

NORTH HIGHLAND CONNECTION

AUGUST 2024



CAITHNESS
CHAMBER of
COMMERCE

STRONGER
TOGETHER

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POWER OF COMMUNITY: COMMEMORATING 50 YEARS OF BUSINESS UNITY IN THE NORTH HIGHLANDS

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Jacobs is recruiting in Caithness.

We are recruiting these roles for our Scrabster office: decommissioning consultant, EC&I engineer, safety case consultant, and asset manager. As part of our Decommissioning & Regeneration Solutions business, you will help our clients deliver major projects across the UK and beyond. More details about these vacancies can be found on careers.jacobs.com by searching 'Scrabster' as the location.



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Jacobs

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The Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage, Noss Head

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S INSIGHT

CAITHNESS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Naver Business Centre Naver House | Naver Road | Thurso | Caithness KW14 7QA
T: 01847 890076 | E: info@caithnesschamber.com | W: caithnesschamber.com

As we prepare to celebrate 50 years since the first chamber of commerce was established in Caithness at our Annual Dinner on September 12th, we are reflecting on this significant milestone. It represents the strength and unity of the businesses in our region, and we are eager to commemorate this achievement. The focal point of Caithness Chamber's annual dinner will be our Business Awards ceremony, which provides a fantastic opportunity for young companies and entrepreneurs to shine, showcasing their successes and allowing us to acknowledge and celebrate their achievements.

We are also delighted to once again sponsor Inverness Chamber's Highland Business Award for Resilience. Our mission remains to nurture a successful, sustainable, and diverse North Highland economy. Our motto, "Stronger Together," embodies our commitment to this goal, and these awards exemplify the power of community and the strength that comes from uniting to uplift and support one another.

Although it's fantastic to celebrate the big wins and awards, small acts of kindness and kinship are sometimes the most heartwarming. It's inspiring to see our members supporting one another and coming together within our local network. A prime example of this is Ben Makin, a Caithness Chamber member and owner of the Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage. Ben has launched a new Facebook group, 'NC500 - Places to Stay,' to promote B&Bs, holiday cottages, pods, lodges, and other accommodation to travellers planning a North Coast 500 trip by car. This platform allows hosts to post late availability, special offers, and respond to visitors seeking places to stay. It's a testament to how a small initiative can significantly strengthen our community, perfectly embodying the spirit and camaraderie that make the North Highlands so special. The stories in the pages that follow indeed echo this same ethos and it's heartening to see businesses working hard to drive



economic and social prosperity in the North Highlands.

Caithness Chamber of Commerce has had a successful year, welcoming new members and actively connecting with our members through various engaging events. We have launched a new series of Speed Networking events, providing members with invaluable opportunities to establish connections and enhance their business visibility in a relaxed setting. Our next Speed Networking event will be held at the Ulbster Arms Hotel in Halkirk on August 21st. We would be delighted to see you there, so please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you would like to come along.

Our chamber is a testament to the unwavering dedication and collective efforts of our members, staff, and supporters. As we look forward to the next milestone, we remain committed to fostering a dynamic and resilient business environment. By continuing to support one another and advocating for the unique strengths of our region, we can ensure that the North Highlands thrives and prospers for generations to come. Here's to celebrating our past achievements and embracing the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

Trudy Morris
Chief Executive,
Caithness Chamber of Commerce



EVENTS

21.08.24

Speed Networking, The Ulbster Arms Hotel, Halkirk

28.08.24

Member's Insight: Caithness Chamber, Apprenticeships

11.09.24

Business Breakfast with Thistle Wind Partners, Mackay's Hotel, Wick

12.09.24

Caithness Chamber 50th Annual Dinner

25.09.24

Member's Insight: BBM Solicitors, Legal Processes and Pitfalls in a perilous world

03.10.24

Caithness Chamber Annual General Meeting

09.10.24

Member's Insight: Highland News & Media, News Coverage to Benefit Businesses

13.11.24

Member's Insight: Kirsteen Campbell Women's Health Coach & Trainer, Women's Health in the Workplace

Visit our website for booking information or email
Fiona@caithnesschamber.com

PREMIER PARTNERS





MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT

O'BRIEN RECYCLING: LEADING THE CHARGE IN ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL

Rooted in the Highlands, Driven by Sustainability: Discover How O'Brien Recycling is Shaping a Greener Future.

Located on their family croft in East Caithness, with breathtaking vistas over the North Sea, O'Brien's Recycling is a standout in the recycling industry. Originally established as a scrap business in the 1980s, this family-run enterprise has been a cornerstone of the North Highlands community for over three generations. By adding skip hire and waste management to their services in 2014, their unwavering commitment to 'Zero Waste to Landfill' has turned waste into valuable resources, fostering sustainability and innovation in their community.

