

fbm UPDATE

FIFE BUSINESS MATTERS

fifebusinessmatters.co.uk

5TH MAY 2020

ISSUE 2

WELCOME

Welcome to another issue of fbm Update! We're back sooner than initially planned, due to the positive response we've had from our readers, as well as the sheer volume of business news. It is encouraging that, at times of hardship and difficulties, businesses are going above and beyond, so read on to find out more!

Remember too, that there is plenty of advice, support, and guidance available to businesses. The **Scottish Government**, **Fife Council** and **Business Gateway Fife's** websites all have links to helpful guides and information.



Laura Poole and her partner Keith Gorman have been producing protective shields for frontline workers

COVID 19 RESPONSE: GOOD TIME FOR GOOD NEWS

The country is coming together in a time of crisis, a time of need. As we are each challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic, and whilst we remain unsure of what the future holds, what is heart-warming is the reaction of Fife's businesses. In recent weeks, many local businesses have been answering, for instance, the urgent call for personal protective equipment (PPE).

Crosshill-based **Re-Employ** has been supplying masks and visors to the frontline staff in Fife, whilst **Surface Heating Systems**, which is located in Glenrothes, has designed face and hard hat/helmet visors and has the capacity to produce up to 1,000 units a day.

Glenrothes' packaging solutions business, **Pitreavie Group**, as well as **Fife College**, have donated masks, face shields, goggles and hand sanitiser for use by frontline health and social care workers.

Hugh Hall, Fife College Principal, said:

"We hope the equipment goes some way to helping protect valued frontline workers as they continue their tireless work to keep us safe and protect the most vulnerable in our communities. They have our deepest respect."

In Glenrothes, **Mongoose Plastics**, a small family-run business specialising in vacuum forming and plastic fabrication, has produced and supplied screens to SPAR Scotland, whilst

Keela is using its manufacturing expertise to make PPE.

Sam Fernando, Sales Director of Keela, said:

"Like so many other businesses in the UK, we're keen to help in the fight against COVID-19. Our specialism is making high-quality clothing for a range of sectors and, currently, our focus is very much on providing kit to the emergency services, as well as necessary items to NHS frontline workers."

PepsiCo Cupar (Quaker) has also responded to the challenge, donating PPE equipment to local care homes, as well as contributing one million juice and soft drinks to the NHS, and on-the-go breakfasts to 100,000 NHS workers at 65 NHS sites.

And, it's not just the big businesses helping – smaller businesses are too! Laura Poole, owner of **Laura Reece**, along with her partner Keith Gorman, owner of **Black Rose Designs**, are using laser cutting equipment, normally used to make wedding stationery and engraving services, to produce protective shields for frontline workers. Having funded the first batch, Laura and Keith set up the 'Fife PPE Production' Facebook group and 'GoFundMe' page to help buy materials to make more shields.

A massive thank you to each one of these Fife businesses for your selfless contributions! Your support means a lot to all of us but to frontline staff in particular.

Fife Economy Partnership
GROWING FIFE'S FUTURE

fbm Update is published on behalf of the Fife Economy Partnership and funded by Fife Council Economic Development.

To send your comments and news stories or to be added to our distribution list, please email: editor@fifebusinessmatters.co.uk

You have been sent a copy of fbm Update as you are a regular recipient of Fife Business Matters. Should you not wish to receive a copy of fbm Update, please email: editor@fifebusinessmatters.co.uk to unsubscribe.

£100M FUNDS TO HELP BUSINESSES

Applications open for lifeline support schemes.

A £100 million package of additional grant support for small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) and newly self-employed people, has opened for applications. The three separate funds will be administered by local authorities and Scotland's enterprise agencies.

THE THREE SEPARATE FUNDS ARE:

- £34 million **Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund**, managed by Local Authorities, will be allocated to the newly self-employed who are ineligible for other COVID-19 support as they became self-employed since 6th April 2019 but are facing hardship with £2,000 grants. For more information, visit [Fife Council's website](#).
- £20 million **Creative, Tourism & Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund**, managed by the Enterprise Agencies with support from Creative Scotland and VisitScotland for small and micro creative, tourism and hospitality companies not in receipt of business rates relief with grants of up to £25,000. For more information, visit [The Scottish Government's website](#).
- £45 million **Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund**, managed by the Enterprise Agencies providing bespoke grants and wrap around business support to viable but vulnerable SMEs that are vital to the local or national economic foundations of Scotland. For more information, visit [The Scottish Government's website](#).



fbm UPDATE BRIEFS

As contactless transaction volumes are increasing dramatically following the outbreak of COVID-19, **Ingenico**, the Dalgety Bay-based global leader of seamless transactions, has been working with its clients around the world, to increase the spending limit from £30 to £45. This avoids customers touching the PIN entry, reduces queues in store and allows better social distancing. Ingenico has also been supporting its partners and merchants with further guidance on how to clean payment terminals.

