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Jerba Campervans win First Minister's Manufacturing Award

The campervan conversion firm accepted the award from **Nicola Sturgeon** at Bute House in Edinburgh after showcasing its 100% employee-owned status.

Co-founders of the firm, **Simon Poole** and **Catherine Brookes**, along with trustee, **David Miller**, were able to discuss the company's long-term goals and ambitions with the First Minister when they went to collect the prize.

The accolade celebrates competitive and innovative manufacturing companies in Scotland which champion fair work and inclusivity while investing in the skills and wellbeing of its employees and contributing positively to the planet.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: "I am very pleased to announce **Jerba Campervans** has won the First Minister's Award for Manufacturing Leadership.

"All of the applications received for the award were of a very high standard. However, with their responsive employee driven

approach, *Jerba Campervans* best exemplified the ethos of the award.

"In demonstrating how a productive and growing company can at the same time offer real benefits to staff, community and the environment, they clearly demonstrated the principle that business for good is good for business."

During the application process, *Jerba Campervans* illustrated how the company is measurably strengthened by employee ownership, how its staff have benefitted from the scheme and how staff have provided support in other aspects of the business, including eco-friendly initiatives.

As well as its 100% employee-owned credentials, *Jerba Campervans* has recently joined The Good Business Charter which measures and recognises responsible business practices through components such as employee wellbeing.

(Continued)

**Trustee
Training**

19th January
9.30 - 11.30

Information [here](#).

The firm has also recently appointed a new managing director to take the company forward through commercial and product development domains.

Simon said: *“It is a great privilege for Jerba Campervans to have been recognised in such a high-profile way.*

“To be rewarded for the work we are doing is very humbling and this achievement marks a really fantastic opportunity for both the company and employee ownership as a whole.

“We believe that staff are at the heart of any business and we hope that winning this award will open even more doors for us as we continue to highlight the advantages of employee ownership.

“Since its inception in 2006, Jerba Campervans has focused on an ethical approach to business and an inclusive approach to working with staff. We were guided through our transition into employee ownership by Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS), a core part of Scottish Enterprise – their experience and insight has certainly underpinned our continued growth and success.

“Employee ownership makes our workplace a fulfilling and positive experience that enables employees to have a real voice.”



Jerba Campervans specialises in converting and customising Volkswagen Transporter vans for those passionate about adventure and the outdoors.

Converting Volkswagen T6.1 models, the North Berwick-based firm is officially recognised by Volkswagen as a Motorhome Qualified Converter, and is the only firm in Scotland to receive this qualification.

The firm became employee-owned in January 2018 and has seen productivity increase year-on-year.

Graeme Nuttall OBE speaking at CDS webinar

CDS is running its popular webinar series aimed at Scotland’s adviser community. The series kicks off with quite a coup – world-wide employee ownership expert, Graeme Nuttall OBE, former government adviser on employee ownership and architect behind the EOT legislation, will present the first webinar on 31st January 2023. This will be of interest to anyone with an appetite to find out more about what’s going on in the employee ownership world.

Graeme will give his views on the uptake of the EOT in the UK, and some suggestions for what might happen in future. There will be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the points raised. More information [here](#).

And if you can’t wait until January, Graeme has written a blogpost summarising his thoughts which you can read [here](#).



Graeme Nuttall

Employee Ownership Explained

Webinar Series



www.cdsblog.co.uk/webinars

Scottish Enterprise co-operative development scotland

Purposeful business award for Swansons

The much-anticipated SCDI Highlands & Islands Business Excellence Awards returned to the Drumossie Hotel tonight for an all-star celebration of regional businesses and a gala dinner. Employee-owned **Swansons Fruit Company** picked up The Highland Council Award for Purposeful Business against very stiff competition. Swansons' MD, Magnus Swanson, says he believes the company's employee ownership model was instrumental in their achievement. He says, *"By opting for employee ownership, we are demonstrating real commitment to our local economy. Our future is secure and as far as is possible, employment is safe and our employees can share in the rewards of ownership."*

The Awards, which were due to take place in September, but were postponed following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, brought together businesses from across the region to celebrate the mutual successes of one another, presenting awards to outstanding organisations across nine categories.

