

FROM THE GROUND UP

ISSUE 18

W M Donald
Magazine

Summer 2025

THE BIG INTERVIEW WITH IAN COBBAN

We speak with Ian Cobban, CEO of Haventus, about his career and unique insight into the challenges and opportunities driving the next phase of Scotland's energy journey.

Pages 4 & 5

WILLIE'S MILESTONE BIRTHDAY

We celebrate 70 years of our CEO and gift him with a fitting surprise.

Page 6

COMMUNITY AT THE CORE

Our team has once again demonstrated that building stronger foundations goes far beyond construction.

Page 20



Inside Issue 18



4 The Big Interview



6 News & Insights



7 Drainage & Utilities



10 People



12 Health & Safety, Sustainability



14 North Update (Highlands & Moray)



16 Aberdeen Update



18 Tayside & Fife Update



20 CSR & The Community



24 Back Page

CEO Welcome



As we head into summer, there's much to celebrate at W M Donald, not least our unwavering commitment to the future of our industry.

One of the most rewarding parts of our work is supporting the next generation. We continue to build strong relationships with schools and colleges, offering young people real insight into the career opportunities that construction can offer. From site visits and classroom talks to mentoring and apprenticeships, we're proud to help shape future talent and inspire the workforce of tomorrow.

That passion for people and progress was recognised earlier this year at the 2025 Northern Star Business Awards, where we were honoured to receive Family Business of the Year. It was a very proud moment for all of us and a wonderful reflection of the hard work and dedication shown every day by our team.

It was also a personally memorable few months for me as I celebrated my 70th birthday — a milestone made all the more special when I was presented with an International Drott 100B Series 2, 50 years old in perfect condition, and the exact same model as the very first machine I owned when I launched W M Donald back in 1977. It brought back many memories and served as a powerful reminder of how far we've come together over nearly five decades, so thank you.

From that single Drott to today's modern fleet and large-scale infrastructure projects across Scotland, we have shaped not just a successful business but a company that remains grounded in its values.

To everyone in our team, thank you for your continued drive, care, and commitment. To our clients and partners, thank you for trusting us to deliver projects we can all be proud of.

Here's to a summer of growth, opportunity, and looking ahead with confidence.

Willie Donald
Chief Entertainment Officer
W M Donald

MD Welcome



There's something particularly rewarding about this time of year. It's a season of growth — and not just in the natural world. Across W M Donald, we're seeing progress in the work we deliver, the people we develop, and the values we uphold.

As Willie mentioned in his welcome, we remain firmly focused on encouraging the next generation of construction professionals. Our partnerships with schools and colleges are going from strength to strength, and it's inspiring to see our team step up to support young people, share their knowledge, and open up real career pathways. That commitment was a key factor in us being named Family Business of the Year at this year's Northern Star Business Awards — a proud moment for the whole business.

It's also been a reflective time for us as Willie marked his 70th birthday with the surprise return of the Drott 100B digger — the machine that started it all in 1977. That moment reminded us of just how deep our roots go and how those early values of hard work, teamwork, and integrity still drive everything we do today.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on delivering exceptional projects, investing in our people, and continuing to grow in a way that stays true to who we are.

Thank you for the part you play in making W M Donald a business to be proud of.

Yours aye,

Ewan Riddoch
Managing Director
W M Donald

The Big Interview — Ian Cobban



From deepwater operations to onshore innovation, Ian Cobban's career has spanned continents, technologies, and energy transitions. Now at the helm of one of the UK's most ambitious infrastructure projects as Chief Operating Officer of Haventus, Ian is leading the transformation of the Port of Ardersier into a powerhouse for offshore wind deployment. With a background rooted in hands-on engineering and a forward-looking approach to leadership, he brings unique insight into the challenges and opportunities driving the next phase of Scotland's energy journey. We caught up with Ian to hear more about the project, his personal motivations, and the lessons learned along the way.

Can you take us back to the start of your career? How did you first get into the energy and infrastructure industry?

It all started while I was still at university. I got a summer job with Subsea Offshore Ltd (SSOL) in Aberdeen. They were a world leader at the time in remotely operated vehicles, intervention tooling, and diving services for the oil and gas industry. After graduating from what was then Robert Gordon's Institute of

Technology, now RGU, I joined SSOL full-time in 1985. That was the start of a 30-year journey with the same company, eventually becoming Subsea7, working in various international roles, both offshore and onshore, right up to 2015.

When did you know this industry was right for you, and did you have any roles or mentors that most shaped your career path?

Honestly, from day one. I loved the variety, the changing work environments, the global nature of it, and most of all, the people I got to work with.

I enjoyed working overseas, which I did for almost 15 years, as I met a wide range of very diverse people and worked with different cultures. My mentor, who guided me through some key decisions in my career, was my former CEO, Mel Fitzgerald, who was tough but fair and would always give you quality time to ensure you delivered.

What attracted you to your current role at Haventus?

