Jbs team of 11 delivered the operation, which for the first time saw TSS350 survey equipment mounted directly onto the Sea Axe unit and alongside Tritech Gemini sonar, providing the client with clear, real-time verification of burial depth throughout excavation and post-survey.

Sea Axe has also secured multiple contracts in Europe and Asia for both new and repeat clients.

Peterhead and the North Sea

Despite its global reach, Jbs remains firmly rooted in the North-east. The firm's operational base in Peterhead houses five dedicated workshops covering design, manufacture and testing, and the company continues to deliver projects close to home – including mobilising a Sea Axe system for subsea excavation work off the coast of the Buchan town itself for a valued repeat client, supporting key infrastructure for the region.

Jo said: "There's something special about mobilising a system just off our own doorstep. Whether we're working in the North Sea, the Middle East, or Asia, the standards and precision we apply are exactly the same. That consistency, alongside our fantastic offshore teams, is what keeps clients coming back to us."

Protecting People and Assets

The firm's blast containment division continues to expand, protecting personnel and equipment during pressure release, testing and intervention work across high-risk industrial and offshore environments – including support for the defence sector and naval fleets and, increasingly, the space sector. Jbs engineers recently travelled to Los Angeles to carry out a site survey for a client developing next-generation space stations, extending a bespoke blast containment solution already in place – a striking example of how far the company's reach now extends beyond its North Sea roots.

Elsewhere, the value of secondary containment was underlined when a

large industrial fan suffered catastrophic failure, its impeller shattering into steel sections that breached the casing and scattered fragments across the site. In response, Jbs designed, manufactured and installed a blast containment wrap to reinforce the casing, engineered to contain high-energy debris. With surface temperatures on site reaching 300°C, its Firemax® high-temperature material was integrated into the assembly, combining thermal durability with impact resistance.

Jbs has recently been selected as the sole provider of blast containment solutions for a major programme supporting the next generation of low-carbon energy infrastructure and strengthening long-term energy security.

Built for Hazardous Environments

Jbs was awarded a contract to design, manufacture and deliver a divalent salt collection and transportation system for an offshore FPSO. The project was developed from an initial 3D concept through detailed engineering and design calculations, culminating in full-scale manufacture and assembly.

The system incorporates three screw conveyor trains, complete with skip frames and a fully integrated

automation package. Manufacture and assembly took place at the Jbs facility, where client representatives visited to complete the factory acceptance test. The equipment was then transported to the client's FPSO in Turkey. The installation and commissioning phase is due to be carried out by the Jbs offshore installation team, ensuring the system is fully operational and ready for service on schedule.



"We're continuing to invest in our people, our technology and the way we deliver for clients."

As a leading manufacturer of screw conveyor systems, Jbs remains committed to developing innovative solutions and supporting its extensive installed base. Recent project successes have been achieved across Brazil, USA, Suriname, Angola, Norway, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, the Netherlands and the UK.

Fabrication Across Multiple Sectors

The Jbs fabrication team has, meanwhile, delivered bespoke offshore structures, marine refurbishment scopes and platform installations, while the business continues to diversify beyond oil and gas - taking on projects in sectors ranging from food and drink to sport, including a recently secured contract to design and build a media gantry for a Scottish football club.

Investing in the Future

That growth is underpinned by continued investment in people and technology. Jbs is an active partner in the Peterhead Academy Learning Partnership, with more than 60% of its team having started their careers through the company's apprenticeship scheme - a pipeline of engineering talent the firm sees as essential to sustaining its international ambitions.

Jo added: "We're proud of where Jbs has got to, but there's plenty more ahead. We're continuing to invest in our people, our technology and the way we deliver for clients - particularly across the energy sector, where the opportunities remain significant."

For more information, visit:
www.wearejbs.com



Jbs



Krona Subsea conducts world-first propeller research and lands major connector orders

Aberdeen-headquartered Krona Subsea has reported a strong start to 2026.

With significant advances in research and development coupled with commercial success, the subsea electronics and connectivity expert is consolidating its reputation as a leading provider of innovative subsea systems.

In collaboration with a world-renowned maritime research organisation, Krona has conducted industry-leading research on propeller efficiency. By integrating its pinless connector technology, Maelstrom, into rotating equipment, it has developed a low-power, high-bandwidth data transfer solution for ship propellers. This marks the first study of its kind on propeller efficiency with environmental benefits. The smart propellers which can report real-time scenarios also optimise fuel consumption and mitigate underwater noise.

In addition to maritime research, Krona has also reported high value orders this financial year from clients in offshore energy and defence for its unique, patented WiSub pinless subsea connector technology.

These orders reinforce confidence in Krona Subsea's proprietary technology for reliable subsea power and data transfer in the world's harshest environments.

Reflecting on the company's growing success, Managing Director, Nigel Money, said: "We're pleased to report a period of sustained growth for our R&D initiatives and commercial success alike. These developments only



strengthen our position as an industry-leading developer of subsea technology with proven operational efficiency in extreme environments.

"As we look ahead, we are building a strong foundation for future opportunities as the adoption of our technology continues to accelerate."

Krona Subsea continues to lead the way in next generation subsea technology across a variety of sectors, including offshore energy, defence and research. Its WiSub pinless connectors are redefining and elevating industry standards, creating new possibilities for the safe and reliable transfer of power and data underwater.

Free business support clinics to help new ideas take shape on Union Street



Business Gateway is teaming up with Aberdeen City Council and Our Union Street to bring pop-up support to the city centre, making it easier for current and potential business owners to access advice where it is needed.

The clinics will offer visible support and guidance on anything related to developing a business, idea or business potential, helping to reduce barriers to entry for people who are ready to explore new opportunities on Union Street.

Aberdeen City Council Co-Leader Councillor Christian Allard said: "By working with Business Gateway and

Our Union Street, we are making free business support more visible and accessible for local people who want to take their first step, grow their idea, or explore how they could play a part in the future of Union Street."

Aberdeen City Council Co-Leader Councillor Ian Yuill said: "Union Street's transformation is about more than improving buildings. It is also about supporting the businesses, entrepreneurs, and ideas that will help bring those spaces back into use. I encourage anyone with a business idea to take this opportunity to speak to one of Business Gateways advisors."

The initiative complements the Union Street Empty Shops Grant Scheme, which supports eligible internal works in vacant shops to help new businesses and tenants get started. Together, the support demonstrates a joined-up approach to city centre regeneration by connecting advice, opportunity and investment.

The clinics are free to attend and are designed to provide practical, accessible support for people at different stages of their business journey. Appointments can be booked between 10am and 4pm on the following dates:

- 16th September 2026
- 21st October 2026

To book a slot please email aberdeen@bgateway.com

Aberdeen Science Centre renews partnership with Equinor for lucky seventh year

Aberdeen Science Centre has extended its partnership with Equinor, marking seven years of collaboration towards inspiring the next generation of scientists, engineers and innovators.

As a Silver Partner, Equinor will support Aberdeen Science Centre to fund the development of new educational programmes, exhibits and learning resources, alongside its ongoing school and community engagement sessions for children and young adults across the North-east of Scotland and beyond.

Funding from Equinor's sponsorship will also be used to maintain and enhance the centre's current exhibitions and activities.

Over the last seven years, Aberdeen Science Centre and Equinor have collaborated on a range of different activities, including boosting young people's confidence with coding and robotics, community-focused events at the centre and a partnership with Norway's Vitenfabrikken (The Science Factory) focused on developing a range of STEM projects and educational tools.

Steph McCann, head of fundraising at Aberdeen Science Centre, said: "It is an honour for Aberdeen Science Centre to continue our long-standing partnership with Equinor. Seven years of support is a remarkable demonstration of

Equinor's commitment to STEM education and to inspiring young people to consider careers in the energy and science sectors, which are so important to the North-east of Scotland.

"As a registered charity, the support of our corporate partners and sponsors is essential to allowing us to continue creating memorable experiences for families, schools and communities across the region. We are hugely grateful for Equinor's continued investment in that work and all that we do."

Nigel Gamblin, Vice President Asset Management at Equinor, said: "Aberdeen Science Centre plays an important role in making STEM accessible and engaging for children, young people and families across the North-east of Scotland. We are proud to continue our partnership for a seventh year and support programmes that build confidence, curiosity and digital skills through hands-on learning. Partnerships like this help more young people discover science and technology and the opportunities they can create."

Launched in March 2026, Aberdeen Science Centre's suite of corporate sponsorship packages allow companies to align their own work and values with activities at the centre and out in the community.



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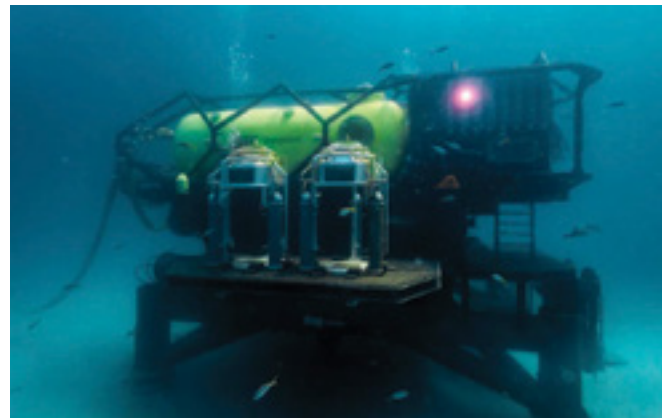
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Unique Group delivers subsea engineering for America's first open-ocean human habitat in four decades



Unique Group, global leaders in subsea technologies and engineering, has successfully delivered the engineering, survey and infrastructure systems supporting Vanguard, the first open-ocean subsea human habitat deployed in United States waters in more than 40 years.

Developed by ocean engineering firm DEEP and installed on the seabed at Tennessee Reef within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, Vanguard is designed to enable crews of up to four aquanauts to live and work underwater during extended scientific and operational missions.

The landmark project presented a complex subsea engineering challenge, creating infrastructure capable of supporting long-duration human habitation while operating safely within a protected marine environment and withstanding extreme weather conditions over a 20-year design life.

Unique Group was responsible for delivering the engineering lifecycle of the habitat's supporting infrastructure, spanning geophysical and geotechnical site investigations, structural and foundation engineering, fabrication, installation support and life-support systems integration.

