

20 years of good VIBES: Scottish Environment Business Awards celebrates 20th anniversary

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As Scotland continues to focus on improving its environmental performance, the VIBES – Scottish Environmental Business Awards is celebrating those that have helped to make a difference since the awards were launched 20 years ago.

Many of these businesses gathered at Dumbarton Football Club on Tuesday (29 January) to mark the start of VIBES 20th anniversary celebrations; which aims to recognise those who have made a difference and to inspire others to adopt more sustainable practices.

It's a key milestone for the environmental awards and while progress is being made in Scotland's sustainable development, organisers of the awards are keen to encourage more businesses and sectors to look at how they can play their part in tackling the ongoing challenges faced by today's planet whilst embracing the economic opportunities they present.

The event focussed on one of Scotland's biggest industries, whisky which is also leading the way in environmental best practice. Distillers have implemented a strong focus on a circular economy approach as well as using low amounts of water, materials and carbon-based energy.

Attendees heard from the Scotch Whisky Association and Chivas Brothers – Pernod Ricard as well as some of their supply chain on the environmental and business benefits of a circular economy approach – just one of the many ways businesses can improve their sustainable performance.

Ronald Daalmans, Environmental Sustainability Manager from Chivas Brothers – Pernod Ricard, headline sponsor of VIBES, said: "As an early VIBES winner, the continued improvements in environmental performance over the last 16 years have highlighted the importance of partnership working to achieve our goals. This approach will be even more important for the significant challenges that remain."

Commenting, Terry A'Hearn, chief executive of SEPA, said: "The scale of environmental challenges facing humanity is enormous, with a real urgency to act. Only businesses that embrace the economic opportunity of sustainable solutions to environmental challenges will thrive.

"We want the best environmental performers to be the most successful businesses and SEPA is committed to helping Scottish businesses recognise the benefits of good environmental performance within environmental rules and regulations. Scotch Whisky is a great example, where we have seen consistently high compliance for several years – demonstrating that high

environmental performance and prosperity are mutually dependent.”

Over its 20 years, the Awards have illustrated the diverse ways businesses from across a variety of sectors are responding to these environmental challenges; from developing innovative products to making simple operational changes and as part of its anniversary VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards is launching a special award to find the best of VIBES.

This anniversary award will recognise past winners of VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards that can demonstrate their continuous improvement and their contribution to Scotland’s sustainable development. Previous winners can apply from February, and VIBES will select up to 10 entries to showcase throughout the celebratory year, with the public selecting the winner at the official awards ceremony later this year.

Terry A’Hearn, added: “The VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards celebrate business leadership in sustainable environmental investment, and are an excellent opportunity to recognise and reward companies for going beyond ‘business as usual’ and driving sustainable growth through innovation.

“It is very encouraging how many of Scotland’s businesses have led the way and are making a difference which will not only support the environment but also protect their bottom line. This was reflected in the fact that over 90% of the UK delegation for the 2018 European Business Awards for the Environment (EBAE) were from Scotland and the SEPA backed VIBES programme. I look forward to hearing more about the 20th anniversary over the coming months.”

To obtain an application form for the Best of VIBES Award, please contact vibes@sepa.org.uk. For more informant on VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards, please visit www.vibes.org.uk

Ends

Notes to editor

About VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards

VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards is a strategic partnership between Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Government, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Highland and Islands Enterprise, Zero Waste Scotland, Energy Saving Trust and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

The Awards are further supported by CBI Scotland, the Institute of Directors, the Federation of Small Businesses, Bright Green Business, Quality Scotland and the Scottish Council for Development and Industry.

The Awards are accredited by the RSA Environment Awards Accreditation Scheme (www.rsaaccreditation.org).

Issued on behalf of VIBES – Scottish Environment Business Awards by The BIG Partnership