With the husband-and-wife team, Alan and Lisa, now leading the charge, the SEPA-accredited O'Brien's Recycling is poised for a bright and sustainable future, and their dedication is making a lasting impact on both the environment and the local economy.

YOU COMMIT TO ENSURING 'ZERO WASTE TO LANDFILL'. CAN YOU EXPLAIN HOW THIS IS IMPLEMENTED ACROSS YOUR OPERATIONAL PRACTICES?

Our commitment to 'Zero Waste to Landfill' is central to everything we do. Each skip we process is meticulously sorted by hand and segregated into specific waste streams to ensure that nothing is missed. We recycle or reuse everything we handle, and any material that cannot be reused is sent for further processing or converted into waste-to-energy. This rigorous approach ensures that we minimise our environmental footprint and contribute positively to the circular economy.

Our meticulous sorting process and partnerships with specialised processing facilities enable us to uphold our sustainability commitment and consistently achieve our 'Zero Waste to Landfill' goal. O'Brien's is proud to be the only SEPA-accredited recycling centre north of Aleson, providing a vital local recycling and waste management facility for Caithness, Sutherland, and the northern Highlands.

WHAT SERVICES DO YOU OFFER AND WHAT DIFFERENTIATES YOUR BUSINESS FROM YOUR COMPETITORS?

Our waste management licence offers our customers complete

peace of mind. Being SEPA-controlled means we adhere to strict protocols, and our commitment to waste segregation is guaranteed as all processes are conducted in-house.

We offer a wide range of services, including skip hire, scrap metal recycling, and comprehensive waste management solutions. What truly sets us apart is our hands-on approach and dedication to ensuring that every piece of waste is handled responsibly.

Our family values, combined with decades of expertise and a forward-thinking mindset, ensure that our customers receive reliable, environmentally conscious service that makes a real difference. We work in partnership with our customers to help them meet their own sustainability commitments. This commitment is just one way we contribute to a more sustainable future for all.

IN WHAT WAYS DOES O'BRIEN'S RECYCLING CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY IN CAITHNESS? ARE THERE ANY PARTNERSHIPS OR INITIATIVES YOU'RE PARTICULARLY PROUD OF?

We are deeply invested in our local community, and giving back is a core principle of our business. We proudly sponsor several local sports clubs and groups, promoting health, wellness, and community spirit in Caithness, including, Wick Academy, Wick Golf Club, Brora Rangers, Keep Lybster Tidy, and Thrumster Primary School.

As a family-run business operating for over three generations, we also provide stable employment opportunities. Our small but growing team is comprised of individuals from the local area, ensuring that our success directly benefits the community.

LOOKING AHEAD, WHAT ARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR O'BRIEN'S RECYCLING? ARE THERE ANY UPCOMING PROJECTS OR GOALS THAT EXCITE YOU?

We are proud of our journey and excited about the future. Our values and accreditations have helped us secure new contracts with major organisations in the region, including NRS Dounreay, NHS Highland, Vestas, Farrans, and SSE. We believe that by continuing to innovate and expand our services, we can make an even greater positive impact on our environment and community.

We are particularly excited about upcoming projects that will enhance our recycling capabilities and further reduce waste. These initiatives will reinforce our commitment to sustainability for generations to come and ensure that O'Brien's Recycling remains at the forefront of environmental responsibility in the North Highlands.

obrienrecycling@btinternet.com | www.obrienrecycling.co.uk

EXPANDING HORIZONS:

GOW'S LYBSTER, STRATEGIC GROWTH IN VENTILATION SYSTEMS

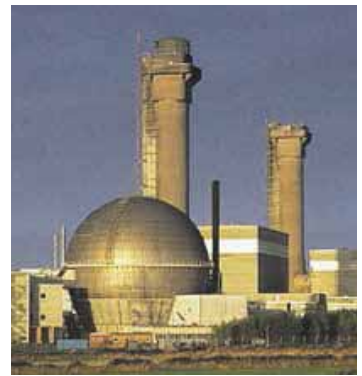
When you are providing bespoke mechanical engineering services to a diverse range of clients and sectors like Gow's Lybster Limited does, it is always best to assume that there are never two contracts the same and that a flexible approach to meeting your clients' needs is best adopted.