The company carried out detailed geophysical and geotechnical surveys across multiple candidate locations, including bathymetric mapping, sub-bottom profiling, seabed sampling and laboratory testing. The survey data enabled the team to identify and validate a suitable installation site based on seabed characteristics, slope stability, environmental sensitivity and operational requirements. A comprehensive metocean assessment, including extreme storm and cyclonic modelling, established the environmental design basis for the project, defining the structural load cases required to ensure long-term integrity under Category 5 hurricane conditions.

At the centre of the project is Vanguard's engineered seabed foundation system, designed by Unique Group to meet DNV subsea standards. The gravity-base foundation combines ballast and drilled tethered piles to provide long-term stability throughout the habitat's operational life. Unique Group also engineered the habitat interface structure, managed fabrication in Louisiana, and supported construction and installation activities.

In addition to the structural works, Unique Group designed and supplied integrated fluid and gas control panels, emergency life-support provisions (part of the habitat's diver rescue strategy), safety refuges, the mooring spread and surface buoy umbilical. The company also delivered the bespoke interior fit-out, including furniture designed specifically for extended subsea occupancy.

Dave Thompson, Group Engineering Director at Unique Group, said: "A subsea habitat is the kind of project an engineer might see once in a career. We had to design something that protects people at depth, survives a Category 5 hurricane, lasts 20 years, and earns DNV certification, all on a timeline most would call impossible. What made it work was our willingness to take on whatever the project needed, from the seabed survey to the foundation to the fit-out, and to solve problems in real time with one integrated team across four countries. We're proud to have developed the infrastructure that enables DEEP to focus on advancing underwater science and exploration."

For DEEP, Vanguard provides a platform to advance coral reef restoration, long-term environmental monitoring, marine science, human performance research and future underwater operations. For the wider offshore industry, the project demonstrates how integrated engineering disciplines can enable safe, long-duration human presence beneath the ocean surface.

Norman Smith, Chief Technology Officer at DEEP, added: "Vanguard demanded engineering that had to perform first time, at depth. Unique Group brought the survey; structural and life-support expertise needed to match that ambition, together with the collaborative approach required to solve complex engineering challenges as the project evolved. Their contribution has been instrumental in making Vanguard a reality."

The Vanguard project demonstrates the expanding role of integrated subsea engineering beyond traditional offshore applications, supporting emerging sectors including marine science, environmental monitoring and next-generation underwater infrastructure.

Partners on the Vanguard project include Bastion Technologies, Triton Submarines and Resolve Marine.

What the North-east can teach us about building a sustainable energy future

Energy transition is often discussed in terms of climate targets and decarbonisation. But for Aberdeen and the North-east of Scotland, the challenge is broader than that. It is about ensuring the future energy system remains available, accessible, affordable and acceptable, the “4As” increasingly recognised as essential to delivering a successful transition.

For this region, these principles are directly linked to jobs, investment, supply chains and long-term economic resilience.

Our long-running Energy Transition Survey has tracked industry sentiment and business conditions since 2004, providing one of the UK's most established datasets on the evolving offshore and low-carbon energy landscape. Over more than two decades, the survey has become an important source of intelligence for businesses, investors, policymakers and government alike providing valuable insight into how the North Sea energy industry is evolving and where businesses see both risks and opportunities.

The latest findings continue to show a sector navigating uncertainty. While businesses remain committed to diversification and lower-carbon opportunities, confidence is being impacted by concerns around fiscal instability, policy uncertainty and investment conditions. At the same time, the data reinforces the continuing importance of the North Sea to the UK economy and energy system.

Availability

Energy availability remains fundamental to economic stability and energy security. For many businesses across the North-east, the transition is not viewed as an “either/or” debate between oil and gas and renewables. Instead, it is seen as a long-term evolution where existing domestic production supports the development of offshore wind, hydrogen and carbon capture.

Research from AGCC's Energy Transition work consistently shows businesses actively diversifying, with many firms already generating increasing levels of revenue from renewable and low-carbon activity.

Accessibility

The transition must also be accessible not only in terms of infrastructure, but through access to investment, skills and market opportunity.

The North-east has world-leading offshore expertise and supply chain capability, but businesses continue to highlight barriers including planning delays, regulatory complexity and grid constraints. Without long-term policy clarity, companies face challenges in making investment decisions around recruitment, reskilling and expansion.

Affordability

Affordability is equally critical. A transition that increases costs or weakens competitiveness risks undermining both business confidence and public support. AGCC research repeatedly highlights concerns around taxation, rising operating costs and uncertainty affecting investor confidence across the energy sector.

For energy-intensive businesses and SMEs across the region, competitively priced and reliable energy remains essential to long-term sustainability.

Acceptability

Perhaps most importantly, transition must be acceptable to the communities and industries expected to deliver it.

The North-east has built decades of economic strength around the energy sector, supporting thousands of jobs directly and indirectly. As a result, the social and economic impacts of transition are significant and must be properly understood.

This is where research plays a vital role.

Data helps move the conversation beyond rhetoric and towards evidence-based decision-making. It allows businesses, investors and policymakers to understand how changes in policy, investment and market conditions are affecting the region in practice.

Importantly, it also helps measure wider economic and social impact from employment and supply chains to investment confidence and regional resilience.

This approach is not new for the Chamber. Through long-term evaluation work linked to major regional events, economic surveys and sector analysis, AGCC has consistently demonstrated the value of robust insight in supporting better strategic decisions across the North-east economy.

As the UK navigates one of the most significant industrial transitions in its modern history, the North-east remains central to that journey, not only because of its energy heritage but because of its capability to shape what comes next.

The challenge now is ensuring transition is not only ambitious but also available, accessible, affordable and acceptable.

Because ultimately, the success of energy transition will not be measured solely by emissions targets but by whether it delivers long-term economic resilience, energy security and sustainable growth for the communities expected to power it.



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

samira.heshmatzadeh@agcc.co.uk

Eztek Rentals Reduce Costs, Without Compromise

Companies in the global energy industry increasingly call for the highest quality equipment without the associated capital expenditure. They also require flexibility, comprehensive service and backup support. Eztek Limited has a dedicated Rental and Calibration Division designed to meet these demands.

Eztek Limited, designer and manufacturer of electronic instrumentation for the global energy industry, has focused on building their rental fleet and services since 2015. They currently maintain a wide range of fully packaged rental systems that are ready for mobilisation at short notice, enabling rapid response to client requirements. All operations are fully supported by Eztek's experienced team, led by Rental and Calibration Manager Michael Stephen.

"We're proud to offer a complete workshop to worksite solution," says Michael. "We offer maintenance, calibration, training and backup support through the complete rental period and we consistently receive excellent feedback about our level of support."

Alongside their ongoing day-to-day rental operations, Eztek has TallyBook Shutdown Systems on long-term rental with North Sea Operators.



Eztek's Zone 1 Safeeye Camera Systems are also frequently on-hire, complementing the TallyBook range of hazardous area loggers. The cameras are typically positioned at key areas of operations, providing real-time visibility to enhance safety and improve efficiency.

Eztek continues to invest in the manufacture of new equipment, the expansion of inventory of associated ancillaries, and the development of innovative applications for their systems to support their ethos of improving safety, increasing efficiency, and reducing client operational costs.

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Just one year after arriving in Aberdeen from Ukraine, Albyn School pupil Myroslav Pohasii is celebrating outstanding Qualifications Scotland exam results and a place at the University of Glasgow, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter after years of disruption to his education.

Myroslav, who joined Albyn in September 2025, achieved four A grades and one B in his examinations, including A grades in National 5 English, Advanced Higher Maths, Higher Economics and Higher Computing, alongside a B in Higher Physics.

The results mean he has met the conditions of his university offer and will be studying Mathematics and Computing at the University of Glasgow.

Originally from Ukraine, Myroslav came to Scotland through a sponsorship programme, seeking the opportunity to complete his education in a safe and stable environment while pursuing his ambition of studying at a British university.

"I felt really excited when I opened my results," said Myroslav. "I got accepted into the university I really wanted to go to, which is Glasgow. I was nervous beforehand, but I was also confident because I knew I had put the effort in."

For Myroslav, one of his proudest achievements was earning an A in Higher Economics, despite never having studied the subject before arriving in Scotland.

"I struggled in the first term because economics was completely new to me. In Ukraine I had studied economic geography, but never economics as a separate subject. By the second term I had gained more confidence, prepared really well for the exam and it worked out."

Having spent much of his secondary education learning online through the COVID-19 pandemic and later amid the ongoing war in Ukraine, returning to classroom learning was a significant change.

"From eighth grade onwards in Ukraine I studied online. I really missed being in a classroom, interacting with other

students and teachers. Learning in person made a huge difference. It was also much easier to make friends."

Myroslav says the welcoming community at Albyn played a huge part in helping him settle into life in Scotland.

He also credits his host family, who sponsored him throughout the year, for making his journey possible.

"I plan to celebrate with my sponsors because they supported me throughout the whole year. Without them, I wouldn't have had this opportunity."

Reflecting on his experience of studying in Scotland, Myroslav said he has valued not only the education itself but also the chance to immerse himself in British life and culture.

"I've improved my English-speaking skills, experienced British culture and learned about the traditions and customs here. Studying at a British school has helped me understand how university life will be, and I really like the Scottish education system because students can focus on the subjects that will help them in the future. It's not like this in Ukraine."

Looking ahead, Myroslav hopes his degree will open doors to international opportunities, with ambitions to work in computing and perhaps even launch his own technology start-up one day.

Lynda Strachan, Deputy Head (Learning & Teaching) said: "Myroslav's story is one of determination, resilience and gratitude. In just one year, he has adapted to a new country, a new education system and a new language, while achieving outstanding academic success. He has embraced every opportunity available to him with humility and dedication, and his achievements are richly deserved. We are incredibly proud of everything he has accomplished during his time at Albyn and wish him every success as he begins this exciting next chapter at the University of Glasgow."

Everyone at Albyn School congratulates Myroslav on his exceptional achievements and wishes him every success for the future.