This year marked the return of the Awards to an in-person format for the first time since 2019,



L-R: Rory Bremner, Magnus Swanson, Cllr Ken Gowans

following a hiatus in 2020 and moving to an online format in 2021. The previous couple of years have presented many challenges for businesses and society alike, and the awards have given the opportunity to celebrate the triumphs of the region's businesses in the face of adversity.

Like prior years, the Highlands & Islands Awards welcomed a star host to provide guests with an evening of entertainment and of course, the all-important awards. This year comedian and impressionist Rory Bremner regaled guests with unrestrained satirical japey.

MSP Richard Lochhead for Moray and Minister for Just Transition, Employment and Fair Work provided a ministerial address.

New Managing Director for Kidzcare

Julie MacKenzie has been appointed to the position of Managing Director as founder Anne-Marie Dunn retires from the company.

Julie says, "It's a real privilege to take on this very important role. Anne-Marie has created something really special at **Kidzcare** and has gradually been handing over responsibility to the next generation of leadership and management. I have a fantastic team around me and I'm looking forward to the challenge."

Kidzcare became employee-owned in January 2021 as part of Anne-Marie's succession plan. Anne-Marie will continue to support the business and is remaining involved as a Trustee.



Julie & Anne-Marie

OAUK News

Great to see so many of our employee-owned companies win awards triumphing over conventionally structured businesses. Such a powerful way to demonstrate the strengths of employee ownership! Congratulations to all winners.

Interesting news from one of the vanguards of employee ownership, Northampton based Scott Bader. It's a brave – and very enlightened step – to introduce a full time permanent role with the mission of cementing employee ownership within a business. Congratulations to Sam Boustred who is the first appointee to the role. You can read more about this on [page 8](#).

Employee ownership policy is featuring again in the news. Labour MP Sir George Howarth introduced a bill that would allow preferential access to low-income workers and the opportunity for gig workers to join. The bill, introduced under the 10 minute rule in November, calls for a number of changes to current rules, particularly for SIP and SAYE schemes. Employee direct share ownership has fallen in recent years, despite being a proven way for providing productivity gains, and boosting innovation and long-termism. He says that the five year minimum investment period is no longer realistic as modern employment has changed. He suggests reducing the period to three years.

A very encouraging figure was [this piece](#) in the Financial Times which tells us that last year there were 500 applications to HMRC for EOT approvals. That's 200 more than the previous year. The article goes on to say that 40% of EOT owned businesses are in the professional services sector, and 99% of staff are happy with the structure. Malcolm Hurlston of The Employee Share Ownership Centre, an organisation which promotes employee ownership of businesses says the EOT is an effective way of retaining staff when a business is sold, strengthening the management and providing stability in communities. However, Malcolm identifies what he sees as a flaw in the legislation. The EOT can only benefit direct employees of the business and excludes non employees such as free lancers or associates who may contribute a great deal to business success.



Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan announced the “Employee Ownership Hub” to support more London businesses to become employee-owned. This is a collaboration with the Employee Ownership Association and Co-operatives UK with the aim of developing the networks, resources and conditions to help employee-owned businesses develop and thrive. The Mayor was effusive in his support for employee ownership saying *“Employee ownership creates dynamic, engaged workforces who feel a deep connection and shared purpose with where they work and who they work with. Increasing the number of employee-owned businesses is a key part of my mission to build a better London for everyone – a safer, fairer, greener and more prosperous city for all.”*

Of course, Wales and Scotland have similar support in place. CDS, part of Scottish Enterprise working in partnership with Highlands & Islands Enterprise and South of Scotland Enterprise, has had great success in growing the number of employee-owned businesses in Scotland. Cwmpas, formerly known as the Wales Co-operative Centre, has long supported businesses looking to transition to employee ownership and recently held an Employee Ownership Forum (more information on [Page 10](#)). This sounds like an immensely valuable event and I'd love to see a similar forum held to bring Scotland's employee-owned companies together.