The civil nuclear decommissioning, defence and energy sectors have been seeking input into projects and issuing tenders for new or upgrades to ventilation systems at their facilities across the UK. This was music to our ears, as Gow's Lybster Limited has an established track record for ventilation projects primarily in Scotland and we had been seeking to extend the range of our services to include nuclear establishment in England and Wales. Our first major ventilation opportunity outwith Scotland was in the energy sector for the provision of a new ventilation system in a new build facility at UKAEA's Site in Oxfordshire. Whilst we were not expecting an instant success, we were extremely pleased to be awarded a contract with a value of

£1.5m to undertake the supply, manufacture, installation and commissioning of the ventilation system for UKAEA.

Since the above success, we have won further ventilation contracts working directly for new clients on the Sellafield, Hinkley Point A and Springfields Sites. Also, we were recently awarded a contract by Jacobs as part of their delivery team for the upgrade of the ventilation system at the Prototype Fast Reactor (PFR) Facility on the Dounreay Site. In total over the last 2 years, we have secured ~£11.5m worth of work, of which £4m has been delivered with the remaining £7.5m being delivered over the next 18 months. We will continue to invest and grow our workforce, including Apprentices and look towards the introduction of new innovative technologies.

www.gows.co.uk



FRANCE MEETS CAITHNESS:

HOW AN OWNER/OPERATOR OF FRENCH NUCLEAR SITES CAN BENEFIT A REGION AT THE FOREFRONT OF UK NUCLEAR.

Orano has been working at Dounreay for decades, offering everything from specialist safety support to cutting-edge approaches to decommissioning planning. Orano is an international leader in the nuclear fuel cycle and an owner/operator of sites in France that have clear parallels with nuclear decommissioning and waste management activities in Caithness.

Orano Limited, the group's UK entity, acts as a gateway to this global expertise, combining unique, international experience with the knowledge of its locally-based UK teams. Having received consistent positive feedback from its clients, Orano looks forward to building a bright future in Caithness.

In the last few weeks, members of Orano's Senior Leadership Team have been in the area, engaging with stakeholders at Dounreay, the Caithness Chamber of Commerce and the local supply chain. Orano is in a period of significant growth and aims to harness the full power of France: British collaboration to deliver solutions for technical challenges at Dounreay, while also



enhancing its UK jobs offer, and making a positive impact in the local areas in which it operates.

So, what can we, as Orano, offer Caithness? Innovative nuclear solutions will always be at the heart of what we do, but we also want to collaborate with and support local areas.

Yes, we can play a part in Dounreay's mission to decommission the site in the safest and most effective way, but we also have opportunities and perspectives that could support the development of resilient local supply chains and promote opportunities to be part of a bright nuclear future.

www.oranoprojects.uk



THISTLE WIND PARTNERS TO HOST SUPPLY CHAIN EVENT IN CAITHNESS

Thistle Wind Partners (TWP), an offshore wind developer established in 2020 by a consortium of DEME, Qair, and Aspiravi, is set to host a significant Supply Chain Event in Thurso on September 11th. This event offers a unique opportunity for businesses to engage directly with TWP and explore future prospects in the North Highlands.

In January 2022, TWP was awarded two ScotWind leasing sites by Crown Estate Scotland for offshore wind development. One of these is The Ayre Offshore Wind Farm, a 1GW floating-foundation project located 57km from Wick, Caithness. The project is situated in the NE2 leasing zone, covering 200km² of deepwater.

The Ayre Offshore Wind Farm, utilising a combination of floating and jacket foundations, represents a diverse and exciting opportunity for technology developers and the Scottish supply chain.

The upcoming supply chain event, organised by the Caithness Chamber of Commerce, aims to introduce businesses to these opportunities and discuss the potential for collaboration in the Highlands. Attendees will have the chance to connect with the TWP team and gain insights into future projects and developments.

Find out more and register on the Caithness Chamber website.

<https://www.caithnesschamber.com/events/business-breakfast-with-thistle-wind-partners/>



TWO

ONE:**West of Orkney Windfarm provides £50,000 to North Highland apprenticeship scheme.**

Businesses and apprentices in the north Highlands can look forward to developing new skills for a greener future, thanks to additional support from the West of Orkney Windfarm. The wind farm developer – which is planning a major offshore windfarm 25km off the Sutherland coast – has donated £50,000 to support a new apprenticeship programme.

The funds will go to FutureSkills, an apprenticeship grant scheme designed to tackle skills shortages and drive investment in new opportunities for businesses and young people in Caithness and north Sutherland. FutureSkills was established in March this year with initial funding from NRS Dounreay and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority. The initiative is being led by the Caithness Business Fund and will offer eligible businesses the opportunity to access grant support of up to £24,500 over a maximum period of three years, towards employment and associated training costs of an apprentice.