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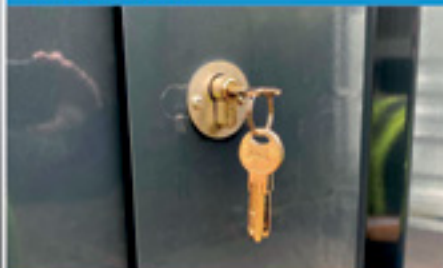
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Offshore Europe 2027: Engineering the Future of Offshore Energy



When Offshore Europe returns to Aberdeen in September 2027, it will do so with a renewed purpose: to better reflect the needs of today's offshore energy industry and create greater value for the companies, professionals and decision-makers who depend on it.

The offshore energy landscape has changed significantly. Today's North Sea encompasses oil and gas, offshore wind, carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, electrification, digitalisation, artificial intelligence and decommissioning. Increasingly, these sectors are sharing infrastructure, skills and supply chains, creating a truly integrated offshore energy ecosystem. Offshore Europe 2027 is being designed to reflect that reality.

At the heart of the sector is engineering. Whether delivering energy security, advancing decarbonisation, extending asset life, improving operational performance or enabling large-scale decommissioning programmes, engineering remains the point where strategy becomes delivery. Offshore Europe aims to be the platform where these conversations happen, bringing together operators, developers, engineering leaders, procurement specialists and technology innovators from across the energy value chain.

More importantly, Offshore Europe

is evolving into a place where organisations can make better decisions and manage risk more effectively. Across every energy sector, the challenge facing business leaders is not a lack of information but understanding which solutions have been proven to work in real-world operating environments. Through peer-reviewed technical content, industry case studies, operator-led discussions and direct access to subject matter experts, Offshore Europe helps companies learn from the experiences of others, evaluate emerging technologies and gain the confidence needed to move projects forward.

In an increasingly complex investment environment, better decisions are often the result of better conversations. By bringing together those responsible for designing, operating, maintaining and transforming offshore energy assets, Offshore Europe creates opportunities for knowledge sharing that can reduce uncertainty, improve project outcomes and accelerate innovation across the industry.

The event's direction includes practical technical content and industry-led development. New and enhanced features will include an expanded Digital Zone, Offshore Wind Hub, North Sea Futures

Theatre, dedicated decommissioning content and an enhanced technical programme designed to address the industry's most pressing challenges and opportunities. Every feature has been developed to support informed decision-making and provide practical insight that delegates can take back into their organisations.

Importantly, Offshore Europe 2027 is being built with industry, for industry. Its Executive Committee includes representatives from operators, service companies, industry bodies and academia, ensuring the event remains aligned with the needs of the sector it serves.

As a cornerstone event for Aberdeen and the wider North Sea energy community, Offshore Europe continues to deliver significant economic impact, international visibility and opportunities for industry growth. In 2027, its ambition is clear: to be the place where the offshore energy industry comes together to share knowledge, build confidence, manage risk and make better decisions about the future of energy.



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As Airpac Rentals celebrates 50 years in business, the company is proud of what it has achieved while remaining firmly focused on what lies ahead.

Over the past five decades, the energy industry has evolved significantly – and Airpac Rentals has evolved with it. Investment in new technologies, expansion of its global fleet and strengthened operations in key regions have all supported a continued focus on one thing: delivering reliable compressed air, steam and nitrogen solutions that help customers succeed.

Managing Director Haydn Davies believes that adaptability will remain key in the years ahead. While the energy landscape continues to evolve, Airpac Rentals' commitment remains the same. Alongside its established work within traditional energy markets, the company is embracing opportunities in geothermal, renewables and other emerging sectors. By continuing to invest in its people, equipment and smarter ways of working, Airpac Rentals is ensuring it is ready for the future.

For Haydn, however, it is the people behind the business who remain its greatest strength and truly set Airpac Rentals apart. Their technical expertise, commitment and dedication have helped build trusted customer relationships over five decades.



As Airpac Rentals marks this milestone, the focus is not simply on celebrating its past, but on building on 50 years of experience to support the projects and industries of the future.

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BUSINESS LESSONS I'VE LEARNED



Craig Watson
Operations Manager
Macgregor

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

If I'm being honest, I am where I am today because of my Wife. There is incredible strength in having someone in your life who provides a constant source of encouragement and unfiltered advice. We all navigate moments of imposter syndrome; having someone by your side who silences that noise, stops you from overthinking, and drives you to do what's right is life-changing. She doesn't just support my perspective, she clarifies it.

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

My military training taught me that the highest-performing teams aren't built on rigid hierarchies, but on trust. People follow a boss because they have to, but they'll follow a leader because they want to. Titles get you compliance; genuine empathy gets you commitment.

I've come to see that understanding different perspectives and the unique ways people think is crucial, not just to being a successful leader, but to being a good person. When you move past a 'one-size-fits-all' mindset and learn what truly motivates someone, you stop managing and start empowering. Who wouldn't want to develop that kind of deep, genuine empathy?

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

I've found that honesty, even when the news is bad, is infinitely more valuable than a comfortable lie. I think the worst thing we all see in business is people making promises to win work, hoping to work out the details later. I'd much rather have a difficult conversation up front than a broken relationship later. When people know that your 'yes' is absolute and your 'no' is backed by a real reason, you develop a level of trust that makes you a far more effective partner.

What's been your proudest career achievement to date?

I am incredibly proud of the team we are building at MacGregor UK. As head of Operations, my focus has been on more than just increasing our headcount; it's been about increasing our perspective. We've welcomed new colleagues from the military, shipyards, and the energy sector, creating a true wealth of experience. This diversity of thought is our greatest asset, ensuring we never settle for 'the way it's always been done' but instead lead with fresh, collective insight.

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

Doing business in North East Scotland is a test of resilience as we navigate a transition complicated by a narrative

that unfairly vilifies Oil and Gas. Critics often overlook a fundamental reality: hydrocarbons are essential building blocks for modern life, providing raw materials for everything from life-saving medicines to high-tech manufacturing.

Despite successive Governments lacking a coherent long-term strategy for the North-East, our strength lies in our people. We have cultivated an international wealth of talent - a global melting pot solving the world's most complex challenges. The collective grit of the North-East, and community spirit will define our next chapter.

What was your first job?

When I was 14, I delivered the Sunday papers in my village and spent all my wages on bacon rolls.

Who or what inspires you most?

I am inspired by my three Spaniels every day. We could all learn from a dog's priorities.

What word or phrase in business-speak exasperates you?

The term "Staff" should be retired - it is old-fashioned and hierarchical in my experience.

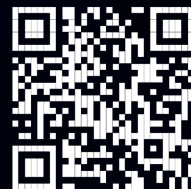
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Aurora Energy Services targets £100million turnover for rapidly expanding Integrated Services group



Aurora Energy Services CEO Doug Duguid (standing) with Kane Winton, Managing Director of the newly expanded Integrated Services division.

Aurora Energy Services is targeting £100million in turnover as it restructures its operations to meet growing demand across energy and infrastructure sectors.

The move sees a number of Aurora's core business lines and approximately 400 staff come under one leadership structure and is a response to client demand for more streamlined integrated services.

Under the changes, Kane Winton, who originally joined Aurora tasked with building an engineering and project management division targeting around £4million in annual turnover, now becomes Managing Director of the Integrated Services division.

That division is expected to account for around £50million of Aurora's UK business this year and is targeting £100million turnover by 2028.

The expanded division brings together fabrication, specialist welding, engineering, procurement, construction and EPC delivery capability, giving Aurora a more joined-up structure for the delivery of larger and more complex projects.

Aurora's engineering and fabrication facility at Huntly will become a core part of Integrated Services division - supporting project delivery - and is expected to add to headcount in the next 12-18 months.

Winton said: "The restructuring of our business model and the new role I have taken on is a direct consequence of the rapid growth Aurora has enjoyed in the last year and it will provide more cohesion in project delivery

which, along with safety, is a main driver for our clients."

"Current market conditions - including the impact of the windfall tax and wider uncertainty in the oil and gas sector - are pushing operators toward suppliers that are cost-effective, responsive and leaner, and Aurora's spread across multiple energy sectors is appealing to clients," he added.

From a standing start in late 2024 and with only five staff, Aurora's Integrated Services hub at Dyce, Aberdeen, now has more than 80 staff and in addition to recently opening a 5,000 sq ft warehouse facility nearby, more office space will become a priority in the year ahead.

"The division is active across oil and gas, renewables, hydro, nuclear, infrastructure and wider energy projects, and ongoing investment by major operators in new assets, upgrades and maintenance projects will spur further growth," said Winton.

"With long-term contracts secured and a strong client appetite for what we are trying to achieve, it is not unrealistic to expect turnover to grow to around £100 million in the next two years - but growth will not be at the expense of project delivery, which will always be Aurora's number one priority."

Aurora Energy Services Chief Executive Officer, Doug Duguid, said: "We have reshaped our Integrated Services division to reflect the wider role it will play in Aurora's growth strategy, and as a result of clients telling us they want one supplier capable of delivering everything."

The energy transition needs investment certainty

Author: Daniel Crighton, Audit Director, KPMG UK, Aberdeen



The global energy transition may be well underway, but what is becoming increasingly clear is that the world is continuing to use more energy.

KPMG, in collaboration with the Energy Institute, recently published the annual 'Statistical Review of World Energy', which found that total energy supply has increased by 1.7% in 2025, with every major energy source from coal, oil and gas to renewables, hydro and nuclear all reaching record levels for the second consecutive year. For the first time outside a recession, renewable energy was the biggest contributor to growth in total energy supply, but demand for oil and gas also continued to reach record highs.

What this tells us is that the energy transition is proving to be an evolution rather than a straight swap from one energy source to another. Countries are investing heavily in renewables, but they are also continuing to rely on oil and gas as energy demand grows and as governments look to protect energy security in an increasingly fragmented geopolitical landscape.

This context matters enormously for businesses across the North-east of Scotland because here, energy is far more than just another industry. It supports thousands of jobs, attracts investment and sustains a world-class supply chain, which is why businesses across the region are paying close attention to global trends but also what is happening closer to home. Even in the UK, where we have seen record growth in renewables, about 75% of total energy supply came from fossil fuels in 2025.

Certainty underpins investment

Changes in UK government leadership have put renewed focus on the future of the North Sea. The new Energy Secretary, Miatta Fahnbulleh, made Aberdeen her first visit at the end of July.