After I left Subsea7, I joined Global Energy Group in the Highlands, managing the manufacture of subsea and topside structures and also working on the UK's first commercial-scale fixed seabed offshore wind farms. That experience set me up perfectly for the next challenge, redeveloping the Port

of Ardersier. It is a rare opportunity to be involved in something of this scale. It will be the largest energy transition facility in the UK and will play a major role in the future of offshore wind.

What is the Ardersier Energy Transition Facility, and why is it important for Scotland?

The Ardersier Energy Transition Facility is being developed as a dedicated deployment site for offshore wind farms. A lot of people do not realise how much land is needed, sometimes around 100 acres, just to lay out and assemble the components before they are transported offshore. That is where Ardersier is unique. It is a huge site with enough space to marshal, store, manufacture, and assemble wind components all in one place. Facilities like this are critical if we are going to roll out offshore wind at the pace and scale needed to meet the UK's net-zero and energy security goals.

How does this project differ from others in your career, and what does it mean to you personally to lead such a significant project?

This project is unique in many ways. While there are similarities with other projects in terms of energy, infrastructure, and offshore wind, what makes it special is that we're starting with a blank canvas. The scale is unlike anything I've worked on before, and



we're creating something that could shape the future of energy deployment in the UK.

It's a big responsibility but also incredibly exciting. I'm proud to be working with a fantastic team, both in-house and with our contractors, all committed to delivering something world-class. This project is about more than just building infrastructure; it's about enabling future growth, creating opportunities, and making a lasting positive impact on the Highlands for generations to come.

How did your working relationship with W M Donald begin, and how has the team contributed to the Ardersier project?

I have known Willie Donald for years and always admired the quality of the work his teams deliver. That longstanding respect made it very natural to involve them in Ardersier.

The teams have played a key role. They have delivered work on the approach roads and a new roundabout, significantly improved the site entrance, and supported utility preparation. Right now, they are also doing groundworks within the site itself. They have been a reliable and responsive partner throughout.

What makes strong contractor relationships essential for projects like this?

Strong relationships are everything. You need trust, openness, and the ability to hold each other to account. Projects work best when everyone is pulling in the same direction, having honest conversations, sharing problems early, and working collaboratively to solve them.

Looking Forward, what is next for the Ardersier facility?

This year is about delivering our dredging and completing the main civil works on the quay wall. That will allow us to bring the facility into full operational use later in 2025. After that, we are planning further expansion, around 940 metres of additional quay wall and more usable land. The demand is already there, so we are building to match it.

How do you see Scotland's energy transition developing in the coming years?

It is not a question of if, it is when. Scotland has the natural resources to be a leader in low-carbon energy across Europe. Offshore wind will lead the way, but we will also see other technologies like hydrogen, tidal, and wave energy playing an increasing role. That shift will bring exciting career opportunities across energy, construction, and manufacturing, particularly for the next generation.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

I get to build something that will genuinely make a difference to the Highlands and to Scotland. That is incredibly motivating. I also enjoy supporting my team. Many of them are much younger than me, and I enjoy helping them grow, develop, and solve the day-to-day challenges that come with a major infrastructure project.

How do you stay motivated when facing project challenges?

As engineers, we are problem solvers at heart. Challenges do not drain me. They

energise me. Working through issues, finding solutions, and delivering outcomes is one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

What do you do to unwind outside of work?

When I do get time, I enjoy being outdoors. Gardening, stalking, and shooting are things I really enjoy. I also like spending time with family and friends. That is where I really recharge.

Has anyone or anything particularly influenced your leadership style, and what has been your most valuable lesson from your career so far?

I try to lead by being open, honest, and reliable. I trust my team to deliver, but I also like to stay close to the technical detail, so I ask questions and stay engaged with the nuts and bolts of what we are doing. Guidance and understanding go hand in hand.

My most valuable lesson: teamwork. A high-performing team will always deliver more than a group of individuals. If you build trust and create the right environment, the results will come.

What advice would you give to someone starting in this industry?

Take any opportunity you are given, and get out of your comfort zone. If you are asked to go onsite, offshore, or overseas for a short or long period, seize the opportunity — you will be amazed how much quicker you can progress your career, and you will be surprised at what you are capable of.

W M Donald Wins Family Business of the Year at Northern Star Business Awards 2025

We are thrilled to announce that W M Donald has been named **Family Business of the Year** at the **Northern Star Business Awards 2025**, hosted by **Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce**.

The award recognises the strength, legacy, and resilience of family-owned enterprises that go above and beyond — not only in delivering commercial success but also in creating a lasting positive impact within their communities. For us, this honour is deeply personal.

Founded in 1977 by Willie Donald, our company has remained firmly rooted in family values, with successive generations helping to shape the business into the leading civil engineering firm it is today. From the early days with a single digger to a workforce of over 300 and a wide-reaching portfolio of infrastructure projects, we have always believed that people, and relationships, are at the heart of everything we do.

Receiving this recognition is a testament to the incredible effort and dedication of our team across all levels of the business. It's also a proud reflection of our ongoing commitment to innovation, partnership, and investing in the future, both within the company and the communities we serve.