Kingdom Housing Association's augmented reality technology is coming into its own during lockdown. Using this technology, Kingdom Housing Association's maintenance team can help tenants carry out routine repairs without stepping foot in their homes. Ideal during lockdown!

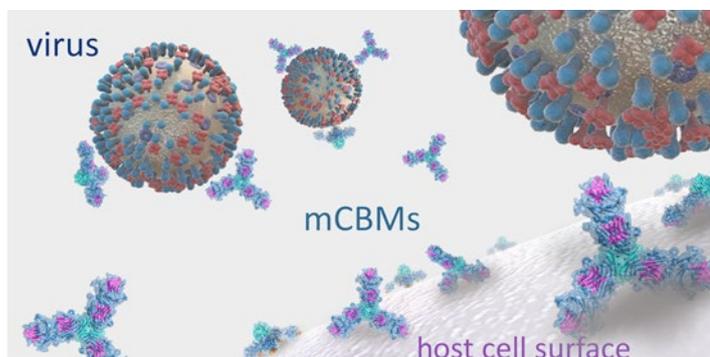
Dunfermline's **eCom Scotland** is offering valuable advice about ways to stay productive and positive whilst working from home, including maintaining regular hours, taking breaks, exercising, maintaining regular contact with colleagues, having a dedicated office space, and asking colleagues for help when necessary. It also recommends using a VPN (virtual private network) enabling secure access to all files from home; seeking online training opportunities; and being positive! For help with your digital learning journey or to take part in eCom's upcoming webinar digital learning series, contact **eCom**.

Eden Mill, which is located in St Andrews, has launched a



limited "blue bottle edition" of its Original Gin to support the NHS and healthcare workers. £2 from every bottle sold between 16th April and 14th May will be donated to Masks for NHS Heroes, a crowdfunding effort established by frontline NHS doctors to help raise money for personal protective equipment (PPE).

NEW SCOTTISH DRUG SHOWS PROMISE IN BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19



A new anti-viral drug developed by **Pneumagen**, a University of St Andrews spin out company, has had positive results in laboratory tests against COVID-19.

Pneumagen Ltd announced results from three separate in vitro studies into preventing coronavirus infections, including SARS-CoV-2 infection the cause of COVID-19, using Neumifil™ and other first-in-class multivalent Carbohydrate Binding Modules (mCBMs), generated using its proprietary GlycoTarget™ platform.

The successful studies involved treating infection and blocking new infections.

Working closely with Public Health England's Porton facility, and separately with the University of Glasgow's MRC Centre for Virus Research, Pneumagen has tested the activity of its mCBMs against coronaviruses, using plaque reduction assays.

At both Porton and the University of Glasgow, Pneumagen's mCBMs were found to reduce the number of SARS-CoV-2 plaques in these assays when the mCBMs were used in both prevention and treatment of infection.

Pneumagen now wants to begin clinical testing for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19.

Douglas Thomson, CEO of Pneumagen, said:

"Today's positive results from in vitro studies of our mCBMs against coronaviruses show that glycan binding has the potential to prevent and treat infection.

"This further supports the value of our universal therapeutic modality to block access to lung cells of SARS-CoV-2, as well as other viruses, that cause respiratory tract infections, providing the potential for a pan-viral respiratory product. Our goal is now to rapidly begin clinical testing for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19."

"Pneumagen now wants to begin clinical testing for the prevention and treatment of COVID-19."



Alistair Booth of The HR Booth

GUIDANCE FROM THE HR BOOTH

HMRC has launched the COVID-19 Job Retention Scheme portal, with the first payments now being made to employers who submitted their claims when the portal opened, and **The HR Booth** is encouraging employers to prepare their claims and get all relevant paperwork in order.

Alistair Booth of The HR Booth, commented:

"We are advising our clients to keep records for five years. It is also important for businesses to document each period of furlough, if employees are being rotated on and off - the minimum period of furlough is three weeks. The government guidance is changing regularly, and we would encourage all employers to seek professional advice on all aspects of furlough."

Alistair further noted that the HMRC has four strategies to ensure compliance, including a 'whistle blower' hotline. Other measures include the requirement for an employer to have already been authenticated by HMRC, a four to six-day processing period to make background checks, which should flag high-risk claims. Checks will also be made after a pay out to verify a claim was real.

For advice on furloughing staff contact **The HR Booth**.

BUSINESS GATEWAY FIFE continues to provide valuable advice to enable businesses to continue trading during this extremely challenging period.