Much of the recent discussion has centred on projects such as Rosebank, one of the UK's largest undeveloped offshore oil and gas fields west of Shetland, and Jackdaw, a major natural gas field in the North Sea. Questions also remain over the future of some tie-back projects, which connect smaller discoveries to existing offshore infrastructure and against this backdrop businesses will be looking for clarity on the long-term policy framework needed to support investment. Even if these investments go ahead, it remains unclear how much further the Government is willing to go given the pledges set out in its 2024 Election Manifesto.

For businesses in and around Aberdeen, investing billions of pounds in long-term projects depends on certainty in the policy and fiscal environment.

The same principle applies to taxation with the Energy Profits Levy currently due to be replaced by the Oil and Gas Revenue Levy in 2030, with the government publishing draft legislation in July setting out how the new regime would operate. While the details will continue to be debated, businesses consistently value a stable and predictable framework that gives them the confidence to invest.

As North Sea fields mature, decommissioning offshore infrastructure will also become an increasingly important part of the sector. That creates significant opportunities for businesses across the North-east of Scotland to apply decades of engineering and offshore expertise. It will also bring substantial costs for government through tax relief, reinforcing the need to strike the right balance between supporting investment, maintaining energy security and managing the public finances.

The UK's energy system is evolving, not transforming overnight and for Aberdeen and the wider region, the priority is ensuring businesses have the certainty they need to invest with confidence and continue playing a central role in the UK's energy future.

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WORDS OF ADVICE



Jade Marlow

Operations Manager, Tool Tec Ltd

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

Regardless of role or seniority, everyone is human.

Lead with kindness and communicate respectfully. At Tool Tec, this is my management style. I believe that supporting those around me, listening and treating everyone with respect creates stronger teams, better relationships and a more positive environment for all.

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

One of the biggest barriers I have overcome in the workplace has been working in a traditionally male-dominated industry. As a woman, this has presented challenges at times, but I have overcome them by building strong relationships with the team around me at Tool Tec. Clear communication has been key, along with remembering that we all share the same goal of delivering the best outcome for our customers and the business.

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

'Get up and get on with it'

It's simple advice, but it has stuck with me throughout both my professional and personal life. From challenges and setbacks, I've learnt that it's important to stay positive and keep moving forward.

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A man, a woman, and another woman are standing together, smiling. The man on the left is holding a tennis racket. The woman in the center is holding a water bottle. They are all wearing athletic clothing. The background is dark.

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At the heart of Lifestyle Premium is access to ASV's impressive Re:form Studio, the largest reformer pilates studio in the Northeast. Sleek, spacious and equipped with top of the range reformer beds, it offers a varied timetable of instructor led classes designed for all abilities.

Premium members can enjoy three Reformer classes every week (worth £144 per month) included within the £85 monthly fee.

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- 10-day advance booking rights
- A monthly guest pass
- A personalised fitness programme
- ASV app access for quick bookings and cancellations
- 10% café discount for post workout refuelling
- Exclusive Club Perks discounts via the ASV app

Since Lifestyle Premium was introduced, ASV has continued to invest significantly in the experience members receive. The gym has undergone a major six-figure upgrade, introducing an extensive range of new equipment, and the cycle studio has also been transformed with new bikes, upgraded technology and an enhanced training environment.

ASV's Head of Business Development, Kris McIntosh, said:

"Lifestyle Premium stands out because it brings so much together in one membership. You have access to our gym, pools and extensive fitness class programme, alongside three Re:form classes every week and a range of additional Premium benefits.

"It gives members the flexibility to enjoy different ways to train while accessing some of the best sport and fitness facilities in the city, offering unmatched value at £85 per month."

Whether your focus is building strength, improving fitness, swimming, group exercise, reformer Pilates or simply enjoying more variety in your routine, Lifestyle Premium gives you the freedom to do it all. It's the complete ASV experience designed to help you get more from every visit.



Access all our amazing facilities and classes, plus 12 Re:Form Studio sessions, a monthly guest pass, and a personalised programme that fits around your lifestyle - all for £85 a month. Premium has it all. Join today.

Sky News documentary puts North Sea future under spotlight

The future of the North Sea was the focus of a Sky News documentary last month as the debate over further oil and gas development moved back to the centre of British politics.

Sky's Economics and Data Editor Ed Conway travelled offshore and visited key parts of the UK's energy infrastructure to examine how much oil and gas remains in the basin – and what role it could play in Britain's energy security.

The programme came as decisions loomed over the Rosebank and Jackdaw developments, with Prime Minister Andy Burnham signalling his government will take a “pragmatic” approach to North Sea oil and gas.

Burnham has said the UK cannot ignore its remaining resources, as the debate shifts to where the UK's energy supplies come from.

Conway speaks to offshore workers, energy industry leaders and environmental campaigners as he explores

whether further domestic production can strengthen UK energy security while remaining compatible with the country's net zero commitments.

The documentary came at a critical moment for the industry, with the government facing growing pressure from both sides of the debate over whether Rosebank and Jackdaw should proceed.

Russell Borthwick, Chief Executive of Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce, said: “This is a must-watch for anyone who wants to understand the reality of the energy debate we are having in this country.

“Ed Conway has gone beyond the slogans and soundbites, speaking to the people who actually produce our energy and asking the fundamental questions too often missing from the debate: how much oil and gas do we still need, where should it come from, and what happens if we choose not to produce it ourselves?”



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The Decommissioning Collective: A new approach to North Sea decommissioning

Author: Stuart Cameron, Managing Director, Boskalis



The scale and complexity of North Sea decommissioning requires a different approach to delivery. As activity accelerates over the coming decade, operators and the supply chain must find new ways to improve predictability, manage decommissioning liabilities and maximise value across the sector.

Recognising decommissioning as a long-term strategic priority, Boskalis Subsea Services believes the industry must move beyond traditional project-by-project delivery towards a collaborative, programme-led model that improves certainty, reduces unnecessary repetition and delivers greater value for operators and the wider supply chain.

That thinking is behind The Decommissioning Collective; an industry-leading model that brings together operators to transform the way subsea decommissioning programmes are planned and delivered.

Traditionally, decommissioning projects have been tendered, engineered and mobilised in isolation. While every asset has its own technical requirements, this approach often results in the same work being repeated across multiple campaigns. Engineering is duplicated, assurance processes begin again, and vessels and specialist teams are mobilised for relatively short periods, limiting opportunities to improve efficiency.

Through The Decommissioning Collective, operators work together to plan activity more strategically, optimising vessel utilisation and

providing greater certainty around schedules and decommissioning expenditure. The result is a more efficient programme of work that helps reduce overall decommissioning liabilities while giving operators greater visibility of future costs and confidence in long-term planning.

The fact that four operators, including Harbour Energy, have now joined Boskalis Subsea Services in The Decommissioning Collective is an important step forward. It demonstrates a willingness to move beyond discussing new approaches and instead commit to a practical model that can deliver meaningful benefits for both operators and the supply chain.

The value of The Decommissioning Collective lies in creating greater alignment between operators and the supply chain. By sharing visibility of future activity and planning programmes collectively, the industry can reduce duplication, make better use of specialist assets and expertise, and create the conditions for more efficient long-term delivery. In turn, this provides greater confidence for investment across the supply chain.

Our commitment to smarter decommissioning is closely connected to our commitment to Aberdeen. The city remains central to the North Sea energy sector and is home to many of the skills, capabilities and supply-chain relationships that will be essential to delivering the work ahead.

Boskalis continues to invest in its Aberdeen operations, technology and people, including the development

of our Remote Operations Centre. However, sustained investment also relies on greater visibility of future activity. A more coordinated decommissioning portfolio can provide the confidence needed to invest, develop future talent and retain the specialist expertise that will be critical to the North Sea's long-term success.

Supporting the future of the North Sea does not mean preserving established ways of working simply because they are familiar. It means applying decades of offshore and decommissioning experience to create a delivery model that is smarter, safer and better prepared for the scale of the challenge ahead.

The Decommissioning Collective represents a practical step towards a more strategic approach to North Sea decommissioning. With five organisations already committed, the model is demonstrating how greater alignment can improve certainty, reduce decommissioning liabilities and create a more sustainable pipeline of work for the industry. The opportunity now is to build on that momentum and establish a new benchmark for how decommissioning is delivered in the years ahead.

OPINION
OPINION



Boskalis

THE DECOMMISSIONING COLLECTIVE

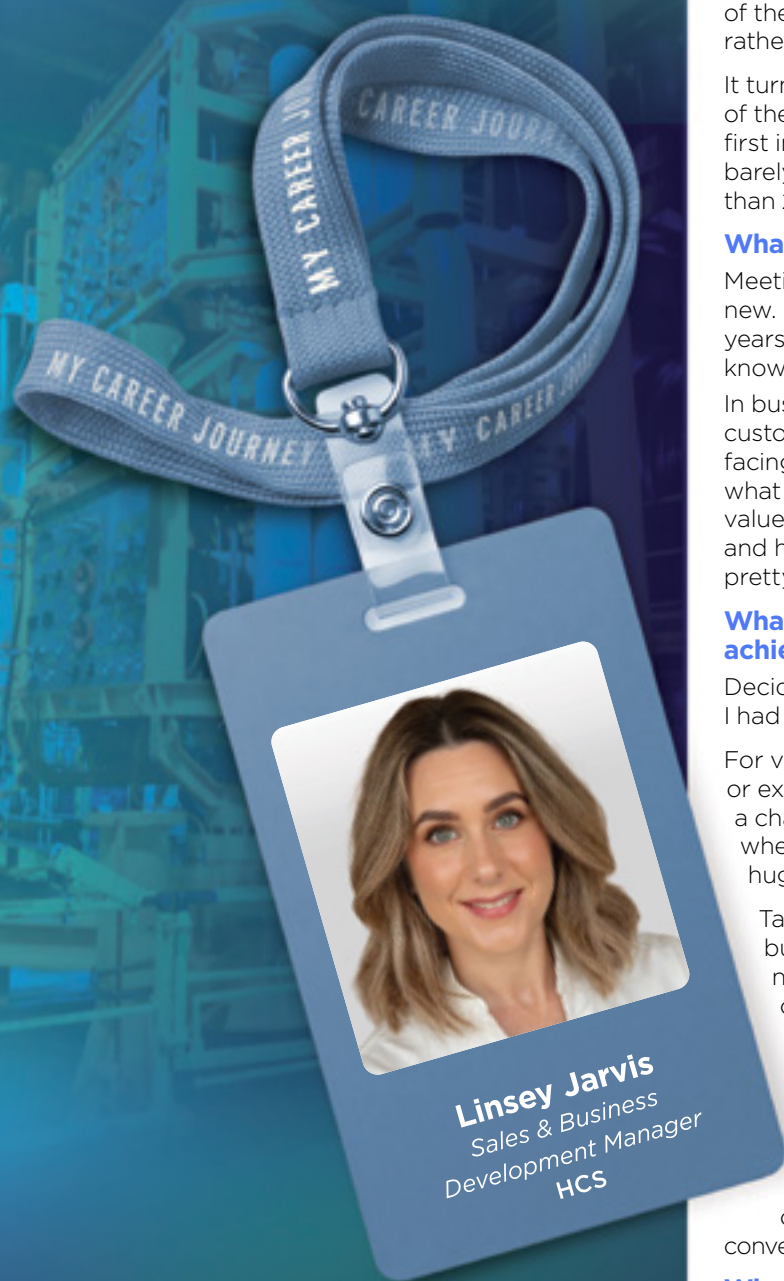
LEADERS IN SMARTER DECOMMISSIONING



My Career Journey

Linsey Jarvis

Sales & Business Development Manager
HCS



Describe your early career path.