Thank you to the Chamber, the judges, our fantastic clients, and most of all, our people — past and present — who make W M Donald what it is. Here's to continuing our journey, grounded in tradition and driven by progress.



Celebrating Willie Donald's 70th With a Nod to the Past — and the Legacy He Built

This spring marked a very special milestone for our founder and CEO **Willie Donald**, as he celebrated his **70th birthday** surrounded by family, friends, and colleagues.

In true W M Donald fashion, the celebration didn't just look back on the years — it honoured the incredible legacy that Willie continues to build, and there couldn't have been a more fitting birthday surprise! Willie was presented with a Drott 100B Series 2 digger, the exact same model as the very first machine he owned and used to launch the business back in 1977.

For those who know the story, that first digger wasn't just a piece of equipment — it was a symbol of grit, determination, and belief in what could be achieved

with hard work and heart. Seeing Willie reunited with the same model brought a wave of nostalgia and pride for everyone who has been part of the journey.

From that single Drott to today's modern fleet and large-scale infrastructure projects across Scotland, Willie's leadership and vision have shaped not just a successful business but a company that remains grounded in its values.

As we celebrate his 70 years — and nearly 50 of those dedicated to building W M Donald — we honour not just a founder, but a mentor, innovator, and inspiration to all of us. Here's to Willie, and to the foundations he laid — quite literally — from the ground up.



Our Current Projects

The Utilities Team continues to deliver high-quality infrastructure solutions across multiple live sites. Here's a snapshot of the key projects currently in progress:

Bridge of Don to Blackdog — Rising Main Installation

A 3km stretch of 180mm HPPE Rising Main is being installed for Kirkwood Homes, connecting Bridge of Don to Blackdog. The project is especially complex due to the main being laid within the live A90 dual carriageway, requiring careful traffic management, phased works, and a focus on safety without compromising productivity.

Grandhome — Water Mains Upgrade

In Aberdeen, we're working with The Grandhome Trust to install a 450mm HPPE water main upgrade at the Grandhome development. This vital infrastructure supports a growing residential area and reflects our expertise in delivering large-scale water projects in evolving urban environments.

Whyte & Mackay Distillery — Invergordon

At the Invergordon site for Whyte & Mackay, our team is delivering a multi-disciplinary package involving both 180mm and 315mm HPPE water mains, along with sprinkler tank installations. This work supports operational safety and resilience for the distillery, and showcases our capability in high-spec industrial settings.

Robertson Homes — Glenrothes Water Main Diversion

The team are carrying out a 14" cast iron water main diversion for Robertson Homes in Glenrothes. This essential task is part of enabling works for a new residential development, where accuracy and coordination with local utilities are key to minimising impact and maintaining programme timelines.



Watch this space!

Willie Donald and Andy Ladley recently set foot on our home champions' turf. The duo were laying concrete at Pittodrie for the new LED screen, which is being fitted in the corner of the south stand as part of AFC's plans to enhance the matchday experience for fans. We can't wait to get even closer to the action!

Glenagnes Project Hits Major Milestone

The Utilities Team has reached a significant construction milestone at the Glenagnes project featured in our last edition, with cable pulling operations now underway on site. This marks a pivotal stage in the programme and is a testament to the planning, precision, and teamwork driving the project forward. Cable installation is a critical step, and its successful commencement reflects the team's strong performance under pressure.



Pipes, Portals, and Partnerships — W M Donald's Smart Drainage Solutions



For the past decade, W M Donald Drainage has provided a diverse range of solutions across the North-East and Highlands.

For the last five years, we have kept Aberdeenshire Council schools, community and sport centres, and public toilets flowing, attending urgent drainage callouts and completing remedials works for FES FM Ltd. FES FM Ltd is one of our clients who use our online portal to visually see the status of the works we carry out for them. They can access the portal and create their jobs to be attended to on the system. This has proved to be a massive success, and we have established a strong relationship working together with their mechanical team to maintain the drainage systems for the public.



Meet the Team John Cruden, Aberdeen Drainage Supervisor

John Cruden joined the team in January, bringing a wealth of knowledge having worked in the drainage sector for over 15 years. John will be supervising and assisting our drainage engineers in Aberdeen, as well as working alongside the Drainage Services Manager, Kiel Hauley and Drainage Co-ordinator, Irene Jamieson, to continue to provide the best drainage services in the North-East.

John said, "When the opportunity arose to join Kiel and the team, I couldn't decline. Having trained with Kiel when we both first started in drainage, I knew I would be joining a busy, proactive team and would

settle in quickly to the role of supervisor. My day starts with checking in with Kiel and making sure that all the engineers are equipped with everything they need to carry out their scheduled work for the day. Depending on what jobs are planned, I will attend the site to guide and assist with any queries the engineers may have. Working in drainage, there are no two jobs the same! I'm working closely with our apprentice Kai Anderson, training him to do CCTV surveys and sharing my knowledge along the way.

"Outside of work, I enjoy going to Pittodrie to support Aberdeen Football Club and spending time with my family."



