

A vision of a bright future with an economy built on sustainable principles

The most urgent action required to help realise this prospect is to support people and businesses through the cost of living challenge, writes **Judith Cruickshank**



The past few years have been immensely challenging. From the first Covid lockdown to more recent economic challenges there's been a seismic shift in our lives.

What hasn't changed though is the sense of community felt in villages, towns and cities across the country. As we look towards Scotland's future, the importance of connection remains, as does our collective entrepreneurial spirit and reputation for leading world class innovation.

Since Royal Bank was first established back in the 1700s, we've been a strong believer in the power of Scotland's people and businesses, and we remain committed to our customers and colleagues across the country. Currently, we support one in three businesses, one in five people, one in seven homebuyers and have the privilege of being one of the nation's largest private sector employers.

It is through these relationships that we're able to understand the critical issues facing our customers as well as help identify the exciting opportunities for Scotland's economy.

Our vision for Scotland's future is an economy built on sustainable principles. One where bold ideas are supported to reach their full potential, where the true power of Scotland's renewable energy sector is unleashed and where young people are equipped with the financial capabilities they need to pursue their dreams and manage their money confidently.

The most urgent action required to help realise this vision is to support people and businesses through the cost of living challenge. As well as creating a hardship fund to support partners such as the Money Advice Trust and StepChange, we have launched a cost-of-living hub, providing practical tools, like a benefits calculator, to help those in need. We must also help create an environment where business-

es can start, grow and thrive. At Royal Bank, we're empowering businesses to scale their ambitions through our Entrepreneur Accelerator hubs in Edinburgh and Glasgow, as well as an online network for those further afield. To date, the turnover of businesses supported totals over £400 million with more than 3,000 jobs created. We have also recently launched a £6 billion fund for SMEs, including a £2bn commitment to help micro-SMEs.

Sustainability is in our shared interest, and we know that climate change is the biggest challenge facing businesses and communities today. However, as highlighted by our recent Springboard to Sustainability Report, the transition to net zero also creates an exciting £22bn revenue opportunity for Scotland's SMEs.

We have stated our mission to be a globally leading financial institution when it comes to taking meaningful action to protect the environment. We were one of the COP26 headline sponsors, along with signing up to the Glasgow Financial Alliance to Net Zero – a collective of firms from nearly 50 countries working together to build a zero emissions global economy. We have also signed a new partnership between ECCI, the University of Edinburgh and Royal Bank of Scotland, providing £1m to empower Scottish companies to take advantage of the net zero economy. As well as funding, we're also creating practical tools like our Carbon Planner to help businesses understand their own climate footprint and identify and evaluate potential actions to reduce it.

There will be many more challenges to come, but as we move closer to our 300th anniversary, Royal Bank of Scotland remains committed to supporting our customers as we build a brighter future together.

Judith Cruickshank has recently been appointed chair of the Scotland Board at Royal Bank of Scotland



Voraciously talented



This year's Marketing Society Star Awards celebrate the campaigns that stand out from the pack, says **Paul Menzies**

The Marketing Society Star Awards are developed to complement our vision to build a vibrant marketing community in Scotland renowned for enlightened thinking, innovation and creativity.

This year's awards theme is Wildly Effective Work, celebrating the campaigns that stand out from the pack, providing selective advantage against fierce competition.

Audience dynamics have fundamentally changed. Sales channels have even shifted over the past few years, and as such the efficacy of great marketing has become ever more important. I would like to extend a large thanks to Guy & Co. for creating the theme and teaming suitably feral imagery with such a primary idea.

Many of our peers are reporting reduced marketing budgets alongside increased campaign expectations and requirements. Thus, whether we are looking to improve an audience's perception of a product or perhaps change their behaviour on a more fundamental level, the initial situational analysis is crucial. The results of any action taken to further an objective must tangibly deliver to determined business or organisation metrics. No pressure then. Seeing positive results quickly is increasingly pertinent – almost like the evolution process has sped up...

The fittest ideas brought to life with colour and focus will produce the most profound outcomes, be they commercial or behavioural. We are calling for these to be shared with the Star Awards and considered entries will be peer recognised via a vigorous judging process. We are encouraging

calls from the feral stars and wildly impactful campaigns in the Scottish Marketing community across six different categories: Development, Strategic, Communication, Sector, Chairman's and Champions.

The development category has awards such as our Star School Award and Rising Stars in the industry. The Star School Award has been co-developed with Young Enterprise Scotland and recognises the importance of effective marketing within the business plan the school teams develop to support the launch of the products they create. The Star Marketing Student award is based on nominations from universities across Scotland who compete at an Apprentice Day event working on both strategic and creative tasks. The winner is invited to work in a paid placement at Edrington UK, a leading drinks company based in Glasgow.

There are six awards in the Strategic category: Integrated Marketing, Digital Strategy, International Marketing, Marketing Planning, Marketing in Society and Brand Development. The Communication category also has six awards covering a wide range of disciplines: Advertising, Design, Brand Experience, Media, Digital Communications and PR. We are also searching for marketing excellence across six industry sectors: Food and Drink, Retail, Financial and Professional Services, Public Sector, Technology Sector and Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Sport.

We have a collection of six Chairman's and Champions Awards – First Time Entry Award, SME Award, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award, Star Agency and Star Marketing Team of the Year, Inspirational



Agency Leader and the Inspirational Marketing Leader of the Year. These awards recognise the people and companies at the top of their game. If that sounds like you, or someone you know, strut forward.