I left school at 17 with the grades I needed for university but decided to take a year out – firstly packing vegetables, then as an administrator at a housing association – before starting my business degree. My course required me to undertake work placements, where I joined a small engineering firm and gained experience across technical support, accounts, purchasing and operations.

I stayed with the company after graduating, initially working in projects and purchasing before eventually moving into sales. Throughout those roles, I was lucky to gain plenty of exposure to the technical side of the products and services we provided – something that has been invaluable throughout my career.

How did you arrive in your current industry?

Almost by accident! At 18, when it came to choosing my university work placement, I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I chose a role within the family business because, unlike most of the other options, it gave me exposure to the whole operation rather than sitting within one department.

It turned out to be a great decision. I got an insight into all areas of the business, discovered what interested me most and got my first introduction to the oil and gas industry – an industry I had barely heard of at the time, despite growing up in Scotland! More than 20 years later, I'm still here.

What's the best thing about your job?

Meeting new people and constantly discovering something new. I've been lucky to work with some brilliant people over the years, many of whom have been more than happy to share their knowledge, experience and stories with me.

In business development, you're exposed to so much – customers, technology, projects, the market and the challenges facing the industry. Understanding all of that helps me recognise what our customers actually need and where HCS can add real value. I also genuinely enjoy meeting people, asking questions and hearing different perspectives, so it's a job that suits me pretty well!

What has been your biggest career challenge or proudest achievement?

Deciding to leave a company after almost 20 years – somewhere I had once assumed I would eventually retire from.

For various reasons, I realised I was no longer thriving, learning or excited to go to work every day, and decided it was time for a change. I didn't know exactly what I would do next, or even whether I would stay in oil and gas, which made leaving a huge step.

Taking that step pushed me well outside my comfort zone, but it reignited my enthusiasm for the industry and gave me new opportunities to challenge myself and develop further. I couldn't be happier with the decision or where I am now.

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

Never stop being curious! Anyone who knows me will know I'm rarely short of a question or two.

Asking questions has helped me build my knowledge and understanding over the years, but it has also developed my confidence and communication skills, and opened doors to conversations and connections I might otherwise never have had.

What does the future look like for you?

More challenges and hopefully plenty more opportunities!

The UK oil and gas industry is changing rapidly, so keeping up with political and regulatory developments, market activity and mergers and acquisitions is a big part of understanding where future opportunities lie.

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AREG calls on Energy Secretary Miatta Fahnbulleh to meet the companies powering the renewables energy sector

In letters to the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Energy Secretary, Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group (AREG) has invited Miatta Fahnbulleh to meet the companies in the North-east of Scotland that are contributing to maintaining security of energy supply across the UK, and leading the technological innovation in clean, renewable power.

Congratulating the Secretary of State on her appointment, AREG said the UK faces a pivotal moment in delivering energy security, economic growth and net-zero ambitions, and called for close collaboration between industry and government to achieve a managed and successful energy transition.

AREG Chair Jean Morrison said: "Our vision is to establish the North-east of Scotland as a centre of excellence for the UK energy transition. AREG has been working for over 20 years on behalf of its members in the energy supply chain to champion the renewable energy sector, and their expertise. We support members to access opportunities that will accelerate the development and deployment of renewable energy.

"AREG believes a balanced approach is needed

to deliver long-term energy security and economic prosperity. The UK's established oil and gas industry continues to play a vital role in supporting the growth of renewables through transferable skills, innovation, engineering expertise and decades of experience operating in challenging environments."

In its message to the Energy Secretary, AREG highlighted the urgent need for policy measures that will unlock investment, accelerate planning and consenting processes, protect jobs and provide long-term certainty for businesses looking to scale up clean energy projects.

Liz Paddon, AREG Operations and Development Manager, added: "We believe that clear, consistent policy signals will help safeguard thousands of high-value jobs, attract private sector investment and enable the delivery of secure, affordable and clean energy for households and businesses across the country.

"The North-east is ready to deliver. It has the skills, infrastructure, technology, innovation capability and international reputation to anchor Scotland's future energy economy and secure a successful transition."



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Building Burnham's Britain:

Who are the new Energy Secretary and Chancellor?

By Danny McKay



When Andy Burnham stepped into No.10 in July to replace Sir Keir Starmer as Prime Minister, speculation was rife as to what the new leadership would mean for the North-east of Scotland – and who would make up his first cabinet.

The key roles of most interest to the region were Chancellor and Energy Secretary.

With Miliband widely expected to be out of the running for Chancellor in Burnham's premiership, and unlikely to remain as Energy Secretary, it was anyone's game.

Home Secretary under Starmer, Shabana Mahmood was the frontrunner for the role of Chancellor, with North Sea advocate Wes Streeting another contender.

But few called Burnham's picks correctly, with former Defence Secretary John Healey brought in from the cold to become Chancellor and rookie minister Miatta Fahnbulleh named Energy Secretary.

Ahead of taking office, Burnham's team had been briefing that the new PM would adopt a more favourable attitude towards North Sea oil and gas, but the appointment of Fahnbulleh, who has long advocated for greater action to prevent climate change, seems to cast that into doubt.

Born in Liberia, Fahnbulleh's family came to the UK after fleeing a civil

war in the West African country. She holds a PhD in economic development from the London School of Economics, and served as a senior economic advisor to Angela Rayner and Miliband during the 2024 election campaign.

Fahnbulleh has called for more investment in initiatives to cut emissions and in local industrial strategies to create green jobs in areas like retrofitting and renewable energy.

In 2019, Fahnbulleh called for a "global Green New Deal" which would see a "massive mobilisation of resources to decarbonise and at the same time create millions of jobs and lift living standards".

"The goal should be net-zero carbon emissions within ten to 15 years, which will require governments to make significant investments in green infrastructure, such as onshore and offshore wind farms and smart energy grids; in new technologies such as carbon capture and storage; and in training workers to develop the skills they will need for the jobs a green economy will create, such as installing insulation, maintaining renewable energy systems, and

reconditioning and refurbishing used goods," she wrote.

In her first week in the job, Fahnbulleh headed north to visit Aberdeen where she met with Offshore Energies UK and other industry representatives before visiting the South Harbour.

She did not make herself available to meet any press during the visit.

Following the meeting, OEG Chief Executive David Whitehouse said: "We had a constructive discussion about the UK's energy future and the need for a pragmatic approach to the transition.

"We spoke about the importance of homegrown energy of all types, continuing at pace with the build-out of renewable energy while also recognising the continuing important role that North Sea oil and gas will play in the UK's energy mix for the foreseeable future.

"That clarity is helpful."

A Department for Energy Security and Net Zero spokesperson said: "The North Sea remains a vital national asset, supporting jobs, growth and the UK's energy security.

"We are clear that oil and gas will continue to play an important role in our energy system for decades to come, alongside renewables, nuclear and other low-carbon technologies.

“Our focus is on providing stability and ensuring the North Sea continues to make a strong contribution to the UK’s economy and energy security.”

While Burnham continues to talk the talk on backing North Sea oil and gas, only time will tell if his cabinet are on the same page.

John Healey, meanwhile, the new Chancellor, comes from a background in the trade union movement but worked in the Treasury under Gordon Brown as Finance Secretary.

There, he developed a North Sea fiscal regime that sought to balance the dual interests generating tax revenue while supporting continued investment.

More recently, as Defence Secretary, Healey, made headlines by clashing with Starmer over defence spending.



That row culminated in a dramatic resignation letter, in which Healey said he was being “forced” to make decisions that “could make the country less safe”.

He wrote: “You have been unable, and the Treasury has been unwilling, to commit the resources that the nation needs to defend the country at this time of rising threats.”

Prior to that fallout, Healey worked to build connections with key economic allies in the US, Middle East and Europe.

That work has led to Healey being a respected figure internationally, with views around reindustrialisation and devolution also aligning with the new PM.



TESS Aberdeen awarded Hose Management Frame Agreement for offshore wind

TESS Aberdeen has announced the successful award of a new frame agreement with a leading offshore wind operator, further strengthening the company's position as a trusted provider of asset integrity and hose management solutions within the renewable energy sector.

Under the agreement, TESS Aberdeen will take responsibility for the management and data recording of more than 50,000 hydraulic hoses across the operator's offshore assets. The project will be delivered using the company's industry-leading TESS Hose Management System, providing complete asset visibility, traceability, and proactive maintenance support.

The advanced digital system enables accurate asset tracking, real-time data insights, and full lifecycle management, helping operators improve operational efficiency, reduce risk, and minimise unplanned downtime.

Delivery of the contract will be supported by TESS

Aberdeen's team of highly skilled, GWO-certified technicians, who bring extensive offshore experience and a strong commitment to safety, quality, and operational excellence.