Celebrating Those Who Go the Extra Mile: The GEM Awards



At W M Donald, recognising and rewarding our people is at the heart of our culture, and the GEM (Go the Extra Mile) Awards are a shining example.

Each quarter, we celebrate team members who demonstrate outstanding commitment, whether it's through productivity, customer service, innovative thinking, stepping up proactively, or guiding others as mentors.

These awards reflect what we value most: dedication, creativity, and teamwork.

We're proud to spotlight recent GEM winners who exemplify these qualities:

- **Stephen Thomson**
Foreman/Ganger
- **Calum Harrison**
Labourer
- **Marc O'Donnell**
Skilled Operative, Utilities
- **Cameron Forbes**
- **Kyle McDonald**

Nominated by colleagues, supervisors, and even clients, these individuals have made a lasting impact on their teams



Marc O'Donnell

and the wider business. Their achievements speak volumes about the talent and passion that power W M Donald.

Looking ahead, the annual GEM of the Year award offers a chance to recognise sustained excellence — rewarding someone who consistently delivers above and beyond while living our values every day.



Cameron Forbes



Kyle McDonald

By celebrating our people, we nurture a positive, motivated workplace and reinforce the importance of those who help shape our success.

Know someone who deserves a GEM? Speak to your contracts manager, or drop Rachel an email at hr@wmdonald.co.uk. Let's keep recognising those who help make W M Donald a great place to work.

Annual Employee Engagement Day



It was great to see so many of you at our annual employee engagement day in January.

This day is designed to foster company-wide engagement, spotlight key leadership messages, gather real-time employee feedback, and create a safe space for honest input. This year's event covered topics such as HSEQ performance and manual handling, alongside fascinating talks, which

included one from Paul Blanchard, who works as a motivational and behavioural safety speaker. Having been in a major accident, falling from height several years ago while fixing a roof at a farm, Paul spoke on the emotional perspective of why health and safety is not just about ticking boxes.

Thank you to everyone who attended and engaged in our key annual session.

New Starts – Building Our Team From the Ground Up

As we head into the summer season, we're delighted to welcome a wave of new faces to the team across Aberdeen, Inverness, and Tayside. From skilled operatives to apprentices and office-based support, each new starter strengthens our commitment to quality, safety, and growth across the regions.

We wish a warm welcome to all our new team members and a fond farewell to those who have moved on. Thank you for being part of the journey.

Here's a look at our latest 35-strong team additions:

| JAN 2025 | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Ollie Roberts | Apprentice |
| John Cruden | Drainage Supervisor |
| Rylie Mackay | Apprentice |
| Sebastian Kozbial | Foreman/Ganger |
| Tomasz Kozbial | Skilled |
| Rafa Bruno | Skilled |
| Kai Faulds | Skilled |
| FEB 2025 | |
| Martin Maciver | Supervisor |
| Jonathan Maclean | Skilled |
| Piotr Wadyl | Surfacing |
| Peter Sinclair | HSEQ Advisor |
| Pavels Safronovs | Foreman/Ganger |
| Dariusz Bednarz | Skilled |
| Adrian Bocek | Skilled |
| Dean Clark | Skilled |
| MARCH 2025 | |
| Stuart Robertson | Foreman/Ganger |
| Eriks Ostrovskis | Drainage & Jetting |
| Nicky Russell | Trainee Supervisor |

| APRIL 2025 | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Craig Hunter | HSEQ Manager |
| Sarah-Jane Watt | Buyer |
| Angela Black | Fleet Admin |
| Shane Spark | Plant Operator |
| MAY 2025 | |
| Gavin Anderson | Estimator |
| James Nicol | Supervisor |
| Rikki Mackie | Foreman/Ganger |
| Andrew Ferries | Mechanic |
| Keegan Wilkinson | Apprentice |
| Zac Gordon | Apprentice |
| Taylor Walker | Apprentice |
| Kacper Bednarowski | Apprentice |
| Mitchell Collinson | Apprentice |
| Matthew Reaper | Apprentice |
| Lucy Alexander | HR Placement |
| Ben Keetley | Labourer |
| Michael Mead | Apprentice |

Building Futures With Mackie Academy

Inspiring the next generation is a key pillar of our CSR strategy, and earlier this year, we teamed up with S3 pupils at Mackie Academy with a unique challenge: devise a way to attract more young people into the construction industry. The creativity and innovation shown by the students was nothing short of inspiring.

Their final concept – the W M Donald Newspaper, packed full of history, stories, and interviews to showcase construction as a forward-thinking, inclusive, and highly skilled career path. A fantastic outcome from a fantastic collaboration!

From volunteering and education to sport, celebration, and recognition, 2025 has already shown what can be achieved when people come together. We're excited to continue building meaningful connections and giving back in the months ahead.

Let's keep laying the groundwork – not just for infrastructure, but for a stronger, more connected future.



Kicking Goals With the Russell Anderson Foundation

In March, a group of 12 W M Donald team members rolled up their sleeves for two days of hands-on volunteering with the Russell Anderson Foundation. Our staff supported various programmes designed to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people across Aberdeen.

