

# Forging the future

**T**raditionally many people went to school, got a job, had a family, and spent the major part of their life working and saving for a pension. Generally the better educated were paid more, were healthier and lived longer in retirement. But the tradition has changed; life for many people is no longer like this and there is a need to find new ways to build a world which includes work – and hope for the future.

Perhaps there is some cause for optimism; recent economic changes, including the fluctuating costs of importing, mean there is pressure to create, make and grow things in the UK. But how can young people be part of this optimism? How can a new generation of people be nurtured who will risk becoming employers with a commercial need to employ local people?

## **A current local picture**

Many current working patterns demand long hours away from home. This in turn means there are niches for traders in gardening, painting and decorating, cleaning, laundering and caring for children and for older people. Relaxation is taken in the hospitality, leisure and (for example) adventure tourism markets, so generating demand for a wide range of workers including those to lead on climbing and other outdoor activities. A further need for workers can arise when people stage events to market an area to visitors aimed at different ages or hobbies.

These are just some examples of opportunities for young people to work with established traders in their area of interest and to create new viable businesses. This process would be assisted if local firms had access to young people in school. Students could meet in a safe environment, learn the right questions to ask, and be enabled to share interests and stimulate each other. But trading conditions limit such activities even for the most motivated businesses.

## **The rewarding challenge in enabling the next generation**

Young people need to be prepared for the future so that that they don't feel vulnerable or afraid of shaping solutions. The Curriculum for Excellence encourages pupils to think about

their own learning, achievements and goals, and thus to crystallise where their passions lie and to awaken their potential which can be satisfied by creative working.

As the traders' highlights in this resource exemplify in a small way, Scotland has a stock of local companies which excel in producing and marketing uniquely Scottish products.

Given care, such local options should grow.

## **Shaping solutions: maintaining harmony at work**

Young people who are preparing to become an employee, perhaps then an employer, must learn how to coexist harmoniously and productively with colleagues within the context of conformance to law and duties of care. Otherwise solutions to problems cannot be shaped, energy is dissipated, and jobs may be lost. Many traders will not employ other people until they are satisfied that a culture can be instilled in which all staff, as a group, consider, learn and evolve solutions to progress the business while maintaining a safe environment in which to work. The consequence of this is that many traders need to know personally of suitable people who seek positions as business partners or employees before they will even attempt to secure new orders or contracts.

Noting that many legal obligations are placed on the employer, including that of ensuring proper briefing of all staff, it helps if new recruits can realise that:

- all staff have the obligation to avoid accidents - even spilt water becomes a hazardous substance when it makes a floor slippery;
- for a range of anyone may encounter difficulties when travelling for work-related purposes, from a lack of transport options to poor access to public places;
- all need to adjust their hours once in a while, perhaps going out of their way to collect something for the boss or a colleague or because absences due to sickness or to attend to a family crisis mean that others may have to take on additional work; and
- a new worker's lack of confidence in learning how to settle coincides with their supervisor/employer learning how best to ease a sound working relationship.

**It is a matter of shaping an environment in which all may learn the right questions to ask, and how to share interests and spark off each other constructively.**

*Acknowledgments:*

*The editorial material in this ScotSectorlink example online resource for schools is independent of the views of those here highlighted.*

*scotsectorlink.org.uk*

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Our Perth shop, café and gallery has a great selection of plants, and the well-stocked gift shop provides an excellent range of products to suit all tastes and all pockets. We also have a training kitchen, a garden and plant centre and open our flagship Mill Street café in December 2012 (the conversion of an old disused public toilet block in central Perth). All our enterprise activity provides work experience and training for people who experience hurdles in accessing and maintaining mainstream employment.

**[giraffe-trading.co.uk](http://giraffe-trading.co.uk)**

The hub of Sheila Fleet Jewellery is in Orkney where all jewellery is hand-made, finished and packaged at the workshop. The showroom displays all collections and a range of gifts, textiles and clothing by other artists from across Scotland. Visitors to the workshop are most welcome, and tours can be arranged.

**[sheilafleet.com](http://sheilafleet.com)**

Solstice is a wholesale grower and nursery, offering over 100 varieties of heather and an equally wide selection of herbaceous plants and shrubs and locally-grown alpine plants. Our garden/site maintenance service for organisations and individuals, offers power washing or brushing of hard areas in addition to grass cutting, shrub pruning, border maintenance and general tidying.

**[solsticenurseries.co.uk](http://solsticenurseries.co.uk)**

Good graphic design, with clear presentation of ideas illustrated with bespoke photographs of Scotland. Within corporate documents, these are essential aspects of marketing to local residents, visitors and the wider business world.

**[michaelgill.eu](http://michaelgill.eu)**

ITP Solutions have our knowledge to provide the solid information technology (IT) infrastructure upon which to grow your business. From network enquires to hardware and software packages and bespoke software, we're here to help. Our training recognises the importance of nurturing the confidence so to get on at work, and covers customer services, health and safety at work, data protection and administration, as well as any kind of IT skill. Bespoke training is delivered at your choice of venue. Please e-mail via the website for further information.

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