2022 has been a good year with lots of our companies having amazing success in what is a difficult trading environment. Interest continues to increase and all signs are that 2023 will see even more businesses join our thriving employee ownership community.

Have a lovely Christmas and a very happy and successful New Year.

Slainthe!

- Carole
01786 611066



New Directors at Chemco

Left to Right: Colin Wade, Ian Gold, Brian Duncan & Masoud Goodarzi

The **Chemco International Ltd** Employee Ownership Trust has approved a Proposal by the Company Board to appoint two new executive directors – Brian Duncan, Operations Director and Ian Gold, Commercial Director.

Both are internal appointments of existing Employee-Owners in the business who have demonstrated their core values and capabilities to directors for a combined 24 years.

Colin Wade, Managing Director/Trustee commented – “I am delighted to welcome Ian and Brian to the Board where I know they’ll bring much added value to the strategic direction of

the Company. They have both worked tirelessly towards this goal for some time and their promotion now will enable, in good time, further progression for their respective teams and consequently a competent plan for succession. We wish them every success.

This announcement is being made during a period of unprecedented growth at Chemco International and supports the Company’s Vision to become excellent in all that it does; in doing so, driving even greater job satisfaction, business growth and stability for the benefit of all our Employee-Owners.

New Trustee for 2020

Project Management specialists, **2020**, have appointed Gemma Pegler as their employee Trustee. Phil Jefferies stood down from the role on his promotion to the role of Sales Director. Following a rigorous election process, Gemma was elected. Gemma is Sales and Marketing Supervisor at the company.



Gemma Pegler

MSP Visits ERS

ERS welcomed Richard Leonard MSP to ERS' headquarters in Glasgow recently. Richard was here to learn more about the company's employee ownership journey and how it's working 6 years in. The employee ownership business model is gaining in popularity across Scotland and the rest of the UK, and he was keen to discuss how this successful form of corporate structure can be further encouraged.

One of the features of employee ownership at ERS is the Annual General Meeting (AGM), where the employee owners have the opportunity to hear the company's management report on company performance and projects and ask any questions. FD Jacqui Smith talked through the financial results, and JP Renaud gave an overview of company projects. New Director Christopher Sandground gave an interesting insight into the large number of remediation projects that ERS has worked on throughout the year – from remote Scottish Islands to inner city land. Many of the questions highlighted how



sustainability is now a key consideration when it comes to doing business.

9 new employees were welcomed as the company continues to grow and the company strives to operate as an employee-centred organisation. ERS has recently formed an Employee Ownership Committee as a means to further engage the company's employees and provide a channel between the board and the employee group.

The AGM was judged to be a great success, with MD Andrew Mackenzie saying it was a direct demonstration of company values and he recognised just how much hard work went into the company's achievements.

Stewartry Care say good bye to Pauline

Stewartry Care we said goodbye to one of their longest serving members of staff recently. Pauline Drinnan officially retired after 23 years of service having started her Stewartry Care career back in 1999. Pauline has witnessed many changes in the company over the years, the most significant being the transition into Employee Ownership in 2004 since then Pauline has been issued with free shares annually and on her retirement, these had a value of £3775.

Pauline praised the company she worked with for such a long time. She said, "I have been employed with Stewartry Care for 23 years, I have enjoyed my experience and many a story I could tell over the years. I have had the opportunity to change to other companies, but remained loyal to Stewartry Care as I felt part of a family.

I have always loved my job, I have been treated fairly and have no regrets whatsoever, if you are of a caring nature and enjoy helping people, I would recommend the role of a Health Care and Support worker to you.



Today I am retiring due to ill health and having been off for a while I know just how much I miss my work, and if I could do it all again I would. With Stewartry Care being employee owned I knew on my retirement I would receive my free shares, but I have to say I was overwhelmed by their value, it has been amazing to be part of the Stewartry Care family.."

Managing Director, Debbie Cochrane said "Pauline was a valuable member of our successful team, her hard work and loyalty over the years shows what a great employee she was, I am hoping Pauline enjoys her well-deserved retirement and she keeps her promise not to be a stranger"

Great results at Workpro by CAS

Computer Application Services Ltd (CAS) is reporting excellent half year growth results. CAS is an employee-owned technology company based in Edinburgh and specialising in Workpro, a case management system for complaints handling, employee relations, information requests and other regulated case work.