The highlight? Getting involved in the Foundation's Easter Camp, where our volunteers played side-by-side with primary school pupils, learning a few football tricks along the way from the talented P4s and even Aberdeen FC star Leighton Clarkson!

It was a week full of heart, laughter, and impact. We are proud to continue supporting the Foundation's mission to create lasting, positive change for young people in our communities.



A Stronger, Safer Team: Welcoming Craig Hunter and Peter Sinclair



Building a safer future starts with the right people in place – and we’re proud to introduce two key appointments to the HSEQ team.

W M Donald is pleased to welcome back Craig Hunter, who now leads on Health, Safety, Environment and Quality (HSEQ), and to introduce Peter Sinclair, joining as HSEQ Advisor for the Inverness region.

Craig’s return brings deep operational knowledge and a renewed focus on developing a strong, proactive safety culture across the business. He’ll lead a growing team and oversee the strategic direction of HSEQ performance company-wide.

Peter, based in Inverness, joins the team to provide greater day-to-day support to our Northern projects. With a hands-on approach and a strong track record, Peter’s presence reinforces W M Donald’s commitment to safe and high-quality delivery on every site.

Craig Hunter, HSEQ Manager, says, “We’re building on strong foundations to embed a behavioural-led safety culture. It’s great to be back and to welcome Peter into the team.”

These appointments come at a pivotal moment for the business, as we push forward on our journey from good to great – ensuring every individual, at every level, is supported to lead by example.



Behavioural Safety in Action: Managers Lead the Way

Director-led sessions for managers and supervisors mark the first step in our business-wide commitment to behavioural safety in 2025.

The January Employee Engagement Day made one message crystal clear: if we want to take our safety culture to the next level, we need to focus not just on processes, but on behaviours.

In March, our managers and supervisors took part in the first of a new series of Director-Led Behavioural Safety Sessions, kicking off our long-term programme for change.

Covering topics like complacency, safety leadership, time vs. risk, and rule-breaking behaviours, the sessions gave managers practical

tools and real-world examples to help them challenge unsafe actions, support their teams, and embed safer ways of working.

“Behavioural safety isn’t a box-tick – it’s a mindset shift. These sessions are just the start of something much bigger.”
— Craig Hunter, HSEQ Manager

The discussions focused on leadership accountability, effective task planning, managing sub-contractors, and overcoming language barriers – all through the lens of everyday safety decisions.

This is a whole-company effort, with follow-up sessions already in the pipeline. The goal? Create a culture where safe behaviours aren’t just encouraged – they’re second nature.



From Good to Great: HSEQ Drives 2025 Company Objectives

Fifteen business-wide objectives set the direction for 2025, and the HSEQ team is right at the heart of them.

From sustainability to site safety, digital tools to daily planning – the year ahead is all about raising the bar across the business. Our new 15 company objectives for 2025 capture that ambition and are grouped under four themes:

1. Sustainability
2. HSEQ & IT
3. Business Development
4. Business As Usual

The objectives are the result of cross-team collaboration and leadership input, to which the HSEQ team has been central in both shaping and launching them.

Everything we plan to do in 2025 is about raising standards. These objectives aren’t just a list – they’re a framework for excellence.

Key actions include:

- Embedding behavioural safety practices at every level
- Developing digital tools to improve reporting and communication
- Strengthening planning and supervision processes
- Supporting environmental and business development goals

Each objective is supported by clear ownership and measurable steps, and the HSEQ team will play a key role in making sure they’re delivered effectively.

The aim is simple: take W M Donald from being ‘Good’ at HSEQ to being ‘Excellent’ – and do it together.

CERTIFICATION OF CARBON OFFSET

This to certify that

WM Donald

Working with Carbon-Zero, have offset their carbon dioxide emissions via CO2balance’s Safe Water Hand Pumps Projects in Uganda

To become a Carbon Neutral Company

based on assessment of their emissions 1st November 2023 to 31st October 2024 in accordance with BS PAS 2060 and is valid for 12 months.

Date of issue 23rd April 2025

co2balance.com

CARBON-ZERO

CERTIFIED BY
Gale Sijon
Mark Simpson
Director
CO2BALANCE

CO2balance UK Ltd, are a UK registered company whose carbon offset projects are recorded on the Gold Standard Registry, fully verified, audited and closed off when completed.

Building Progress: Across the North, W M Donald Is Delivering on Every Front

From whisky warehouses to new homes and vital road links, W M Donald continues to shape the landscape of the Highlands and beyond. With projects spanning residential, industrial, and infrastructure sectors, our teams have been working hard to deliver results for clients across the region.

It's been a busy season for operations, with several major milestones already achieved and exciting new sites just breaking ground. Here's a snapshot of where the North team are now and where they're going next.

Our Current Projects

Learn more about the projects our teams have been delivering and that are set to get underway since our last issue of From the Ground Up.

Delnies, Nairn

In partnership with Barratt Homes, W M Donald has completed the access roundabout for the new Delnies development in Nairn. This marks a significant early milestone in what promises to be a dynamic new residential area on the Moray coast. With strong community interest already, this development sets the tone for what's to come.