Keith Robertson, Director at TESS Aberdeen, said: "Securing this Frame Agreement is a fantastic achievement for our team and highlights the trust placed in TESS to deliver critical asset integrity support in the offshore wind sector. Managing over 50,000 hoses is no small task, but with our proven Hose Management System and GWO-certified technicians, we're confident in providing a service that ensures reliability, safety, and complete peace of mind for our client."

By combining innovative technology with specialist technical expertise, TESS Aberdeen continues to help operators maintain the integrity of critical hydraulic systems while supporting the long-term success of the offshore energy transition.





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How do you make the energy sector attractive to media?

Author: Ben Palmer, Senior Account Manager at BIG Partnership



Ben Palmer, Senior Account Manager at BIG Partnership, looks at how businesses in the North-east of Scotland can tell their stories to the right audience. The energy sector in the UK supports roughly 1.48 million jobs, around 1 in every 25 people across the country. Each and every one of those individuals will have a tale to tell about their professional career.

Energy can be a hard story to sell to media, though headlines of the impacts of domestic and global politics on household bills are as commonplace as ever. Negative stories generate negative headlines and those types of stories don't need to sell themselves to outlets in the same way that a corporation launching a new product might.

But there are important, often more positive stories than bills shooting up, that need airtime too: the technologies driving the energy transition, the research being undertaken that's shaping the future of the sector, the work being done to ensure that the country's energy transition is successful. Robert Gordon University's latest report which warns that the North-east of Scotland risks losing thousands of high-value jobs and critical skills is one excellent example of that.

For those of us in the energy sector – and particularly those of us in this region, who are only too aware of the

financial pressures facing the industry – there is a challenge to make such narratives attractive to media. How do you tell a story in a way that cuts through to the audience you actually want to reach?

In our case, the audience is often the Westminster government, whose Energy Profits Levy is widely blamed for the accelerated downturn in the North Sea oil and gas sector and consequently a lack of investment in renewables.

While it may be a story we're familiar with, the tale of the so-called Windfall Tax is one dogged in numbers: a 78% tax rate, the end of which if brought forward could increase tax receipts from £32.9 billion to £48.6 billion, according to OEUK. It's important stuff but as a journalist once said to a colleague: tell me what's interesting, not what's important.

For journalists, what they really want to hear about is the people behind the sector.

Of those 1.48 million, there will be engineers, offshore workers, supply chain personnel and communities that all have stories which are interesting. But how do you bring this to life?

Consider A Town Called Bruce, a campaign designed by my colleagues at BIG which told the story of a town called Bruce, 200 miles north-east of Aberdeen in the North Sea. It's not

a town, obviously, but rather Serica Energy's Bruce platform, a collection of individual stories brought together on one structure which will be familiar to others across the basin.

Or look at how Dales Marine launched its recruitment drive for new apprentices earlier this year. Interviews with Energy Voice showcased the skills they have learned, their commitment to the sector and why they believe the apprenticeship puts them on a steady and successful career path. Comments directly from source to press without the corporate spin which journalists loathe.

The energy sector has a plethora of stories to tell, but in the wider mainstream news spectrum, it can often be overlooked. Geopolitics, crime and culture may all be ahead in the pecking order but even these serve as a reminder of what's key to making them intriguing: people are at the forefront of the narrative in each.

If you work in the industry and want your story told, start with your people. Not the megawatts, not the tax rates, not the transition targets. The engineer who came offshore after 20 years in manufacturing. The apprentice who turned down a university place. The supply chain business keeping a community employed. Those are the stories media will take, and they're the ones that reach the audiences that matter.

IKM Testing UK secures multi-million-pound framework agreement

North-east Scotland-based IKM Testing UK has strengthened its relationship with an international energy company, after securing a multi-million-pound framework agreement for the provision of specialist steam and chemical cleaning services, for an initial three-year term with two optional one-year extensions.

Under the contract, IKM Testing UK will deliver steam cleaning and chemical cleaning services across their clients assets, continuing to provide safe, efficient and high-quality solutions aligned with operational and project requirements.

Barry Summers, Regional Director at IKM Testing UK, said: "This latest contract award is the result of several years of close collaboration and a strong working relationship between our organisations.

"We are proud that the quality, reliability, consistency, project management and scheduling expertise we provide have been recognised through this award. We look forward to supporting our client's offshore operations and maintenance activities in the years ahead, ensuring safe, efficient and well-coordinated delivery throughout the contract term."

This award follows the successful establishment of the existing Leak Testing & Pipe Freezing Support Services Framework Agreement and comes at a time when IKM Testing UK's expertise continues to gain industry recognition, with the company recently named a finalist in the OEUK Safety Awards for its steam cleaning services.

IKM Testing UK is a complete service provider for the energy sector, delivering specialist services that contribute towards safe operations, reduced downtime and efficient project execution.



UPCOMING EVENTS

DRAG NIGHT	25.09.26
LADIES SOIREE	24.10.26
MURDER MYSTERY NIGHT: HALLOWEEN HELL	30.10.26
FESTIVE WREATH MAKING	28.11.26, 1PM
BREAKFAST WITH THE GRINCH / BREAKFAST WITH SANTA	THROUGHOUT DECEMBER, 9AM
SUPPER WITH YOUR FAVOURITE CHRISTMAS CHARACTERS	THROUGHOUT DECEMBER, 5PM
PARTY LUNCHESES & DINNERS	THROUGHOUT DECEMBER, 12PM OR 7PM
ABBANOON TEA	19.12.26, 1PM
FESTIVE MURDER MYSTERY NIGHT	19.12.26, 7PM
FESTIVE TABLE ARRANGEMENT MAKING	20.12.26, 1PM
CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH	25.12.26 FROM 12.15PM
HOGMANAY GALA BALL	31.12.26, 7PM
HOGMANAY FAMILY PARTY	31.12.26, 7PM
HOGMANAY DINING	31.12.26, 5PM

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The GB Energy story so far

By Dan McGrail

When Great British Energy chose Aberdeen as its headquarters, it wasn't just about finding an office. Our decision to base ourselves here reflects a simple belief: our best chance of success lies in working alongside the people that have already helped the UK meet some of its greatest energy challenges.

Our new headquarters at Marischal Square, which will open very soon, will house corporate functions, supply chain activity and major development projects, including our ambitions in deep-water offshore wind. But success won't be measured by the size of our office. It will be measured by the opportunities we create, the investment we unlock and the jobs we support.

A core part of our strategy is ensuring Aberdeen's strengths help shape our future direction. That's why we've established the Aberdeen Energy Taskforce which is helping us maximise the economic benefits of the energy transition, strengthen local businesses and support communities in seizing the opportunities ahead.

Scotland has long been at the forefront of community energy innovation, and we want to draw on that experience as we deliver our Local Power Plan. We're working with organisations including NESCAN, Aberdeen City and

Aberdeenshire Councils and Local Energy Scotland to explore how communities can play a greater role in generating, owning and benefiting from clean energy projects. Our vision is that by 2030, every community in the UK will have the opportunity to benefit from and own a local energy project.

Aberdeen will play a leading role in the technologies that define the next chapter of the UK's energy story. Whether it's deep-water offshore wind, grid infrastructure or emerging energy technologies, the skills developed through decades of offshore energy experience provide the foundation for future growth.

A large part of our legacy will be the opportunities we create for the next generation. That means not only creating jobs today but helping build the workforce that the UK needs tomorrow. Through the educational partnership we are building with Developing the Young Workforce North East, Robert Gordon University, and TechFest -

we're opening doors to careers in clean energy.

We want young people growing up in the NorthEast to see a clear pathway into rewarding careers, knowing they can build their future in the region.

We are currently recruiting across investment, supply chains, local energy and corporate functions to build the diverse expertise needed to deliver our goals. Investment and portfolio teams dates will help identify, assess and deliver investment opportunities; supply chain specialists will work with industry, government and delivery partners to strengthen UK manufacturing and unlock growth; local energy professionals will work with councils, communities and partners to expand shared ownership, while corporate teams will provide the foundations to operate effectively and at scale.

We're continuing to recruit Aberdeen based roles all of which can be found on our website.

Great British Energy's and Aberdeen's successes are closely linked. By embedding ourselves in the city we believe we have the best possible platform to deliver our mission.



Why early well intervention is becoming critical to North Sea decommissioning success

Author: Gary Smart, CEO, Unity Well



As the global oil and gas well stock matures, the well intervention market is growing rapidly. Rystad Energy reports that global intervention rates are forecast to reach 17% in 2027. This trend is relevant in the North Sea, where a significant proportion of offshore wells are entering late life and operators are balancing production optimisation with the challenge of safe, cost-effective decommissioning.

Well intervention is a necessary part of most well lifecycles, as assets mature. Reservoir pressure falls as hydrocarbons are extracted, mechanical components corrode with age and exposure to corrosive fluids, while scale and wax can build up inside tubing and choke flow. Left unaddressed, these problems compound resulting in production drops, increased integrity risks, and in the most severe cases, a well can lose containment altogether.

Intervention is a safety-driven decision as well as a commercial one. Nowhere is this clearer than in decommissioning, where the focus shifts from maintaining production to safely and permanently closing a well. Growing commercial pressures are driving a shift towards earlier planning. Operators who begin well integrity work months, sometimes years, ahead of plug and abandonment are finding their campaigns run to a tighter, predictable schedule.

Planning ahead for predictable decommissioning

Early engagement changes what gets discovered, and when. Legacy equipment, incomplete historical records and constrained platform space all create problems if they surface once a rig is mobilised. Bringing well integrity specialists into the planning process means shallow or preparatory interventions can be completed before the campaign begins. For North Sea operators managing complex brownfield assets, this ability to identify and address issues ahead of major campaigns can be the difference between a predictable programme and costly offshore delays.

Taking this proactive approach provides earlier access to wells, greater cost certainty, hazards identified before execution, and less non-productive time on the rig. It can also reduce offshore personnel and minimise valuable deck space tied up during operations.

An innovative approach to intervention

Unity's Surface Intervention System (SIS) enables operators to complete key well integrity activities without relying on a drilling package. The rigless system does not need conventional rig equipment to isolate a well with single or dual barriers, and its interchangeable tooling covers integrity remediation as readily as production optimisation or decommissioning support. Because the unit is compact, it can operate below deck or away from the primary rig, keeping preparatory work off the critical path.