TWO:**A day at the Latheron Show: Promoting Health and Wellbeing (More than Motivation)**

The annual Latheron Show, renowned for celebrating rural life and community spirit, took a refreshing turn this year with the introduction of the Health and Wellbeing tent. This new addition, aimed at promoting physical and mental wellness, featured an array of expert speakers, including Fiona Macintosh from More than Motivation. Fiona addressed a packed tent on the pressing issue of stress management, discussing the pervasive impact of stress on daily lives, and highlighting its physiological and psychological consequences. Drawing on both scientific research and personal anecdotes, she emphasised the importance of recognising stress symptoms early and taking proactive



THREE

measures to manage them. Fiona shared effective relaxation techniques, and strategies for growing resilience, providing attendees with practical tools to combat stress.

The collective wisdom shared in the Health and Wellbeing tent left a lasting impression on attendees, equipping them with valuable tools to tackle stress and cultivate resilience. The Latheron Show continues to be a beacon of community engagement, and this new focus on health and wellbeing only enhances its appeal, promising even greater things for the future.

morethanmotivation.co.uk

THREE:**CC Chocolatier Launches New Shop Full of Tempting Treats!**

It's been a whirlwind of a year for CC Chocolatier since winning the Young Business Award at the Caithness Chamber Annual Dinner in 2023. The business has undertaken a major revamp of their kitchen workshop in Bower and has added a new shop to their premises!

Alongside their workshops and renowned afternoon teas, CC Chocolatier is now offering a tempting array of patisserie cakes and treats for takeaway each week. The mouthwatering selection features delights such as Turkish Delight, rich buttery croissants, cheesecake, rich chocolate fudge cake, eclairs, fresh strawberry tarts, macarons, and, of course, their handmade chocolates – just to name a few! Mandy Boydell, the owner of CC Chocolatier, has also collaborated with local crafters and artisans, providing space in the shop for them to showcase and sell their products. She commented, "We have seen a steady increase in tourist traffic through our doors this year, with more and more visitors venturing off the NC500 route. We are still focusing on our pre-booked chocolate-making workshops and legendary afternoon teas, but with our shop, we ensure that no visitor leaves disappointed or hungry!"

"This year, our aim is to establish the shop as a must-visit destination. Locally, there has been tremendous support for our chocolate-making workshops, which are perfect for group events. As I always say, 'The chocolates you make may



FOUR



FIVE

only last five minutes, but the memories will last a lifetime!”
 Visit CC Chocolatier and experience the delectable treats and local craftsmanship that make them truly special at their Kitchen Workshop in Bower, outside of Wick, Caithness.
cchocolatier.co.uk

**FOUR:
 A Forss for Change!**

Located just 7 miles west of Thurso, Forss Business & Energy Park is a dynamic 200-acre site that combines modern business facilities with sustainable energy solutions. The park features 60,000 sq ft of office space, various industrial units, a 6-turbine windfarm, and an Anaerobic Digestion Plant.

Under new management since March 2024, Forss has seen remarkable growth in recent months. Existing tenants, including North Pont Distillery, have expanded their premises by a combined total of 16,000 sq ft. whilst we've also welcomed new businesses, including Carries Couthie Café which opened in July and services both the park and public.

Famed for its early life as NAVCOMMSTA Thurso, a cold war American Navy Base, Forss has a rich history which is still prevalent throughout the site today.

Choosing Forss offers numerous advantages: a sustainable environment, flexible spaces available from a range of offices to large industrial units, easy access to Thurso, and a supportive, diverse business community. Looking ahead, the business plans to further develop its renewable energy capabilities, install battery storage facilities, develop a visitor centre and construct data centres.

With a unique blend of innovation, sustainability, and community at Forss, the management team is ready to arrange tours or discuss leasing opportunities that align with your business needs.

forsspark.co.uk

**FIVE:
 Norscot Joinery Ltd Celebrates 40 Years of Innovation and Community Support**

Norscot Joinery Ltd, a leading manufacturer of timber frame kit homes, windows, and doors, celebrated its 40th anniversary in July 2024. Founded in 1984 as Fairmitre (Highland) Ltd and rebranded in 1987, the firm relocated to its historic Bower workshops. The company has consistently expanded its product range and capabilities, achieving notable milestones such as starting PVCu window and door manufacturing in 1988, launching the charming Caithness Cottage in