Slackbuie Phase 2H

Further south in Inverness, our teams have returned to Slackbuie to begin the next phase of infrastructure works for Tulloch Homes. Phase 2H builds on previous success and continues to expand this well-established development. Roads, drainage, and utilities are now underway as we help bring another high-quality housing project to life.



Invergordon Warehousing

Whisky is big business in the Highlands, and Compass's new warehousing at Invergordon is helping to meet growing demand. W M Donald has commenced work on Phase 1B, adding three new warehouses to the site. This builds directly on the success of the first phase, which now stores maturing whisky barrels in a purpose-built, secure facility.

Completed Projects

Ardersier Port

We're proud to have delivered the new access roundabout at Ardersier Port for Haventus, supporting their ambitious regeneration of the historic port site. This strategic upgrade will facilitate heavy transport movements and future development inside the main port area. A big thank you to our team who overcame logistical and weather challenges to deliver a robust and future-proofed solution.



Culvert Works in Dornoch

In Dornoch, W M Donald successfully completed the installation of a culvert for Springfield Properties. This was no straightforward job: working around existing services, with challenging ground conditions and tight deadlines, the team delivered a critical piece of infrastructure, allowing handover of new housing plots to proceed. Excellent effort from everyone involved on-site.

Upcoming Projects

Milton of Leys

Next on the schedule is a new access road at Milton of Leys, where Barratt Homes is preparing a major new development. W M Donald will be enabling access to this exciting site, supporting housing growth, and creating vital transport links in the area.

100 Homes at Riverford, Conon

Another exciting housing development is on the horizon in Conon Bridge. W M Donald will be delivering infrastructure works for Tulloch Homes' 100-home scheme at Riverford. Our scope will include access roads, drainage, and utilities, ensuring the project gets off to a strong start.

Distillery Works at Linkwood

Work is also set to begin at the historic Linkwood Distillery near Elgin. For Morrison Construction, W M Donald will be providing piling and concrete works that will facilitate internal site upgrades. This project blends our civil expertise with the heritage of one of Speyside's iconic distilleries.

Case Study:

W M Donald's Contribution to Riverside Primary School in Tillydrone

Client:
Robertson Construction

Contractor:
W M Donald

Project Completion Date:
Summer 2025

Project Overview:

In a significant step towards improving education and community facilities in Tillydrone, Aberdeen, the new Riverside Primary School is set to open just before the summer holidays in 2025. The school, built on the site of the former Tillydrone Infant School and part of St Machar Primary School, will accommodate 650 primary pupils and 100 nursery-aged children. The project also features a 3G 7-a-side football pitch and a variety of outdoor play and learning areas, designed to offer a modern, versatile environment for pupils.

W M Donald was appointed by Robertson Construction to carry out essential works required to bring the project to completion. Their involvement helped navigate a series of challenges and ensured the project remained on schedule for its opening.

- Scope of Works:**
- W M Donald's scope of work was comprehensive and included:
- **Drainage Works:** Connecting the site to the existing sewer system and attenuation tanks, ensuring proper water management across the school grounds.
 - **Service Downtaking:** Removing old street lighting columns, infrastructure, and surfacing from the previous school grounds.
 - **Utility Installations:** Installing essential utilities, including water mains, electrical systems, fire safety mains, BT lines, and a sprinkler system.
 - **Sustainable Infrastructure:** Adding electric vehicle (EV) charging points and bike shelters to support greener transport options.
 - **Play Areas and Landscaping:** Creating designated play park areas and installing bespoke walling designs, including concrete structures, gabions, and Tobermore walls.



- **Hard Landscaping:** Enhancing the site with planters, benches, sensory play equipment, and other custom outdoor furniture.
- **Surfacing Works:** Completing the surfacing across pathways, roads, and play areas to make the environment both accessible and safe for all users.

- Key Achievements:**
- Like many large-scale construction projects, Riverside Primary presented a series of challenges, including:
- **Adverse Weather Conditions:** Persistent rain caused delays to some parts of the project, which were managed through careful scheduling and coordination.
 - **Rising Costs:** As with many projects in 2024, Riverside faced increasing construction costs. However, through close collaboration with Robertson Construction, W M Donald helped to reduce the impact on the overall budget.
 - **Design Changes:** Modifications to the design during construction added complexity, but the team at W M Donald worked flexibly to incorporate these adjustments.
 - **Utility Connections:** New utility connections had to be integrated into the site, requiring careful planning and coordination to avoid delays.

Despite these challenges, W M Donald remained focused on delivering the project on time and to the highest standards.

Community Impact

The Riverside Primary School project is more than just a building. It represents a significant investment in the local community in Tillydrone. With the new school offering modern learning environments, sports facilities, and outdoor spaces, it is expected to become a central part of the community for years to come.

The addition of a 7-a-side football pitch, play park areas, and sensory equipment will provide young people in Tillydrone with opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, and outdoor learning. These resources are vital for fostering a healthy and engaged community.