The CAStodians, as employee owners call themselves, are successfully growing the customer base with a number of high profile additions over recent months and now have Workpro users in several countries. The Workpro support team has now established cloud hosting in Canada for use by government and corporate clients attracted to Workpro in any of its configurations; ombuds and regulatory complaints, finance complaints and HR casework. www.workpro.com

Business Relationship Manager, Simon Laxton, has just returned from a conference in Ottawa where Workpro user, Ontario's Patient Ombudsman addressed Canada's regulatory sector. Next up is one of the UK's premier HR conferences in Manchester where Workpro will again be on show. The UK is still Workpro's main market with 70% of customers in England.

The rest of the year is looking just as encouraging; if current pace keeps up, closer to 30% than the recent 20% growth will be achieved. The company plans to invest significantly in employees and developing the talent pool. CEO Ken Naismith comments, *"The team has been keen to get new wins in as early as possible this year to stay ahead of growing uncertainty in the economic climate. Tough times ahead are likely to bring more HR concerns and complaints from government and commercial service users. Workpro can help organisations to manage and provide insights into these issues for the benefit of all concerned. It would be naive to think that we'll be immune from the same issues as everyone else but there is every reason to see the business thrive when we can provide such value in relieving many people's pressures. The more we focus on giving value, the more we're winning."*



Rising energy costs and IT sector salary costs will impact on bottom line profit but the cumulative effect of continuing to grow the recurring licence portfolio is a much better option for CAS than making short term cost savings. High customer retention rates and the ever-growing [recurring] revenue base is taking Team CAS to where it wants to be in terms of being a self-sustaining employee owned business and a rewarding place to work. Recruitment, ongoing marketing, product and team development have been factored into 2023's plan.

The first EBT share pay-out is on the horizon as long term CASTodian Pam Thomson, Finance and Administration Manager, prepares for retirement. The company is looking to fill the big gap she'll leave in the team. More information can be found [here](#). If you know anyone who might fit the bill and be interested in working for a successful, ambitious employee-owned business then do pass this on.



Scott Bader creates employee ownership role

Scott Bader, the global manufacturer of adhesives, composites and functional polymers, has created a full time employee ownership position within the company's structure. Previously a part-time role, the new full-time role has been appointed following an in-depth, two year review and update of Scott Bader's Constitution that canvassed the opinion of all colleagues around the world. The exciting move follows other leading employee-owned businesses in having a dedicated and independent leader responsible for ensuring the employee voice is heard and acted upon.

Having a full-time Chair will offer the GMB a greater level of engagement to ensure they can express an independent view on behalf of Scott Bader colleagues, putting the voice of colleagues at the heart of everything Scott Bader does and making sure its industrial democracy flourishes. It also allows Scott Bader to once again be front and centre on the world stage in pioneering a different kind of business.

Scott Bader became employee-owned in 1951, entrusting the wellbeing of the company to the colleagues who make it what it is. The Global Members' Board leads its international and industrial democracy. It gives Members a voice and is a diverse and inclusive body that fairly represents everyone's interests.

Sam Boustred has been appointed full-time Chair of the GMB following a successful

period as part-time Chair during Scott Bader's Constitution review. Sam said: *"This step forward was possible due to the shared vision held by our Governance groups that genuinely believe in industrial democracy. The Membership overwhelmingly supported the strengthening of the GMB in our constitution review and by creating a full-time position for the Chair we are demonstrating our commitment to the changes. I am honoured to take this position and play my part in ensuring that the Scott Bader Group continues to provide the best possible service to our stakeholders."*

Scott Bader was a founding member of the Employee Ownership Association, previously called Job Ownership Ltd. In 1951, Scott Bader became one of the **first employee-owned UK companies** as Ernest and the Bader family gifted their shares to the workforce through the formation of the Scott Bader Commonwealth, a charitable trust that holds the shares of the company.