1990, and opening its first Inverness showroom in 1992. Norscot's growth accelerated in the 2010s with major contracts, including Natural Retreats in John O'Groats. More recently, it has achieved Gold membership with the Structural Timber Association and launched the innovative WellBe Home Project. Now under the ownership of Tom Wang, Norscot's robust presence in Inverness ensures excellent service across the Highlands. Norscot's adaptability to market demands shines through its innovations, like the WellBe concept for smart, energy-efficient homes. This includes a recent project supplying WellBe kit homes to a development in Hudswell, North Yorkshire. The company's commitment to quality and customer satisfaction is reflected in its extensive product range and numerous awards.

norscot.co.uk

**SIX:
 Getting involved in the Highlands and Islands Climate Festival**

The third Highlands and Islands Climate Festival will take place from the 1st – 30th September 2024. The festival is a celebration of community led climate action. It shines a light on the incredible work happening where we live and its impact on our people and planet.

The festival is organised by the Highlands and Islands Climate Hub and a group of active community groups from across the region. The Hub has been able to offer small grants to communities to support participation within the festival and is thrilled to have received over 40 applications from communities in Highland, Orkney & Shetland. The festival programme is predicted to see well over 100 events take place throughout the festival.

To encourage and support growth, the Highlands and Islands Climate Festival has this year launched a range of sponsorship opportunities. Businesses are invited to get involved with festival activities by hosting events, welcoming community groups into workplaces or using corporate volunteer hours to support events and community projects. Businesses are also invited to make a financial contribution to the festival which will allow organisers to build on its success and create a bigger and better festival for 2025. Sponsorship opportunities are tailored to individual businesses and will be shaped to you and your brand.

To register your interest in getting involved in the festival in any way, please contact hello@hiclimatefest.co.uk

**SEVEN:
 Taste North Food & Drink Festival 2024:
 Call for Exhibitors**

Producers and exhibitors are invited to register interest for the Taste North Food & Drink Festival 2024, set for Sunday, 3rd November in Wick. The 2023 event drew over 1,700 visitors and has been shortlisted for 'Outstanding Cultural Festival or Event' in the Highlands and Islands Thistle Awards.

Taste North 2023 featured 40+ food, drink, and craft exhibitors, chef and cocktail demonstrations, family activities, and a record-breaking Taste North Challenge. Organised by Venture North, the festival champions Highland food and drink with a strong Love Local ethos. Cathy Earnshaw, Destination Strategy Manager for Venture North said, "The feedback we received from attendees and exhibitors was that Taste North 2023 was the "best one yet". It is hard to describe the joy of the buzz and atmosphere for all the family on the day. We are planning even more for 2024!"

tastenorth@btinternet.com



SIX



SEVEN

GREEN ENGINEERS FOR THE FUTURE:

New Course and Workshop Launched at UHI North, West and Hebrides' Thurso Campus

A new, fully funded, short course aimed at engineers and technicians looking to train in green engineering maintenance skills is now open for applications from businesses.

The 'Green Engineers for the Future' five-day short course is a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, focusing on sustainability and the integration of engineering maintenance and control practices with 'green principles.'

The course will be delivered from August in the newly opened Green Engineering Maintenance Workshop based in UHI North, West and Hebrides' Engineering, Technology and Energy Centre in Thurso.

Lydia Rohmer, Principal and Chief Executive of UHI North, West and Hebrides said: "This training course is aimed at people already working in the engineering industry, who want to upskill in green engineering skills and drive more sustainable practices in their business. It will provide an important platform to help engineers and technicians apply 'greener' and more sustainable practices to their operations. This is particularly important for businesses in our region, who are leading the way when it comes to renewable energy and the move towards net zero."

The course and workshop have been supported and funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund through the Highland Council's Green Skills Training Fund.

The funding has not only enabled the construction of the new workshop but will also fully fund the initial six training cohorts for businesses. Priority funded enrolment will be given to small and microbusinesses, ensuring that local enterprises have access to essential green skills training.



industry news

'FOR PEAT'S SAKE' PROJECT PARTNERSHIP TO DELIVER PEATLAND RESTORATION TRAINING TO BUSINESSES

UHI North, West and Hebrides, in collaboration with NatureScot Peatland ACTION, announces the launch of the 'For Peat's Sake' project, introductory peatland restoration training course for businesses.

The five-day course, An Introduction to Peatland Restoration, will combine classroom-based learning with practical field trips equipping businesses with an introduction to peatland ecology, wildlife habitats, restoration techniques and hill working safety while addressing the growing need for skilled professionals in the peatland restoration sector.