The combination of compact footprint and rigless deployment is proving itself on North Sea projects, where deck space is at a premium and rig time is expensive. Unity's experience in the North Sea has shown how early deployment of SIS can help identify well conditions, establish barriers and complete preparatory activities before larger intervention campaigns begin.

This North Sea track record has become the platform for growth into other mature basins internationally. Unity has spent decades building specialist well integrity knowledge in the UK, with more than 1,000 wells maintained and 300 abandonment wells completed. This has given the company the confidence to take that expertise to operators facing similar challenges elsewhere.

The well integrity partner's role is changing. Specialists are now involved much earlier: tracking condition, responding quickly when something changes, and keeping production running wherever restoration is still possible. This continuity matters because knowledge of a well's history, condition and integrity challenges can be lost during the handover from operations to end-of-life planning.

Over the next decade, decommissioning will account for a substantial share of industry expenditure, and the pressure to get it right first time will grow. Wells that are understood before their final chapter tend to close out with fewer surprises and lower cost. Much of that success is determined by the work completed early. As more operators adopt this approach, early well integrity engagement is set to move from best practice to standard practice.

OPINION
OPINION

ONE SeedPod welcomes Bothy Butter as new tenant



Bothy Butter, the Scottish premium butter brand has moved production to Scotland's food and drink innovation hub ONE SeedPod in Aberdeen.

The new site allows Bothy Butter, the only butter producer in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Dundee and Angus, to run 100L batches up from 20L, while still allowing the product to be traditionally churned and hand crafted.

Founder Kim Cameron said: "The move to ONE SeedPod is a deliberate step to give the brand room to scale within a purpose-built dairy environment.

"We want to be able to stand proud behind our ethos of Buy Bothy, Buy Scottish, which we can absolutely do here as we stay true to creating a hand-crafted product with just two ingredients, Scottish cream and salt."

ONE Food, Drink and Agriculture Chair Stanley Morrice MBE said: "It was great to meet Kim and her team – they already look at home in ONE SeedPod and feel part of the entrepreneurial community here in the North-east. Bothy Butter is the latest addition to the fantastic portfolio of brands Kim has grown, and it's exciting to see her scaling it here."

Director ONE Food and Drink Alan Thorpe added: "We're delighted to welcome Kim and the Bothy Butter team to ONE SeedPod. They're now part of the entrepreneurial community here, alongside other food and drink businesses scaling up in the North-east of Scotland.

"It's already meant two new jobs in Aberdeen, and it puts Bothy Butter in a much stronger position to win food service business in a market that's long been dominated by French and Irish butter."

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Back in business:

ATR returns to independent ownership with Keith Moorhouse at the helm



The ATR brand is back. Aberdeen-based equipment rental solutions and inspection services firm has returned to independent ownership, with Managing Director Keith Moorhouse once again at the helm.

The acquisition marks the beginning of the next chapter in a journey that began in 2007, when Keith purchased ATR and, under his leadership, transformed it into one of the UK's leading specialist equipment hire businesses. During his tenure, ATR increased its fleet, diversified its services, expanded internationally and established long-term relationships with several of the leading operators and contractors in the oil and gas sector. This success ultimately led to the company's merger with Centurion Group in 2017.

Keith remained part of the team until 2025, when he stepped away to pursue other interests. During his year out, a health scare became a turning point, prompting him to reflect on both his personal and professional priorities. So, when the opportunity arose to bring ATR back into independent ownership, he didn't hesitate.

"ATR has been a huge part of my life for many years," said Keith. "We had been on a growth trajectory for some time, so the natural next step for the business was to become part of something bigger. And it did."

"When I took some time out last year, I genuinely thought it was time to do something different, but I didn't anticipate how much I would miss it. Then I had a health scare, which made me realise I still had a lot to give, and that I wasn't finished with ATR."

Keith continued: "I've had an unbelievably warm response from everyone. It's been really humbling to be honest. Many of the team have been with me on the ATR journey and it's great to be embarking on this next chapter together. I'm a great believer that if you look after your people, they look after you and that applies to staff, customers, and suppliers."

"We have decades of expertise across the business, a highly skilled

what we will continue to build on. As an independent business we now have the freedom to make decisions quickly and work more closely with our clients. They don't come to us just to hire equipment - they come to us because they know we'll work alongside them to find the right solution."

Keith plans to expand ATR significantly over the next three years by investing in people, strengthening customer relationships, developing the rental fleet, and exploring new prospects in established energy markets and emerging sectors.

"There is a real opportunity for us to become more integrated with our customers and bring new ideas to the table. I believe the North Sea market is going to turn in our favour and we're well placed to help our clients capitalise on that shift. We understand their challenges, we understand their operations and can provide the right solutions efficiently and within budget."

While Keith has overseas growth in his sights, Aberdeen will always be home. "I'm Aberdeen born and bred and I'm proud of my roots. First and foremost, it's about looking after our clients in Aberdeen and ensuring our supply chain is as local as it possibly can be. Keeping investment in the local economy is important to me and Aberdeen has been good to me over the years, so I want to make sure I'm good to Aberdeen."

When Keith is not at ATR's headquarters on 16 Denmore Road, Bridge of Don, he devotes his time to another long-standing passion - football. As chairman of Cove Rangers FC for the past 29 years, he has overseen one of the club's most successful eras, including its rise from the Highland League to Scottish League One and the development of a new state-of-the-art stadium.

Keith commented: "Whether you're building a football club or a business, success comes down to the same things - the right team, a winning culture and always striving to improve. These values have stood me in good stead on and off the pitch, and they will continue to be the foundation on which we will build the next phase of ATR."



"I kept in touch with my colleagues at Centurion and when the chance came to buy the business back, I knew I had to do it. I am grateful to Centurion for giving me the opportunity to lead ATR once again and we will continue working with them going forward."

With a fleet of more than 40,000 assets available for hire and mobilisation, ATR supports energy projects in the UK and internationally. The firm employs 66 people across its bases in Aberdeen and Great Yarmouth and Keith's return to the company has been warmly welcomed by the team.

and committed team and our priority is to serve our customers and deliver what they need, when they need it.

"I'm very passionate about ATR. My focus is to go back to basics - to do what we do best and do it well. That commitment is what gets me up every morning at 4.30am."

"ATR is known for being responsive and dependable. If a customer called us at 10am, we would have the kit ready by 2pm. That's the approach that has set us apart, and

40 years of service for Stewart Gibson

Robertson Granite is proud to celebrate a significant milestone as Managing Director Stewart Gibson marks 40 years of dedicated service.

Stewart joined the company on August 11 1986, beginning his granite career in the drawing and estimating department before moving into the Aberdeen memorial retail division shortly thereafter. In September 1987, he became South Scotland Area Manager, based in Edinburgh, where he helped strengthen Robertson Granite's presence across the region.

His leadership trajectory continued with his appointment as General Retail Manager in 1998, followed by promotion to Retail Sales Director in 1999. Stewart's contribution over four decades has been central to the company's growth, reputation, and continued commitment to quality craftsmanship.

Stewart is pictured (left) being congratulated by company chairman Graeme Robertson.

The year 2026 also marks another major milestone:



150 years of Robertson Granite / Robertson Memorials manufacturing granite memorials and providing monumental services to both the trade and the public.

Together, these anniversaries highlight the company's long-standing heritage and the enduring dedication of its people.

Aberdeen International Airport announced as headline partner for the 2026 North-east Scotland Tourism Conference

VisitAberdeenshire is delighted to confirm Aberdeen International Airport as the headline partner for the North-east Scotland Tourism Conference.

Taking place at P&J Live on Wednesday November 4 2026, the conference is the flagship event for the North-east's tourism industry, bringing together more than 200 businesses, industry leaders and partners to share ideas, hear from expert speakers and explore the opportunities shaping the region's visitor economy.

Aberdeen International Airport plays a key role in connecting the North-east with the UK and beyond. The partnership reflects a shared commitment to supporting tourism growth and strengthening the region's economy.

Robert Paterson, Operations Director at Aberdeen International Airport, said: "We're delighted to partner with VisitAberdeenshire as headline sponsor of the North-east Scotland Tourism Conference 2026. The event provides an important platform for businesses, industry leaders and stakeholders to come together and explore new opportunities for the visitor economy. By supporting the conference, we are reinforcing our commitment to the long-term success of the North-east and helping ensure the region continues to grow as a destination for both leisure and business visitors."

Chris Foy, Chief Executive of VisitAberdeenshire, said: "It is a real pleasure to welcome Aberdeen International Airport as our headline partner for the 2026 North-east Scotland Tourism Conference.



"Strong connectivity is essential to a thriving visitor economy, and the airport plays a vital role in bringing visitors, business and investment to the region. Together, we look forward to delivering a conference that inspires collaboration and helps tourism businesses seize future opportunities."



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Fierce Beer joins Tennent's Direct portfolio with cask ales and core products

Fierce Beer has joined the Tennent's Direct portfolio, the first phase of a new trading relationship with C&C Group, bringing six Fierce Beer lines to hundreds of venues across Scotland.

Three cask lines are now available: Signal Fire, a brand new 4.2% Amber Ale launching exclusively through Tennent's Direct; Surf Shack, a 3.4% session Hazy IPA; and Noir, a 4.3% classic stout.

Alongside the cask range, three products from Fierce's core range are also now available through Tennent's Direct for the first time: Fierce IPA, the brewery's 5% namesake IPA; Cerveza, Fierce's renowned 4% Mexican lager with lime; and Iron Brew, the 4.5% cooler that has been taking the UK by storm.

The partnership was onboarded with support from Matthew Clark Bibendum's launch team, and follows almost two years of conversations between Fierce Beer and Tennent Caledonian Breweries. That timeframe reflects the level of trust behind the deal: Signal Fire's exclusivity to Tennent's Direct is being extended because of that relationship, not as a one-off gesture.

Richard McLelland, Sales Manager at Fierce Beer, said: "This is the result of almost two years of work with the

team at Tennent Caledonian Breweries and Matthew Clark Bibendum. Getting six of our beers, cask and can, in front of hundreds of venues through Tennent's Direct is one of the biggest steps we've taken for how far Fierce can reach. We'd encourage anyone with a Tennent's Direct account who hasn't got these on yet to get in touch with their rep."

Tennent's Direct account holders can order all six lines now through their usual platform or rep. Pub owners who don't yet hold a Tennent's Direct account can contact Tennent's Direct directly to find out how to access the range.



