

# BUSINESS NEWS

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# EXECUTIVE

## Data provides a key chance for Highland businesses to ensure their voices are heard

I HAD a really useful meeting with Scottish Government civil servants last week in which we explored how ministers and Highland businesses could best engage through the range of opportunities offered by Inverness Chamber of Commerce as the region's leading business membership organisation.

As the strong voice of business for the city and the wider Highlands and Islands, I recognise we have a critical role to play in arguing for the betterment of our region through, for example, improved transport links; provision of leading-edge digital infrastructure, increased housing provision and the transformation of city and town centres to ensure they are the beating heart of our business lives.

In having this kind of dialogue though, I am aware there is an inevitable degree of tension around giving politicians of any party a platform and the need for



### Business Focus

By Stewart Nicol

Chief executive,  
Inverness  
Chamber of  
Commerce

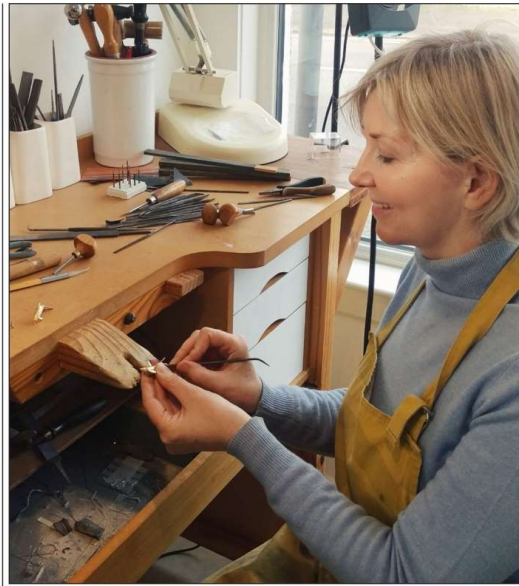
us as a business community to strongly, even forcibly, articulate our needs and aspirations.

However, I am convinced members of Inverness Chamber of Commerce, and Highland businesses have a powerful mechanism to ensure their voice is clearly heard by those in government at every level across our nation. The Quarterly Economic Indicator (QEI) is the longest running data series of its kind. It provides a regular and respected insight into the fortunes of key Scottish sectors.

Our QEI focuses on key sectors that matter

to our city and region – manufacturing, construction, finance and business services, tourism and retail, measuring a number of indicators including business optimism, investment and performance to provide comprehensive understanding of the business landscape.

A highly respected and influential publication, the QEI clearly plays an essential role in setting the business agenda and informing the most senior levels of government and policy making of the needs of local chambers and their members. Given that Inverness Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to actively connecting and representing businesses across the Highlands to support their growth, I believe the QEI provides a unique opportunity for our businesses to have their voices heard. Email [info@inverness-chamber.co.uk](mailto:info@inverness-chamber.co.uk) to find out how to contribute.



Left: Eileen Gatt at work in her Black Isle studio. Top and below: Some samples of her new work.



# Climate crisis is an inspiration for Eileen

BLACK Isle jeweller Eileen Gatt has used her concerns about climate change as inspiration for a new collection which was launched at a prestigious London art show at the weekend.

The Munloch-based craftswoman's Aurora Collection was showcased as part of the Craft Scotland showcase at Collect 2022, the leading international fair for contemporary craft and design, held at Somerset House in the centre of the UK capital.

Eileen's brand new collection was on display for the first time alongside works from 10 other talented Scottish creators whose work was being showcased under the Craft Scotland banner. They were among a total of over 350 makers from across Britain whose work was on show at Collect 2022.

Eileen explained that the new collection is inspired by

By Calum Macleod  
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her concerns over the environmental tipping point the world faces through climate change. Each piece is designed as a visual metaphor, illustrating the fragile nature of the polar climate.

Polar bears, whose future existence is threatened by rising temperatures and melting ice, are a recurring motif on her miniature wearable polar panoramas, made from silver, gold and precious gemstones.

"The conversation around climate change is one of, if not the most important topic we need to be acting on,



**Climate change is the most important topic we need to be acting on, so I hope each piece will spark discussion and prompt action.**

Eileen Gatt

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