Peatland ACTION, a key partner in the project, is a national programme led by Scottish Government, which offers funding to improve the condition of degraded peatlands across Scotland. Restoring peatlands is one of the most effective ways of locking in carbon – providing a nature-based solution to both the climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

Adding to the significance of this project is the Flow Country's official inscription as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, awarded in July 2024.

Recognised for its vast, unspoiled blanket bogs, the Flow Country is a vital carbon sink and a globally important habitat. This training programme will not only contribute to regional climate goals but also support the preservation and enhancement of an area of international environmental importance.

For further information or to express interest in either of these opportunities, please contact Business.nwh@uhi.ac.uk



FOUR WAYS VIRTUAL SITE ACCESS

IS IMPROVING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF WORKING IN NUCLEAR.

Candice Long, Digital Solutions Engineer, AtkinsRéalis.

My first experience of how technology could positively impact safety happened during a VR driving simulation – when I put on the VR headset, I was suddenly driving in a virtual world. I couldn't help but see it from a safety perspective, and how this technology could give people the opportunity to do hazardous things, like operate machinery or walk round a site, without ever having to be in danger.

Likewise, Virtual Site Access – a suite of tools to manage or access a site remotely, developed by AtkinsRéalis, is improving the human experience of working on nuclear projects in several ways:

Fewer site visits, fewer risks

By capturing site data, processing and sharing it on a cloud-based platform, teams can get site updates without visiting a hazardous site. By reducing in-

person visits, fewer people are put at risk on-site and travelling to site.

Automation frees up technical resource

Data sharing from site is smoother with an integrated delivery method. By automating data management and security desensitisation, technical teams have more time to focus on value-driven tasks and innovation.

Remote, flexible working

With secure-cloud-based data management, data can be accessed securely from anywhere, so individuals can collaborate more easily long-distance and work from home.

Faster collaboration, better decisions

By transferring data securely and remotely, accurate information can be provided quickly in situations where time is critical.



Engineering a better future for our planet and its people

We are a world-class engineering services and nuclear organization. We connect people, data and technology to transform the world's infrastructure and energy systems.

Together, with our industry partners and clients, and our global team of consultants, designers, engineers and project managers, we can change the world.

atkinsrealis.com

Scan the QR code to find out more



MEET THE MEMBERS

Rebel Creative

Rebel Creative is a new business operating from Wick. Rebel combines business development and communications services – supporting clients from the first spark of an idea, through delivery, marketing and measurement. Director Nicola More explains the Rebel mindset:

'I first had the idea for Rebel Creative when I was working with Focus North. It struck me that many organisations – be they small businesses, public sector or third sector – are struggling to reach their full potential due to a lack of capacity. Often we see opportunities but don't have the skills or people power to run with them. Rebel provides a 'floating' resource, working on anything from strategy development and stakeholder relations to PR and marketing.

'The business is brand new, having just launched in May, but I am already forming a network with other local professionals to fill a gap for a north Highland creative agency. Rebel also has a strong social conscience, aiming to develop local talent, operate sustainably and support one charity each year.

'I've had a pretty diverse career, taking in journalism, local government and business development. Throughout it all, it's people and stories that make me tick, and Rebel allows me to combine those passions in my own enterprise.'

rebel-creative.co.uk



No-Nonsense Nutrition

Meet Rebecca, the founder of No-Nonsense Nutrition, a business built on a passion for nutrition and empowering women to achieve their personal goals. With over a decade-long career as a chef, Rebecca expanded her expertise, graduating as a nutritionist in 2023. Transitioning from her chef's whites, her new venture focuses on food education and personalised coaching through bespoke nutrition plans.

"No Nonsense Nutrition" embodies Rebecca's commitment to evidence-based advice and dispelling the myths pervasive in today's social media-driven nutrition landscape. Her dedication to clarity and precision ensures that each client receives trustworthy information tailored to their unique needs.

Thanks to a generous small business grant from the Highland Council,

Rebecca secured essential equipment for public speaking engagements. This investment empowers her to deliver enlightening talks on nutrition and wellbeing to diverse audiences, from community groups to workplaces and charities.

Rebecca's work covers a broad spectrum of health care needs, including strategies for maintaining vitality during shift work, navigating nutrition during menopause, effectively managing nutrition with conditions like endometriosis, and unraveling the complexities of gut health. These engaging sessions are also available as webinars, accommodating virtual audiences nationwide via platforms like Teams or Zoom, perfectly suited for today's dynamic remote work environments.

no-nonsense-nutrition-coach.co.uk

SSE RENEWABLES

welcome Tongue Primary to Strathy North

SSE Renewables welcomed Tongue Primary School to Strathy North Wind Farm as part of their ongoing accreditation as an Eco School. All 31 children visited over two days.