Ever since, through robust strategic management and chemical manufacturing excellence, Scott Bader has innovated the global chemical industry and now operates in every continent, across 18 offices and 7 manufacturing sites.





Lauren Gray & Gerard McMahon

Pacific Building were one of just 12 companies across the UK recognised with a special award at a glittering ceremony hosted by The 5% Club at the House of Lords last week.

The company, who were only **recently granted Gold status** by the organisation that recognises employers large and small who commit to increased, inclusive and accessible workplace training, picked up the “Breadth” category prize for SMEs (small to medium-sized businesses).

In London to pick up the award at the Lords on Friday were Pacific Managing Director Gerard McMahon and Lauren Gray, Head of HR and Administration.

The 5% club – which has a membership of 750 businesses across Britain – promotes and recognises “earn and learn” schemes such as apprenticeships, graduate schemes and sponsored students course placements that allow workers to develop their skills and potential.

A total of 129 firms committed to a formal audit by the Club to gain accredited Gold, Silver or Bronze membership, and Pacific Building were one of 107 Employers who met the Gold Standard – and one of just six north of the Border.

All these companies were then shortlisted for an award, and the team at Pacific then received the good news that they were one of the lucky 12.

Sponsored by the Open University the “Breadth” award for SMEs went to Pacific, and the

large employer prize was granted to Bell Group.

Mark Cameron OBE, Chief Executive of The 5% Club, said: *“Very many congratulations on winning our UK National ‘Earn and Learn’ Awards – SME Employer Breadth Award. This is a tremendous achievement, of which we hope you are justifiably proud.”*

“Very well done to everyone across your organisation who contributed to your submission and especially to those who are delivering the activity for which you have been recognised – it is truly inspiring.”

“We are keen that these award winners join us at future events in 2023 to talk about the secret of their success and share best practice in their emerging talent strategies.”

Mr McMahon said: *“As a company, we always say that ‘we exist to build great things’, but we can now demonstrate that we also exist to build a great business for the future.”*

Speaking at Pacific’s headquarters in Hillington today, Mr McMahon said: *“As a company, we always say that ‘we exist to build great things’, but we can now demonstrate that we also exist to build a great business for the future.”*

Pacific became an employee-owned business in January 2019, which means every staff member is a beneficiary of an Employee Ownership Trust, which owns Pacific Building Ltd on behalf of all employees now and in the future.



Wales holds first Employee Ownership Forum

Cwmpas, formerly known as the Wales Cooperative Centre, has held its first Employee Ownership Forum.

The forum has been set up to allow businesses and companies that have transitioned into employee ownership to gather and discuss how the transition into employee ownership has worked for them as founders, EOT (employee ownership trust) trustees and management. The forum has been set up to allow businesses and companies that have transitioned into employee ownership to gather and discuss how the transition into employee ownership has worked for them as founders, EOT (employee ownership trust) trustees and management.

The event, sponsored by law firm Geldards and held at their offices in Cardiff, also offered insight into those company founders who are considering EOT as part of their succession planning and gave them an insight into how it has worked for other Welsh companies.

EOT as a model is growing in Wales, with the number of employee-owned companies doubling in the past five years, and there are now 40 Welsh businesses under employee ownership. These include recognisable Welsh brands such as Tregroes Waffles, Melin Tregwynt and production company Cwmni Da. UK-wide, well-known companies such as John Lewis, Arup construction and Richer Sounds are also employee owned.

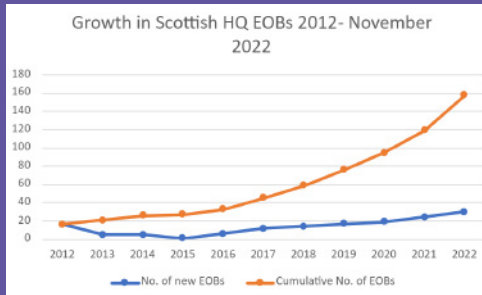
Attendees of the forum heard from experts in the field, including Nicola Mehegan and Professor Paul Cantrill from Cwmpas, about the

support it can offer businesses exploring this business model, as well as discussions around the legal and tax issues for an EOT by Andrew Evans of Geldards, company valuations from Richie Tout from Azets, and funding available for help with setting up an EOT from Bethan Cousins from the Development Bank of Wales. Representatives from over 20 companies attended to discuss everything from appointing trustee directors to governance following an EOT transition.