Looking Ahead

With the school's official opening just around the corner, W M Donald's role in the Riverside Primary School project stands as a testament to their capability in tackling complex civil engineering challenges and delivering high-quality results.

The company's expertise in managing infrastructure works, utility installations, and landscaping was key to ensuring the school would be ready in time for the new academic year.

As the community looks forward to the opening of Riverside Primary, W M Donald is proud to have played a crucial part in bringing this important project to life. It is a project that will have a lasting positive impact on the future of education in Tillydrone.

Our Current Projects

Learn more about the projects our teams have been delivering and that are set to get underway since our last issue of From the Ground Up.

Blackdog

One of the standout achievements so far this year is our progress on the Blackdog Pumping Main project for Scottish Water. This long-anticipated job involves the installation of 2.7 km of pumping main along the A90, a key part of modernising the area's water infrastructure.

After years of delays and planning hurdles, construction is finally underway and moving fast. Despite the challenges, W M Donald has hit the ground running, pushing ahead with an already ambitious programme. The client has expressed their satisfaction with our pace and professionalism, and we remain committed to completing the job to the highest of standards community.



Upcoming Projects

As we look ahead to a busy year, W M Donald continues to make strong progress across a wide range of infrastructure and civil engineering projects throughout Scotland. Here's a look at some of the key updates from both ongoing and upcoming work.

Braeside Infrastructure
Malcolm Allan

The Aberdeen team is also gearing up for a major infrastructure package at Braeside, working alongside Malcolm Allan. This project includes the installation of key utilities such as drainage, services, and new roads, with tie-ins to existing networks. This is part of enabling works for a new residential development, and W M Donald is proud to play a central role in supporting local growth.



Revetment Works
Royal Aberdeen Golf Club

W M Donald is proud to have been appointed to carry out works at the historic Royal Aberdeen Golf Club. The project involves rebuilding the revetment at the iconic first tee, a location steeped in golfing heritage. This is a unique and exciting opportunity for our team to contribute to the preservation and functionality of one of the country's most renowned courses.



Mugiemoss Phase 2E
Barratt Homes

W M Donald continues its successful partnership with Barratt Homes at Mugiemoss, moving into Phase 2E of the development. Our team has been a consistent presence on this site, delivering high-quality infrastructure to support the growing community. With each phase, we build on our strong track record in residential infrastructure delivery.

New Contract Wins: W M Donald Secures Key Projects Across Tayside and Fife

W M Donald is pleased to announce a series of significant new contract awards that continue to strengthen its presence across Tayside and Fife. With a combined value of £27 million, these projects reflect the company's growing reputation for delivering high-quality civil engineering solutions while deepening relationships with both long-term and new clients in the region.

Almond Valley Perth

W M Donald has been appointed to deliver the civil engineering package for a 340-unit housing development at Almond Valley, located northwest of Perth. Awarded by long-term client Barratt Homes North Scotland, the project includes extensive earthworks, major sewer infrastructure, and all associated plot works.

Despite site-specific challenges such as existing service infrastructure, watercourses, and large culvert installations, W M Donald's integrated project teams, close collaboration with local suppliers, and proactive engagement with residents are expected to ensure smooth project delivery. The award represents a significant achievement and a continuation of a trusted client relationship.

Elgin Street Dunfermline

Following the successful completion of an affordable housing development in Leslie, Glenrothes, W M Donald has been awarded a second contract by Campion Homes. The new project involves the delivery of a 41-unit affordable housing scheme for Fife Council.

The scope of works includes initial earthworks, installation of sewer and road infrastructure, and complete plot foundations and hard landscaping. The award reflects both the quality of workmanship delivered on the previous project and the strong working relationship built with Campion. W M Donald is proud to contribute to the delivery of modern, affordable housing and reaffirms its commitment to the region.

Westpark Blairgowrie

W M Donald has also secured its first Tayside-region contract with national housebuilder Persimmon Homes. Located in the scenic town of Blairgowrie, the 150-unit development marks a significant new client relationship for the regional team.

The full civil engineering package, comprising bulk earthworks, extensive sewer infrastructure, off-site works, and all plot works, has been awarded to W M Donald. While the project brings technical and logistical challenges, the company's experienced personnel and solutions-focused approach will ensure a high standard of delivery.



Our Current Projects

Several long-term W M Donald projects are entering their final phases, showcasing the company's continued focus on quality, collaboration, and community impact.

West Woodlands

Originally highlighted in a previous issue, the West Woodlands project is now approaching completion, with works scheduled to finish by June 2025. This development has tested the full scope of W M Donald's capabilities, with live occupancy, complex split levels, and a tight programme adding to the challenge.

Thanks to coordinated efforts across all departments, meticulous attention to detail, and excellent site management, the development is progressing to a high standard. The final result will be a development of exceptional quality, reflecting the dedication of everyone involved.

Huntingtower

After nearly eight years on site, the landmark Huntingtower development is now in its closing stages. The project has weathered numerous external disruptions, including the COVID-19 pandemic and global supply chain issues, yet has remained on course through perseverance and client collaboration.

