

Embargoed until 1st October 2012

Fife turf specialist claims Scotland's 'Business of the Year' prize at the Chamber Awards 2012

A Fife specialist in fine turf management has secured a prestigious achievement for the area after it was announced as the Chamber Awards 2012's Business of the Year (sponsored by Westfield Health) for Scotland.

The Great Turf Company (GTC) made it a memorable triple celebration when it also won the Most Promising New Business (sponsored by BT Business) and Achievement in International Business Awards (sponsored by DHL Express), beating off competition from across the country.

Judges were impressed with the company's commitment to doubling its turnover this year through the manufacture and supply of natural fertiliser and nutrition products to sporting venues.

There were five other winners from Scotland, including one of the UK's most eco-friendly hair salons and a company responsible for providing catering and facilities management services to the offshore oil and gas sector.

The full list of Award winners includes:

- Alba Power (Excellence in Customer Service)
- Ayr College (Marketing Campaign of the Year)
- Elan Hair Design (Sustainability Award)
- Entier Limited (Commitment to People Development)
- Vegware (Excellence in Innovation)

President of the British Chambers of Commerce Martyn Pellew said: "There has never been a more important time for businesses to showcase the amazing work they are doing on a day-to-day basis.

"The Chamber Awards is a perfect platform for them to do just that and receive the recognition and profile they deserve for helping move the economy forward and create employment, often in local areas."

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Chamber Awards 2012 is committed to finding the best businesses in Britain through a series of regional heats followed by a National Final, due to be held at London's Guildhall on November 29th.

Now in its 9th year, the competition is one of the showcase events for the 'Business is Good for Britain' campaign that highlights the role of business as a positive force for the UK recovery and the success of local communities and individuals.

Unlike conventional petro-chemical fertilisers that are harmful to people and the environment, The Great Turf Company's products are 100% natural and designed to activate soil biology.

In the two years since its launch, the company has already secured a high profile client base featuring 15 Premier League football teams and a number of famous Open Championship golf courses.

Backed by domestic success, it has also been successful in expanding into international markets and now has distributors in Europe, the Middle East and USA.

The company, along with the five other winners, will now represent Scotland in their respective categories in the Grand Final, with the chance to win £25,000 and the title of "Outstanding Business Achievement", courtesy of the RBS Group.

Martyn concluded: "A record number of firms have taken part this year, all determined to prove that 'Business is Good for Britain!'"

The Chamber Awards 2012 is supported by the RBS Group, BT Business, Dell, DHL Express, Westfield Health and Acua Limited.

For further information or to book your place at the National Awards Final, visit www.chamberawards.co.uk

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For further information, please contact Russ Cockburn on 07812 600271 or email russ@dc-pr.co.uk

Notes to Editors

Breakdown on the other winners:

Alba Power Ltd (Excellence in Customer Service) – Located in Aberdeen, the company is one of the UK's leading Rolls-Royce aero-derivative gas turbine specialists, offering a comprehensive range of overhaul, maintenance and support services.

From a standing start in 2000, it has grown into a world leader and is set to turnover £14m this year, operating 140 gas turbines across 16 countries.

Alba Power has been able to sustain this growth through a commitment to outstanding customer service, with 100 turbines overhauled with zero claims and 500,000+ cumulative overhaul running hours successfully completed.

Ayr College (Marketing Campaign of the Year) – One of South West Scotland's leading further education providers has had a milestone year in 2012, with the launch of its new Aeronautical Engineering Training Centre.

Building on existing links with nearby industry, Ayr College has greatly increased its training capacity and embarked on a 12-month marketing campaign designed to attract the next generation of engineers.

This involved targeting school leavers by hosting the GO4SET competition and an Engineering Fun Day, where pupils were invited to design a new product for air travel.

Mature students were not left out either and this combined approach reaped dividends with 83 apprentices now signed up – a 50% increase on last year.

Elan Hair Design (Sustainability Award) – Elan Hair Design has invested £250,00 into transforming its Inverurie premises into what is believed to be the UK's most eco-friendly hair salon.

The commitment has seen it implement a number of measures to save energy, reduce waste and increase the 'feel good' factor of using hairdressing and beauty treatments that leave a positive effect on the environment.

This has seen the business purchase carbon-zero furniture, install PV panels to generate electricity, adopt LED lighting to reduce electricity usage and use basins that cut water consumption by 64%.

Going green has been a wise decision, with Elan Hair Design reporting a 20% increase in turnover and the possibility of more new jobs to add to its existing 14-strong workforce.

Entier Ltd (Commitment to People Development) – 'People power' is proving crucial for the Aberdeen company, which specialises in providing the offshore oil and gas industry with catering and facilities management services.

It operates a competence assurance process to ensure all of its 435 staff have the skills and practical experience needed to carry out their roles effectively, not to mention operating a positive personal development policy that looks to promote from within.

Having a flexible and motivated workforce will be key for Entier, as it looks to build on a projected £26m turnover by diversifying its core offer to include heli-admin and medics.

Vegware (Excellence in Innovation) – Vegware is the UK's first manufacturer of completely compostable food packaging, including hot cup lids, double-wall cups, soup containers, high heat cutlery and glassine window bags.

Based in Edinburgh, the firm's award-winning products are all plastic-free and low-carbon, with its UK customers ranging from large contract caterers (Compass, Aramark) and food distributors (Brakes, 3663) to the NHS, Government departments and artisan cafes.

The company, which also offers branding, graphic design and social media support, is also distributing to South Africa, Benelux, Central Europe and North America – the latter through its franchisee Vegware USA.

Background on BCC

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) is the national voice of local business.

The BCC sits at the heart of a powerful nationwide network of Accredited Chambers of Commerce, serving over **100,000 businesses** across the UK, which **employ over five million people**.

For more information visit: www.britishchambers.org.uk