Duncan Taylor Scotch Whisky launch first Mizunara Octave cask

Duncan Taylor Scotch Whisky has further expanded its award-winning Octave portfolio, with the introduction of its first-ever Mizunara oak cask finish.

Directly sourced from Japan, the rare Mizunara oak cask was chosen to finish a triple-distilled Auchentoshan single malt over an initial four-month maturation period. The result is a distinctive Octave whisky that showcases the unique influence of this highly prized Japanese oak.

Ian Logan, Senior Spirits Manager at Duncan Taylor, said: "The ongoing success of our Octave range gave us the opportunity to push the boundaries and experiment with new cask finishes. Auchentoshan's lighter, triple-

distilled spirit, allowed the Mizunara oak to fully express its natural character and the results far exceeded our expectations."

The Mizunara cask arrived at Duncan Taylor's headquarters in Huntly, Aberdeenshire, in March after being exported directly from Japan. Distilled in October 2011, the Auchentoshan matured for 14 years before spending four months in the Mizunara octave.

To mark the release, Duncan Taylor collaborated with Japanese photographer Kato Shu (FRPS) to capture the bottle alongside a Mizunara oak in an ancient forest at the foothills of Mount Fuji.



United Infrastructure expands Scottish operation with new Alness office to support SSEN Transmission and local communities

United Infrastructure has officially opened its new office in Alness, marking a significant milestone in the company's commitment to supporting SSEN Transmission's major investment in the north of Scotland's electricity network.

The new Highlands base establishes a permanent presence in the region as part of United Infrastructure's continued growth and expansion into Scotland's power transmission and distribution sector, strengthening project delivery capability and enabling continued support for local communities.

The office will play a key role in supporting the delivery of critical proposed power infrastructure projects across the Highlands and beyond in partnership with SSEN Transmission. This investment reflects United Infrastructure's long-term commitment to Scotland and its ambition to help deliver the resilient power networks needed to support the UK's transition to a cleaner, electrified future.

The opening event was attended by United Infrastructure's senior leadership team and representatives from SSEN Transmission. Guests took part in site visits to view progress on works associated with the Accelerating Strategic Transmission Investment (ASTI) programme,



which is playing a vital role in delivering the network infrastructure required to support Britain's electrification ambitions.

SSEN Transmission Programme Director Sandie Lengden and United Infrastructure CEO and Chairman Neil Armstrong officially opened the new Alness office with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The expansion underlines United Infrastructure's ambition to play a leading role in supporting the UK's power infrastructure requirements and delivering the networks needed to achieve net zero targets.

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Stuart Sutherland & Bram van Zelm

The IADC North Sea Chapter has appointed Stuart Sutherland, Vice President Well Services UK at Odfjell Technology, as Chapter Chair, whilst Bram van Zelm, Operations Manager – Valaris Limited, is named Chapter Vice Chair.



Colin Brennan

Xeretec has strengthened its Scottish team with the appointment of Colin Brennan as Key Account Manager. Colin brings more than 12 years' experience in sales and account management to Xeretec's Aberdeen office.



Andrew Walker

Aberdeen-based Hall Morrice has appointed Andrew Walker to the role of Partner to work closely with Managing Partner Robert Bain and the wider team to help shape its strategy, direction and continued development.



Alana Macrae

Aberdeen-based ROV services company Film-Ocean has welcomed Alana Macrae to its commercial team as Senior Contracts Specialist - further strengthening its ability to deliver complex projects across the globe.



Keith Robertson

Aberdeen-based AV One Solutions has appointed Keith Robertson as Creative Director. Keith will oversee delivery of creative projects and bring together bold ideas with commercial thinking to deliver real value for clients.



Calum MacLeod

Converged Solutions Group (CSG), an Aberdeen-based technology group of four established businesses, is pleased to welcome Calum MacLeod as Marketing and Digital Media Assistant.



Rhona Gillan

True North Advisors has hired a dedicated Head of Marketing as the fast-growing communications, marketing and public affairs agency continues to expand. Rhona Gillan joins the firm from Hampton.



Pauline Walsh & Ronnie Bonnar

Aurora Energy Services has appointed highly experienced utilities and infrastructure executive Pauline Walsh as a Non-Executive Director, while offshore wind veteran Ronnie Bonnar will act as an Advisor to the Board.



Louise Coutts

ESWL announced the promotion of Louise Coutts to Key Account Manager. Louise has progressed through several roles within the business since first joining in September 2024 as part of the expediting team.



Amanda MacDonald

Aberdeenshire-based financial planning firm Create Financial Solutions has strengthened its leadership team with the appointment of Amanda MacDonald as Business Manager.



Callum Cruickshank

Hydrus Group has welcomed Callum Cruickshank as its new Business Development Manager. Callum will support the company's continued growth across the energy, renewables and industrial sectors.



Ian MacLeod

Kent, a global integrated energy services partner, has appointed Ian MacLeod as Head of Flexible Pipes, further strengthening its technical leadership and specialist subsea integrity capabilities.



Angela Hepworth

Scottish Renewables, the voice of Scotland's renewable energy industry, has appointed Angela Hepworth as its new Chief Executive Officer. She joins Scottish Renewables from Drax.



Giovanni Corbetta

Unique Group, global leaders in subsea technologies and engineering, has appointed Giovanni Corbetta as the new Chief Executive Officer, bringing more than three decades of leadership experience.



Scott McGinigal

Serica Energy has appointed Scott McGinigal Chief Operating Officer leading safe, reliable and cost-efficient operations across Serica's assets. Scott joined Serica from Nexos, where he served as Chief Executive Officer.



Caroline Harwood

Pinsent Masons has added to its corporate energy team in Aberdeen with the appointment of mergers and acquisitions specialist Caroline Harwood. Caroline joins the international law firm from Addleshaw Goddard.



Liz Paddon

Aberdeen Renewable Energy Group (AREG) has appointed Liz Paddon as Operations Business Development Manager, reinforcing its commitment to supporting and championing the sector in the North-east.



Fiona Ritchie & Miranda Aitken

North East Scotland College has underlined its commitment to working in partnership with the region's employers, appointing Fiona Ritchie as Business Operations Manager and Miranda Aitken as Employability and Partnerships Manager.





Josh Goolnik

Salus Technical has welcomed Josh Goolnik to the team as Head of AI Products. Josh joins with extensive senior technology leadership experience from the energy sector and will shape Salus Technical's AI product portfolio.



Sarah Layng

Costco Aberdeen has welcomed Sarah Layng as its new Warehouse Manager. Sarah brings nearly 30 years of dedicated service with Costco, along with extensive experience in Canada, Manchester, Oldham and Haydock.



Karolis Zaksauskas

Aberdeen-based Mearns & Gill, Scotland's longest-running creative marketing and events agency, has appointed Karolis Zaksauskas as Web Developer, further strengthening its extensive web capabilities.



Callum Duncan

As part of Mother Technologies' ongoing expansion of its technical team to support both existing and future customers, the company has welcomed Callum Duncan to the team as a Systems Engineer.



Alex Busch

Following a comprehensive recruitment process, VSA has appointed Alex Busch as its new Chief Executive Officer. Alex brings more than 20 years of leadership and frontline experience across the social care and education sectors.



Matthew Allan

Matthew Allan, Audit Director at Aberdeen-based accountancy and business advisory team Azets since 2022 and an experienced accountant of more than 16 years' standing, has been promoted to Partner

ESS Energy celebrates 'Next Wave' of future offshore managers

ESS Energy, specialist provider of foodservice and facilities management to the offshore sector and related industries, is celebrating the graduation of the first cohort from its 'Next Wave' programme, designed to develop future chef managers for the sector.

'Next Wave: Navigating Your Future' is a 12-month course for talented chefs with the potential to progress and blends practical experiences with leadership development.

Six candidates have spent a year completing on-the-job training, workshops with subject matter experts, e-learning and practical work, culminating in a final project to develop the knowledge, capabilities, behaviours and competencies required to be a successful chef manager. They have received individual support, advice and guidance from a senior mentor throughout.

Successful completion of the course was marked at a special graduation event held at an ESS client site in Aberdeen. Delegates presented their final projects, enjoyed a lunch prepared by ESS chefs and received recognition awards along with a chef jacket, hat, knife and certificates. The event was supported by ESS supply partners.

ESS' chef managers provide a home-from-home experience for offshore workers who are away for two to



three weeks at a time, while living offshore themselves for extended periods.

The energy industry has a well-documented aging workforce, and ESS has designed the programme to ensure a strong pipeline of managers coming through. It reinforces the company's commitment to upskilling its people and investing in their development, as well as providing reassurance to clients around service continuity.

A new cohort has already started their Next Wave journey, and ESS is set to announce an exciting new development to the course later this year.

Six-figure investment uplevels capabilities for J+S Subsea Ltd

Leading subsea controls specialist J+S Subsea Limited has unveiled a new state-of-the-art testing facility as it targets expansion in key emerging markets.

At a cost of almost £140,000 and with support from



Energy Transition Zone Ltd (ETZ), Aberdeen-based J+S Subsea Limited has created two dedicated test bays for its fast-mate renewables connection system. The test bays are rated to 30,000 psi and will advance the company's capabilities in the renewables and CCS sectors as well as energy transition activities such as decommissioning and late life asset support.

The purpose-built test cell will enable the supply, manufacture and rigorous testing of state-of-the-art electrical and hydraulic connection technology ensuring the safe, efficient and reliable transmission of power in subsea environments.

The new testing facility will strengthen the company's product offering and create the potential for further recruitment to add to the 32-strong team.

J+S Subsea Limited Managing Director Phil Reid said: "This latest investment marks another important step forward for our business. With the support of ETZ Ltd and our move to significantly larger premises in late 2024, we are working towards long-term, sustainable growth."

Neil Young, Deputy Chief Executive of ETZ Ltd, said: "J+S Subsea is a great example of the world-class supply chain capability we have here in the North-east of Scotland. Through the ETZ Ltd Challenge Fund, we are helping ambitious companies invest in innovation and new capabilities that enable them to diversify, accelerate market entry and support business growth. We were delighted to support this project and see investment in the new testing facility, exactly the type of project the Challenge Fund was designed to support."



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