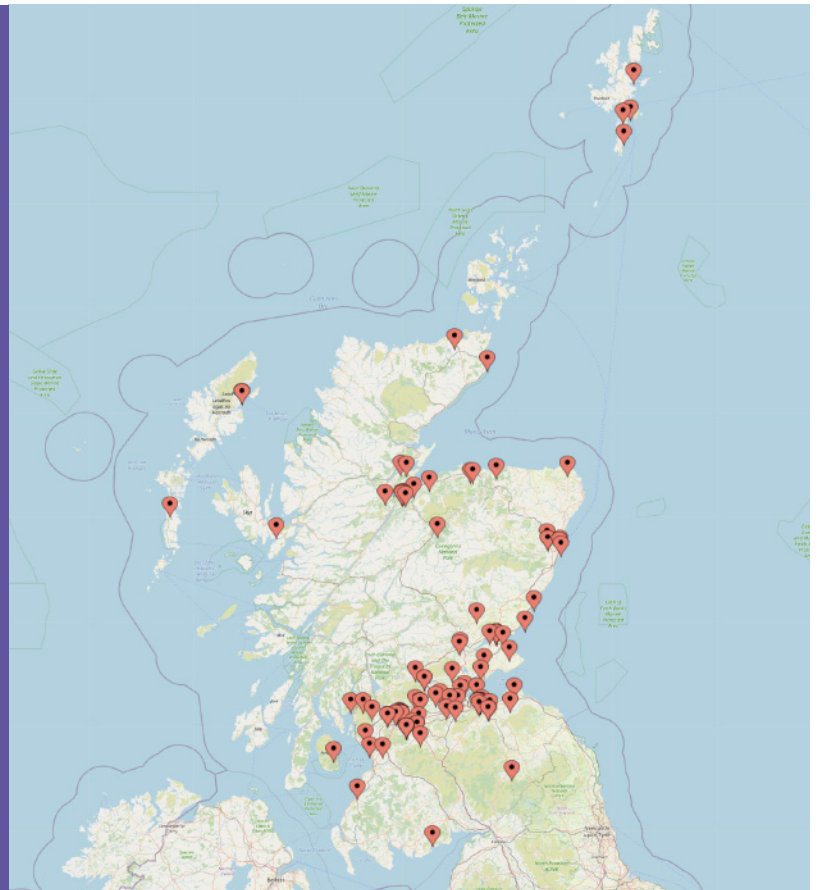
Nicola Mehegan, project manager of Employee Ownership Wales, said: *“It was great to see so many EOT business founders, trustees and managers there, all discussing the ups and downs of running an EOT company. No two transitions to employee ownership are the same as there are many different factors involved, such as the employee split, the number of employees, the make up of the trustees – so there are many things to consider when looking at the EOT model. “The overriding feeling during the forum was one of solidarity, progression and positivity for the model, which in particular offers business founders a way of passing on their business to an already invested workforce. The number of different businesses who attended from varying sectors was really encouraging to see.”*

“This is the first EO forum we have held, but we will have many more to come so we can all learn from each other and help to learn from each other’s experience of transitioning into an EOT,” Nicola added.

Employee Ownership in Scotland



OA Ownership Associates uk
let's make it happen



Trustee Training - 19th January 2023

This two hour session aims to equip Trustees to fulfil what is a pivotal role within the employee-owned company. The session is in two parts and is delivered over Zoom. You can join for both parts, or if you have already attended Part 1 or a previous session, you're very welcome to join only for Part 2.

Part 1: Information giving – legal duties of trustee, responsibilities, the Trust deed, the Trustee role. 9.30am – 10.30

Part 2: Case Study – group work on a trustee dilemma in an employee-owned company. All groups work on same case study, come together to report on discussions. Everyone says this is tremendously useful. 10.30 - 11.30

To register your interest email carole@ownershipassociates.co.uk