Its experienced advisers continue to offer one-to-one support, via phone or video call, and can direct businesses to further support, in a bid to minimise the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. Visit **Business Gateway Fife** for more information. Further information, news, guidance and advice is also available on **The Scottish Government** and **Fife Council's** websites.

FIFE PRO-AV BUSINESS WINS BIG



Colin Farquhar, CEO, Exterity



Congratulations to technology business, **Exterity**, which has been honoured with a Queen's Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2020. The Dalgety Bay headquartered business was recognised for its ability to execute its global strategy to deliver the best professional IP video and digital signage solutions to its clients worldwide, while maximising operating and financial excellence.

Colin Farquhar, CEO of Exterity, commented:

"This is a tremendous achievement and testament to our continued investment in R&D and in the best talent, alongside our strong ties with the advisers and investors who have helped us turn our vision into a market-leading, global company."

UPTAKE ON SDP WEBINARS ON THE RISE

The **Supplier Development Programme (SDP)** is continuing to deliver its tender training for businesses in Scotland. Rather than face to face training, it is hosting online webinars, for which uptake is on the rise.

SDP is keen to support Scottish SMEs, third sector and supported businesses with guidance as to how best to use this potentially 'quieter' period to look to recovery and plan a future business pipeline.

Dot Smith, Fife Council Economic Development, said:

"SDP is a key resource to businesses at this time, creating an invaluable network to its members and also providing support in the challenges faced, both in the current and longer terms, with regard to supplier awareness, availability and engagement."

BRIGGS MARINE TURNS THE TIDE



Briggs Marine completed the installation of subsea power and data cable off the west coast of Scotland

Against a gloomy economic backdrop, Burntisland-based **Briggs Marine** has been turning the proverbial tide, having completed a significant cable installation off the west coast of Scotland, as well as winning a significant seven-year contract.

The challenge of installing a subsea power and data cable in winter was never going to be easy, but add the COVID-19 restrictions and the challenge increases exponentially! But that wasn't enough to deter Briggs Marine's professional team – in April, they completed a successful cable installation, thereby providing a safe and efficient lifeline support service to remote communities on the west coast.

In addition, the marine contractor has been awarded a seven-year contract with Forth Ports Limited for the maintenance of vital Aids to Navigation on the Forth and Tay Rivers. The contract, which Briggs Marine successfully re-tendered for earlier this year, will see the business undertake the maintenance of 81 floating aids to navigation, two mooring buoys and 35 fixed aids to navigation.

HOT WATER TANKS FOR COVID-19 HUB ON ORKNEY



McDonald Water Storage supplies hot water tanks to COVID-19 hub on Orkney

The team at Glenrothes-based **McDonald Water Storage** have pulled together to supply cylinders to the plumbing trade, including two bespoke 300 litre hot water tanks, to increase the hot water capacity for a COVID-19 hub being set up in a school on Orkney. Great work!

GOOD GUYS DOING GOOD THINGS

With one simple goal to feed everyone, whether they can afford it or not, friends Byam Trotter, owner of **Trotter's Independent Condiments**, and Tom Davidson, a chef and caterer, have joined forces to create a new menu of ready meals.

Using Byam's industrial kitchen in Kirkcaldy, which is usually used for producing chutneys, the pair, under the project name, Super Meals, have been producing a range of ready meals, using local produce.

When ordering, clients can donate meals and, for every three meals sold, Super Meals will donate one meal to a local charity or food bank. The first batch of Super Meals was donated to The Cottage Family Centre, a Kirkcaldy-based charity helping vulnerable families most in need.

Every meal is made from local ingredients, arrives chilled and can be cooked immediately or frozen on the day of delivery.

Byam Trotter commented:

"Now, more than ever, it's vital that we look out for one another, and make sure that everyone has access to food, whether they can afford it or not."

Meals can be ordered **online** or by phone on:

07712 339 275.



Byam Trotter and Tom Davidson of Super Meals

DIAGEO EMPLOYEES MAKE HAND SANITISER FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN SCOTLAND

Diageo employees across Scotland have begun distribution of more than 55,000 bottles of free hand sanitiser - produced at the company's Leven packaging plant in Fife - to communities where the company has distilleries and operations.

Working in partnership with local authorities and community organisations, Diageo's people across its network of sites across the country will distribute the hand sanitiser to where it is most needed in local communities, targeting care homes, care in the community staff and people volunteering to help the vulnerable.

The 500ml bottles of hand sanitiser are being made to World Health Organisation formulation, with the liquid developed by a team at the company's technical laboratories in Menstrie, Clackmannanshire. Production and packaging was undertaken by staff at the Leven packaging plant.

In Fife, Diageo is donating just over 10,000 bottles to the local community. The company is working in partnership with Fife Council to distribute the supplies locally as well as distributing directly in conjunction with requests from employees.