Entries and nominations should be emailed to marketingsociety@lux-events.co.uk with a deadline of 13th February, and you don't need to be a member of The Marketing Society to enter.

and wildly effective

The Star Awards Gala Dinner will be held in Glasgow in June, where we expect to have over 500 marketing professionals in attendance. We thoroughly look forward to celebrating apex-predator planning, voracious talent and wildly effective work.

Full details can be found at www.starawards.marketingsociety.com **Paul Menzies, Brand and Marketing Director, Beer at C&C Group GB and Star Awards Chair**

↑ The Star Awards 2022 Marketing Team of the Year, Rokbak, with host Jennifer Reoch, right



land and Wales indicate that 859 abortions took place because a foetus had Down's syndrome of which 24 were at, or older, than 24 weeks. This means that eugenic ideology aiming at deselecting those with a certain genetic heritage is alive and well in the UK. The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has consistently criticised countries that enable discriminatory abortions on the basis of disability. This committee recommended in 2011, that countries "abol-

ish the distinction made ... in the period allowed under law within which a pregnancy can be terminated based solely on disability." To this end, a petition can now be signed on the official Petitions page of the Scottish Parliament to address such discriminatory abortions at: petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1996.

Dr. Calum MacKellar, Director of Research, Scottish Council on Human Bioethics



Golden opportunity to stop illegal killing of birds of prey

A strong deterrent and meaningful sanctions are now required if nature protection laws are breached to stop this blight, says **Duncan Orr-Ewing**



Progress on protecting our majestic birds of prey from illegal persecution has unfortunately been both slow and ineffective over the last two decades. Various piecemeal improvements to legislation have been made, but these have proven largely inadequate.

The Scottish Government's patience has also been exhausted. Successive environment ministers, who tried valiantly, have grown tired that their public warnings have been simply ignored by some grouse moor owners. As a consequence, they launched a ground-breaking consultation in autumn 2022 that will ultimately result in driven grouse shooting being licenced. This legislation presents a golden opportunity to consign illegal killing of birds of prey to the history books.

A report published by NatureScot in 2017 showed that between 2004 and 2016 almost one third of 141 golden eagles fitted with satellite tags by researchers had either been illegally killed or disappeared in suspicious circumstances – and mostly on grouse moors. This was just the latest in a plethora of research carried out over the last 20 years that showed a clear link between raptor crime and grouse moor management.

In response, the independent Grouse Moor Management Group, chaired by Professor Alan Werritty, was set by Scottish Government "to advise on the environmental impact of grouse moor management practices..... and advise on the options for licensing of grouse moor businesses". Following the recommendations of that review group, the Scottish Government agreed that the time had come to licence grouse moor businesses and also committed to licensing muirburn, and to ban

burning on deep peatland soils, our vital carbon stores.

A strong deterrent and meaningful sanctions are now required if nature protection laws are breached and to stop the blight of illegal killing of birds of prey. NatureScot must also have the powers to remove the licence to shoot grouse for a defined period. Those responsible grouse moor owners and who work with the public authorities to enhance raptor populations should not be concerned by such a system. In most other European countries game bird shooting is licenced in some form.

In recent years muirburn has also come under the public spotlight due to the damage caused by major wildfires tying up the resources of the fire services. A significant number of wildfires are due to agricultural and sporting muirburn getting out of control set in the context of dryer springs caused by climate change.

Our peatlands are our vital carbon stores covering 20 per cent of the country, and store the equivalent to 140 years of Scotland's total greenhouse gas emissions. The Scottish Government has committed £250 million over the next 10 years to help restore some of the 80 per cent of peatlands that are degraded and to help deliver Net Zero commitments. This public investment must not be undermined.

The Scottish Government has proposed a precautionary approach to muirburn, including licensing, and banning muirburn on peatland soils. We strongly support these measures, which ensure better protection for public interests. In the context of the nature and climate emergency, these actions are long overdue.

Duncan Orr-Ewing, Head of Species and Land Management, RSPB Scotland



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Petition aims to end abortions based solely on disability

A non-disabled foetus is better protected in law from being terminated, writes **Calum MacKellar**

Last November, the Court of Appeal endorsed the 2001 High Court of England and Wales' rejection of the landmark case brought forward by Ms. Heidi Crowter, a 27-year-old woman with Down's syndrome from Coventry, against the Abortion Act 1967, as amended (which also applies to Scotland).

Indeed, this Act enables a termination up until birth if the foetus has a disorder, even when the procedure is not necessary to prevent grave injury to the pregnant woman or to save her life, but restricts abortions to 24 weeks if the foetus has no disability.

In other words, a non-disabled foetus is better protected in law from being terminated, which Ms. Crowter argued, expresses a clear discriminatory message that any resulting non-disabled child is seen as having more

value and worth in society than a child with a disability. To be fair, the Court of Appeal did recognise that many people with disabilities may be offended by certain provisions of the Act and that these may be seen as inferring that their lives are of lesser value.

But the Court also ruled that a perception of what the law implies is not, by itself, enough to challenge the provisions of the Act. Indeed, Lord Justice Underhill argued that the Abortion Act 1967 was not sending any explicit or overt statement that the life of a disabled child is inferior to that of a non-disabled child.

In response, however, it may be useful to clearly determine the very few reasons why women do decide to terminate a foetus with a disability. And one of these would certainly be that having a non-disabled child is seen as