

Highland Business

Women Appoints New President in Its 30th Year of Empowering Local Businesswomen

by Iris Thompson-Burton



It is with great honour and excitement that I take up my role as the new President of Highland Business Women (HBW), an association that has supported, grown, and networked women in business throughout the Highlands for three decades. As we mark this milestone, I reflect on the incredible legacy built by those before me and look forward to the future with renewed purpose and energy.

I would like to start by paying tribute to our outgoing President, Emma Glass, whose leadership has driven the organisation forward. Emma has guided HBW through challenges and triumphs, fostering an inclusive, supportive, and empowering environment for all our members. Her contributions will resonate in HBW for years to come, and I am deeply grateful for her unwavering support.

Additionally, I want to acknowledge and express gratitude to Natalie Bruce, our outgoing Social Media

Coordinator, and Karen Simpson, our outgoing Events Coordinator. Natalie's work on social media has connected us with thousands of women across the Highlands and further afield, amplifying our message and raising awareness. Karen's expertise in event planning has resulted in memorable moments in HBW's history, creating meaningful experiences for our members. Both have been invaluable assets to the Board, and their departure marks the end of an era for HBW. However, they leave behind a legacy of excellence that will continue to inspire and guide the organisation.

As we look ahead, I am thrilled to introduce you to the Board (all volunteers): Aimee Fraser, Secretary, Kirsty Macarthur, Finance, Amy Macleod, Charity Coordinator, Sarah Francis, Website. Rebecca Corbett & Jill McAlpine, Events and Barbora Gaborova, Social Media & Communications.

I am confident we will continue to bring fresh ideas, energy, and enthusiasm to the organisation, ensuring we continue to serve our members in innovative and impactful ways. Together, we will uphold HBW's values while making bold strides towards greater accomplishments.

This year is especially significant for HBW, as it marks our 30th anniversary. For three decades, HBW has empowered, connected, and supported women in business across the region, and we are committed to continuing that work. It is not lost on me that this anniversary year for HBW coincides with my own 30-year career milestone! We are planning an exciting range of events and activities to celebrate this milestone and ensure our members remain at the heart of everything we do. I am particularly excited about showcasing the achievements and successes of our members and providing spaces for networking, professional development, and collaboration.

The first of these celebrations took place on March 6th, with a sold-out International Women's Day event at the Lochardil House Hotel. This event was a tremendous success and a powerful example of what HBW represents. We were joined by an inspiring panel of four women who shared their unique journeys and insights on leadership, entrepreneurship, and achieving success as women in business. The diverse experiences of our panellists created an empowering and thought-provoking conversation that left our audience feeling motivated and inspired. The feedback from attendees has been overwhelmingly positive, and I am excited to see this momentum carry us through the rest of the year.

Looking ahead, we are planning a series of exciting events and initiatives to honour HBW's legacy and look

forward to the next 30 years. The events will be supporting and promoting our charity of the year – RASASH. We aim to offer something that appeals to as many members as possible, whether through workshops, social gatherings, or opportunities to collaborate. Notably, we have an upcoming Dance Workshop with James Montgomery on April 30th and a Speed Networking lunch on May 14th at the Glenmoriston Hotel. Tickets for both events are on our website. We are committed to ensuring HBW remains a place where all women, regardless of their business sector or background, can find a supportive community to help them thrive.

We understand that women in business face unique challenges, and we are here to provide networking opportunities that enable women to overcome those challenges and excel in their careers. Together, we will continue to foster a culture of support, collaboration, and empowerment for women in business across the Highlands. Here's to an exciting year ahead, full of new opportunities, remarkable achievements, and lasting connections. Thank you to everyone who has been part of HBW's journey, and I look forward to what we can accomplish together in this landmark year to ensure the next chapter in HBW's story is just as impactful and inspiring as the last 30 years have been. Best wishes as ever, Iris.



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