Positioned adjacent to the historic Huntingtower Castle, the development has been one of W M Donald's most enduring and complex undertakings. Now nearing completion, the project stands as a testament to the company's resilience and its ability to deliver lasting value to both clients and communities.



Welcome to the Team: Gavin Anderson

We're delighted to welcome Gavin Anderson to the WM Donald team as our new Estimator.

Gavin brings with him over seven years of civil engineering experience, having worked with a well-regarded civil engineering contractor in the region. His strong technical knowledge, combined with a keen eye for detail, positions him as a valuable addition to our growing team.

Prior to joining WM Donald, Gavin shared his long-standing admiration for the company, particularly our reputation for creating a

positive working environment and our steady, strategic expansion into the Tayside and Fife regions. Now part of the journey himself, Gavin is eager to contribute to our continued success.

"I've always been impressed by WM Donald's approach and the way the company has made its mark across Tayside and Fife," Gavin said. "I'm excited to be part of that growth and look forward to supporting the team in delivering high-quality outcomes throughout the region."

Please join us in welcoming Gavin to the WM Donald family.



Community at the Core: W M Donald's Commitment to Giving Back in 2025

At W M Donald, our commitment to community and corporate social responsibility (CSR) runs deep, and the first half of 2025 has proven no exception. From taking part in local events to inspiring the next generation and supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of young people, our team has once again demonstrated that building stronger foundations goes far beyond construction.



Driving Community Spirit at the Grampian Truck Show

This year's Grampian Truck Show was a true celebration of community, craft, and horsepower.

As always, W M Donald was proud to be part of this family-friendly event that shines a light on the transport and construction industries. Our stand was buzzing with visitors of all ages, and our team loved the opportunity to engage with fellow professionals, local families, and young truck enthusiasts. We were particularly pleased to help highlight the crucial role our sector plays in supporting the region's economy and infrastructure.



Annual Golf Outing — More Than Just a Game

May brought with it one of our most anticipated events of the year — our annual golf outing at the beautiful Ballater Golf Club, and we were treated to fantastic weather! Against the backdrop of Deeside's rolling hills, colleagues, clients, and friends came together for a relaxed yet competitive round of golf. Events like these help reinforce the values of teamwork, collaboration, and wellbeing that lie at the heart of our culture.



W M Donald Supports Men's Mental Health at Charity Football Tournament

W M Donald was proud to take part in the KR Group Charity Football Tournament 2025, which brought together a brilliant line-up of local businesses for a day of sport, teamwork, and fundraising in support of men's mental health.

Hosted at Strikers Indoor Football in Bridge of Don, the event saw spirited performances from teams representing Men In Mind, XL Global Group Ltd, Motive Offshore Group Ltd, Baker Hughes, W M Donald - and of course, the hosts, KR Group.

W M Donald gave a solid performance throughout the tournament and made it all the way to the final. Despite running out of steam in the closing stages, the team held their heads high after a day of great football and even better camaraderie.

Congratulations to Baker Hughes, who took home the trophy following a string of impressive matches.

All proceeds from the tournament are going to Men In Mind, a vital cause supporting men's mental health in our community.

A huge thank you goes to KR Group and everyone who took part, helped organise, and cheered from the sidelines - it was a day to remember!



Oor Willie Stands Free with W M Donald



There were smiles all round at W M Donald as our resident Oor Wullie statue showed his support for Aberdeen Football Club in true Dons style.

Following AFC's triumphant cup win, the colourful sculpture – originally part of Archie Foundation 'Oor Wullie Big Bucket Trail' - was proudly kitted out in AFC's red-and-white scarf and flag bearing the team's motto: Stand Free.

The statue, usually a cheerful burst of creativity outside our HQ, became a local talking point as staff and visitors celebrated the win. Decked out in the club's colours, Oor Wullie brought an extra dash of cheer and pride to the workplace.

There's a lot of support for the Dons among our team, and we thought our Oor Wullie would want to join in the celebrations too.

A fitting tribute from our business, firmly rooted in the North-East community, and proof that team spirit isn't just for the football pitch.

Honouring Local Heroes

This year, W M Donald was also proud to support the Highland Heroes Awards, an event that shines a light on the selfless individuals and organisations making a real difference in their communities. Kris Brown, Senior Contract Manager, was honoured to present the award for Charitable Organisation of the Year, which went to the inspiring Special Needs Action Project (SNAP).

SNAP provides invaluable support to children and young people with additional needs, and we were humbled to help recognise their dedication and impact. Supporting events like Highland Heroes aligns perfectly with our values – amplifying voices, celebrating achievements, and giving credit where it's due.





Proud Sponsors of the 2025 W M Donald MacTavish Cup

In 2025, W M Donald proudly became the title sponsor of the historic MacTavish Cup – shinty's premier senior competition in the North of Scotland.

This partnership underscores our commitment to supporting grassroots sport and the communities we serve. The tournament, steeped in tradition since 1898, showcases the passion, resilience, and teamwork that resonate with our values. It's been an exciting season so far, and we look forward to this culminating in the final at the newly refurbished Bught Park, Inverness, on 14th June.



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