The Site Supervisor explained how the wind turbines are built and operated, answering some very insightful and challenging questions from the pupils.

They also learnt about forestry management as part of the removal of the non-native forestry at Strathy South and the planned peatland restoration works.

Pupils enjoyed hearing the many stories of the different animals that are seen and monitored at Strathy North and South wind farm, such as Golden Eagle and Hen Harrier.

To round off the day, the pupils were able to experience what it felt like being in at the top of a wind turbine through a virtual reality headset.

Eilidh Edgar Stakeholder Engagement Manager said "It was a pleasure to have the pupils on site, we really enjoy hosting visits for young people, who one day might go onto work for SSE Renewables. We received wonderful drawings and personal thank you notes from the pupils, we look forward to welcoming the school back as construction Strathy South Wind progresses"

www.sserenewables.com/who-we-are/scotland-s-renewable-powerhouse/



Powering a truly sustainable future



Jacobs and Langfields introduce TANICS™

TANICS™ has been developed jointly by professional and technical services company Jacobs and Langfields, specialist manufacturers of process plant for nuclear and other highly regulated industries.

It is the world's only site-deployable automated welding solution developed specifically for the safe and long-term storage of spent nuclear fuel – and it's coming to Caithness.

The system will be demonstrated to an audience of industry professionals on September 11 and 12 at JGC Engineering's Trials, Testing & Training Facility at Janetstown in Thurso.

This is a fantastic opportunity to see first hand the capabilities of TANICS - The Automated Nuclear Irradiated Container Solution - and to discuss potential applications for the system. Discover more at www.tanics.co.uk.

If you would like to attend one of the demos, please email emma.farley@jacobs.com

TANICS has been developed to address the problem of sealing and verifying long term storage containers remotely in the nuclear industry. It consists of a robotic welding system capable of producing both full and partial penetration butt welds moving around a static stainless-steel container. The system produces high quality welds in accordance with PD5500 Cat 1 in addition to the demands of the Sellafield build level criteria.

Post welding, a robotic inspection system demonstrates that each weld is free of surface defects and meets the required standard.

MOVERS + SHAKERS

LINDSAY MATTHEWS

Recruit North Highlands Caithness Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to introduce Lindsay Matthews as the new Talent Attraction Specialist at Recruit North Highlands. In her role, Lindsay will spearhead this initiative in collaboration with the Focus North partnership. Her focus will be on highlighting Caithness and Sutherland as leading choices for living, working, studying, and investing. Lindsay will also offer personalised support and guidance to prospective candidates considering a move to the region.



www.recruitnorthhighlands.com
recruitnh@caithnesschamber.com



BBM SOLICITORS

BBM Solicitors is delighted to announce the addition of two new esteemed professionals to their team.

Firstly, Tracey Aitken joins as the new Practice Manager, bringing a wealth of experience from her distinguished career in Finance and People Management

within the third sector with PPP. Tracey's role will be pivotal in supporting the firm's Directors and steering its strategic growth.

Thomas McGahie also returns to BBM Solicitors, transitioning from his previous role as a summer student to embark on his Traineeship with the firm.

Cairnmore Hill Wind Farm

REDESIGN



Cairnmore Hill is a redesigned 5-turbine proposal located approximately 4.5km west of Thurso in an area identified by The Highland Council as 'having potential for wind farm development'. It has the potential to deliver significant benefit to the local area over its operational lifetime.

RES has also partnered with UHI and pledged £60,000 over the next three years to their Student Development Fund which will empower more than 60 students to further their personal development and further learning.

Find out more: cairnmorehill-windfarm.co.uk

£3.7 million
Tailored community benefit package

£8.75 million
Business rates to The Highland Council

£1.4 million
inward investment

28,000 homes
powered by clean, low-cost electricity

16% biodiversity
Net gain across the site

21,925 tonnes
Carbon offset (compared to fossil fuel mix)

The 28,000 homes equivalent figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site together with RES' predicted capacity factor of 49.66% and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from DESNZ showing that the annual GB average domestic household consumption is 3,239 kWh (January 2024). Final wind farm capacity will vary depending on the outcome of planning permission and the turbine type selected.

INVESTING IN SCOTLAND



The West of Orkney Windfarm is being developed 30km off the west coast of Orkney and 25km from the north Sutherland coast.

With an expected capacity of around 2GW, and first power scheduled for 2029, the project will be capable of powering the equivalent of more than two million homes.



