Business

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Workplace wellbeing a key theme at Gosha conference

WORKPLACE health, employee wellbeing and healthy leadership skills were among the key themes as the Guernsey Occupational Safety & Health Association hosted its 2025 Safety and Wellbeing conference.

More than 100 people gathered at the Princess Royal Centre for Performing Arts to hear a number of keynote speakers deliver impactful messages on the importance of good physical and mental health in the workplace, and how leaders could foster positive and successful working environments.

Gosha chairman Andrew Mills said those speaking had touched on a number of issues, and praised the 'simple' and 'uncomplicated' way in which they gave their presentations.

One of the biggest problems workplaces seemed to contend with, he said, was the risk of physical injury.

'The risk of slips and falls was something that was highlighted quite regularly.

'It's quite an easy problem to address as well, often it can be as simple as moving cables or re-positioning something that has the potential to be a safety hazard.'

He emphasised the increased focus on mental health, and said it was vital that employees spoke up about any issue that was affecting them so it could be dealt with proactively.

'Prevention is more important than the cure. People need to feel confident in raising issues and not to feel frightened.

'This is a good event to have those conversations and shift attitudes and mindsets.'

Chris Ayres, mechanical engineering lead for event sponsor Guernsey Electricity, is also chairman of the company's health and wellbeing committee.

He was among the speakers on the day.

He said employee wellbeing was dependent on a range of factors, including access to health and support services, job satisfaction, facilities, pay, and job description.

He emphasised the importance of building a culture where conversations about wellbeing were commonplace, and said it was down to company leaders to instil this within their organisations via events, workshops and information sessions.

> **'Prevention is more important than the cure. People need to feel confident in raising issues and not to feel frightened'**
>
> Andrew Mills, Gosha chairman

Lisa Ingrouille, workplace lead at Guernsey Mind, gave a talk on mental health. (34450269)

'We work quite closely with Guernsey Mind, for example, on things like how to manage stress, how to sleep better,' he said.

'All of these things can make a difference.'

Also at the event were representatives from the Health Improvement Commission, aiming to encourage those in attendance to make healthier choices at work.

Sam Green, from the commission, said implementing activities such as walking meetings and active breaks could make a positive difference.

'Increased daily movement has all sorts of physical and mental benefits, it can make a massive difference to leadership and workplace culture,' he added.

The Gosha team, left to right, Jon Coyde, Jordan Peacock, Simon Welch, chairman Andrew Mills, Joey Naidoo and Seamus Gillespie.
(Pictures by Sophie Rabey, 34450271)

Giba backs update to finance industry policy framework

THE head of the leading business organisation in the local finance industry has backed the idea of working up a new policy framework for the sector.

Jo Peacegood, chairwoman of the Guernsey International Business Association, said that the framework should meet the industry's own ambitions for its future.

'It will provide a vital roadmap to help unlock new opportunities and maintain our competitive edge,' she said.

'Industry is pleased to be working in partnership with government, the GFSC and Guernsey Finance to ensure the policy framework reflects the needs of this critical economic sector.'

Guernsey Finance chief executive Rupert Pleasant has also backed the project, which has been agreed and will be funded by the new Economic Development Committee.

'Having a cohesive, forward-looking strategy will significantly enhance how we promote Guernsey internationally over the coming years.'

Jo Peacegood.
(Picture by Peter Frankland, 34436817)

William Mason, director-general of the Guernsey Financial Services Commission, said that the regulator was also supporting the project.

'We can now build on the great foundation provided by our February Moneyval assessment result to ensure Guernsey remains a top choice for high quality innovation.'

Economic Development has commissioned much of the work out to an off-island consultant, although the Policy & Resources Committee has since said it will look to reduce how often this is done within the States.

Deputy Andrew Niles, finance sector lead for the committee, said that the consultants would not be repeating work the island had already done.

'What we want to do now is identify how we strengthen the areas where we have a competitive hold, expand existing areas into new and different geographies and products, and explore new and feasible opportunities where Guernsey can win.'

The project is due to conclude during the first quarter of 2026.

Local lawyers advise on Darwin deal

LOCAL lawyers worked on a deal with Metro Bank in the UK for a five-year £50m. lending arrangement for the Darwin Leisure Development Fund, which owns holiday parks in the UK.

The deal, comprising a £10m. revolving credit facility and a £40m. term loan, will provide Darwin with flexible growth financing as it continues to develop and expand its portfolio of high-quality luxury parks and leisure facilities. These extend from Oxfordshire through to Scotland, and stretch across the country from North Wales to Norfolk. All are high quality or in the process of being upgraded.

Alex Wickens and Camilla Hobbs from Walkers advised on Guernsey law elements of the deal.

The Darwin Leisure Development Fund provides long-term investors with the opportunity to invest in the lucrative UK Holiday Park market. It aims to combine a secure return, well ahead of inflation, with business strategies to create sustainable shareholder value.