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# Scotland sets course for a low-carbon economy

In the next 20 years, Scotland will be thriving in a low-carbon world. Businesses and communities will prosper from better environmental performance. And decisions on health, well-being and sustainable economic growth will have the environment and sustainability at their heart.

By Scotsman Reporter

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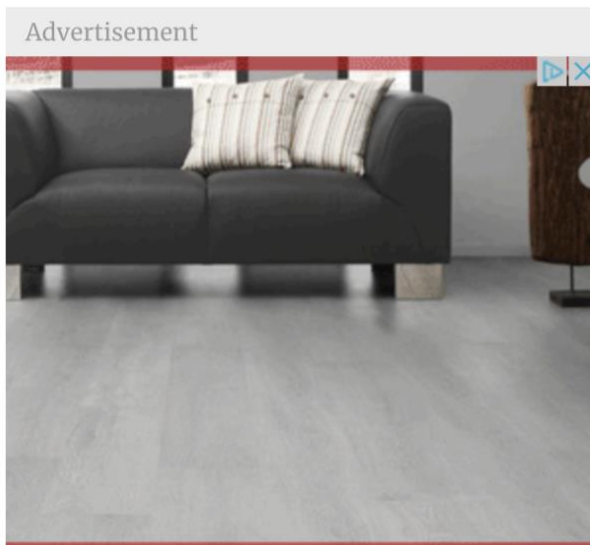
Mark Hazell of Jaw Brew visits the factory to see his beer being bottled. Picture: Iain McLean

Reflecting on the 20th year of the VIBES Scottish Environment Business Awards, Bob Downes, chair of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and head of the VIBES judging panel, said the economic opportunity for Scotland was huge.

“Scotland is already a world leader in low carbon innovation and, as we look ahead to the next 20 years, I believe we will continue to build on that reputation,” Downes says.

“Increasingly, Scotland will share and export its technology and expertise globally. And resource efficiency will be accepted unequivocally as an opportunity to unlock social and economic success. We are currently burning through the resources of three planets. So for businesses, societies and nations that develop ways to live within the resources of our one planet, the opportunities will be huge.”

The 2019 VIBES Scottish Environment Business Awards recognised 12 businesses that have taken significant steps to improve or reduce their impact on the environment, often saving money in the process.



In partnership with the Scottish Resources Awards 2019, VIBES also presented a Young People Award this year, to recognise the key role the younger generation will play in tackling climate change in the years to come. This went to Yanik Nyberg, founder of Glasgow-based Seawater Solutions, which

grows crops in seawater to offset the impact of agriculture on climate change.

Since the awards began in 1999, more than 160 businesses have been recognised.

One of the previous winners is Paisley-based craft brewer Jaw Brew, which produces a low alcohol beer that uses waste bread in place of a proportion of malt.

Mark Hazell, co-founder, said: “In the next 20 years, I expect packaging to change radically and become largely compostable, with plastic being drastically reduced.



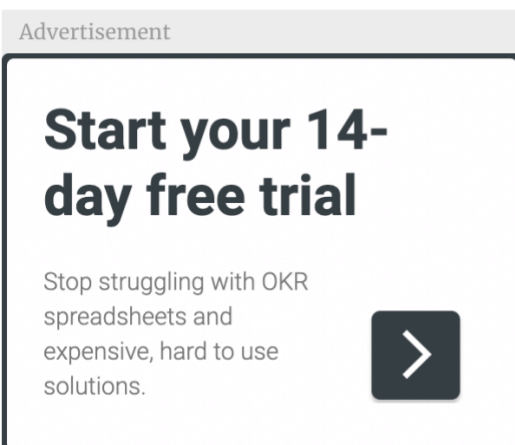
Those businesses which increase their circularity will thrive, particularly those that work together as the younger generation moves away from interacting with non-sustainable enterprises.

The amount that people care about the environmental credentials of the companies

they buy from will snowball.”

Economic development agency Scottish Enterprise is a partner in the VIBES Awards. Ian Carstairs, sustainability team leader at Scottish Enterprise, said over the last two decades the sustainability agenda had moved from “nice to do” to a business imperative.

On the next 20 years, he said: “The need to respond to the climate emergency has brought business practices in to sharp focus. We will see an acceleration of industrial decarbonisation activity and we will see the responsibility for this filtering down through supply chains.



“We’ll see an increase in ‘business for good’, where growth is pursued responsibly and the benefit will be realised by the companies, their shareholders – and by society as a whole.”

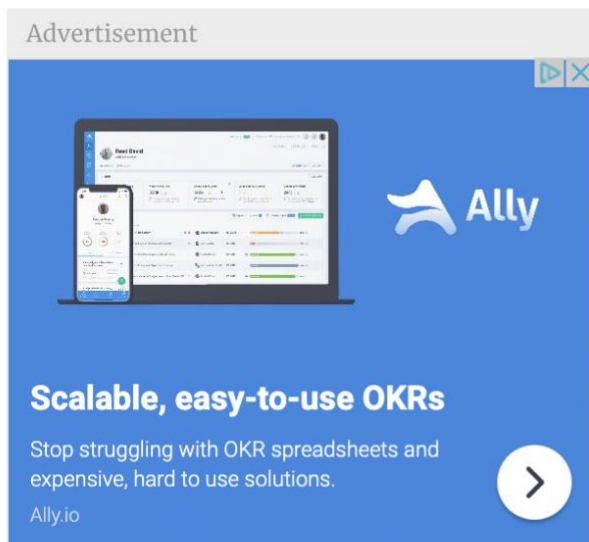


Chivas Brothers, the Scotch whisky business of wine and

spirits group Pernod Ricard, was the headline sponsor of the 2019 VIBES Awards. Environmental sustainability manager Ronald Daalmans said he had seen a shift in the focus of environmental protection over the last 20 years from compliance and preventing harm to resource efficiency, circularity and waste segregation.

Looking ahead, he added: “The future is likely to provide a wide range of opportunities for businesses and product developers with an open and flexible outlook to help deliver the challenges we face on climate, resource efficiency and habitats.

“Having the opportunity to part of that change is very exciting – and also a little daunting. But hopefully that will drive innovative solutions that will deliver healthy, happy, inclusive businesses and societies that appreciate the environment in which they operate and live. I hope Scotland, its products and natural resources will be a leader in this area.”



VIBES is delivered as a partnership between SEPA, The Scottish Government, Energy Saving Trust, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Water and Zero Waste Scotland.

The 2019 awards were sponsored by Adaptation Scotland, Bright Green Business, Devro, Farne Salmon, Mabbett, ScottishPower, Glenmorangie, PeelTech, eCom Scotland, The Scottish Government, Travel Know How Scotland, The Bay

Fish and Chips, Tunnock's, the University of Stirling Management School, Scottish Leather Group and Wave, as well as the headline sponsor Chivas Brothers Pernod Ricard.

The Awards are also supported by CBI Scotland, the Institute of Directors, the Federation of Small Businesses, Scotch Whisky Association and Bright Green Business.

To find out more about the VIBES awards, visit [www.vibes.org.uk](http://www.vibes.org.uk)