The project is being developed by a joint venture comprising Corio Generation, TotalEnergies and Renewable Infrastructure Development Group (RIDG).



More than Motivation®

By | Fiona Macintosh | Owner of More than Motivation

THE POWER OF EXPECTATIONS

4 Steps to Elevating Employee Performance through Positive Beliefs

Expectations shape reality. This simple yet profound concept, rooted in Expectations Theory, has far reaching implications for various aspects of life, from education to the workplace and even with our families.

The expectations we hold for others can significantly influence their performance and growth. This article highlights the transformative power of positive beliefs and explores why maintaining high expectations for employees' performance and potential is so critically important for today's effective leaders seeking a more engaged and more motivated workforce.

We also discuss four practical steps managers can take to harness the power of expectations and elevate employee performance.

Let's start with the concept of Expectations Theory, often associated with the self-fulfilling prophecy, which suggests that the expectations we have about others can lead to behaviours that cause those expectations to come true. Basically, if you expect someone to perform well, you will likely treat them in ways that encourage high performance, thereby increasing the chances that they will indeed perform well.

Conversely, low expectations can lead to behaviours that stifle performance, reinforcing the belief that the individual is incapable of achieving more.

While studying for my teaching qualifications, I came across a compelling story that perfectly illustrates this concept and the power of expectations.

Two lecturers at a Further Education College were assigned two different classes for the same subject (I think it was welding, but definitely an engineering type subject). Unbeknownst to them, an experiment was being conducted.

One lecturer was told that their class consisted of the top performing students, while the other was informed that their class had the lowest performing students. In reality, the "top" class was actually composed of poorer performing students, and the "low" class was made up of the high achievers.

As the term progressed, an astonishing outcome emerged. The class branded as low performing actually outperformed the class of high performers. But how did this happen? The answer lies in the power of expectations.

"The lecturer who believed they were teaching top students treated them as such, setting high expectations and providing encouragement and support. These students, in turn, rose to the occasion, exceeding expectations."

The lecturer who believed they were teaching top students treated them as such, setting high expectations and providing encouragement and support. These students, in turn, rose to the occasion, exceeding expectations. Meanwhile, the lecturer who believed they had a low-performing class likely conveyed lower expectations, which led to poorer performance despite the students' actual capabilities.

This experiment, though ethically questionable by today's standards, revealed a powerful lesson applicable to the workplace. The expectations managers hold for their employees can profoundly impact their performance and development - positively influencing employees by:

- Boosting Confidence and Self Belief
- Encouraging a Growth Mindset
- Enhancing Performance
- Creating a Positive Work Environment

On the flip side, low expectations can expose an organisation to detrimental risks. When managers do not believe in their employees' capabilities, it can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy of under-performance. Meaning low expectations can:

- Erode employees' confidence
- Stifle their growth
- Diminish their motivation.

This can create a negative cycle where employees feel undervalued and unchallenged, leading to disengagement, poor performance and a toxic workplace culture.

Implementing High Expectations is key to unlocking



employees' full potential and fostering a positive work environment. To harness this power, managers should:

- 1. Set Clear and Ambitious Goals:** Clearly communicate the expectations and standards you have for your employees. Ensure that these goals are challenging yet attainable.
- 2. Provide Support and Resources:** Equip employees with the necessary tools, training, and resources to meet high expectations. Offer guidance and support to help them navigate challenges.
- 3. Recognise and Celebrate Achievements:** Acknowledge and celebrate when employees meet or exceed expectations. Positive reinforcement can motivate them to continue striving for excellence.
- 4. Encourage a Culture of Feedback:** Foster an environment where constructive feedback is valued. Use feedback to help employees grow and improve, reinforcing the belief in their potential.

The power of expectations cannot be underestimated. Managers can harness it to inspire confidence, foster growth, enhance performance, and create a positive work environment. Ultimately, believing in your employees' ability to excel and grow is not just a managerial strategy; it's a catalyst for unlocking their true potential.

■ **Fiona Macintosh is a professional member of the International Stress Management Association, holds a CPCAB accredited Level 5 Diploma in Mental Health & Wellbeing Awareness and is an accredited Practitioner of Motivational Maps and Liberating Leadership. Fiona can help you develop a wellbeing strategy, undertake stress risk assessments to protect your workforce, and provide team and leadership development for your organisation.**

(You can delve into more detail about the benefits of Implementing High Expectations in the workplace with more in depth articles at morethanmotivation.co.uk)

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Alicante, Amsterdam, Bergen,
Dublin, Copenhagen, Esbjerg,
Faro, Gdansk, Malaga, Stavanger



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