

‘You can do anything you set your mind to!’

It’s often said, if you want something done, give it to a busy person! Perthshire-based entrepreneur Kirsteen Ross certainly has the right ‘can-do’ attitude, with her many achievements in business, sport, charity, and environmental & social activism.

Kirsteen has always been a high achiever as a former champion gymnast, trampolinist and badminton player, who also studied violin, piano and singing at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music from age 14.

She started her career in banking and finance and then, after taking time out to start a family, founded Ogilvie Ross with husband John in the late 1990’s. Their firm advised public sector organisations on sustainable office furniture, and the ethical management and disposal of unwanted furniture. Kirsteen said, “Before the ‘green’ movement became popular, we were convinced that redundant furniture and its composite materials could be reused and were passionate about finding better ways to manage this process and reduce waste to landfill.”

With Kirsteen as managing partner, the firm grew and won several national awards for sustainability and environmental innovation as well as the prestigious ISO 14001 accreditation.

Alongside her professional commitments, Kirsteen plays a very active role in the community, performing with Perth Symphony Orchestra and St Andrew’s Orchestral Society. She is also a competitive endurance road cyclist and ride leader, encouraging women and girls to get active in cycling. Kirsteen set up the Kinross-shire Trishaws and manages a team of volunteers taking elderly people or those unable to cycle out on adapted bikes to feel the wind in their hair and help end loneliness and isolation.

She also founded, coached and led the Kinross-shire women’s cricket team to two national titles and became an international level cricket scorer. “Cricket is our family sport. Both my sons have played at junior international level and my husband plays for the local club. It seemed sensible to take an interest in the sport to spend more time with my family.”

By 2010, Ogilvie Ross was a successful business and Kirsteen’s interest in cricket saw her management skills develop in a new direction. Handing over the day-to-day running of the firm to John, she started a new challenge leading Cricket Development for Perth & Kinross. Over the next five years, Kirsteen built a highly successful sports development model for cricket, and sportscotland eventually offered her the chance to lead a 2014 Commonwealth



Kirsteen Ross
Executive Partner
Ogilvie Ross

Games Legacy project for Perth & Kinross aimed at changing lives through physical activity.

Kirsteen also completed a degree in sports development while maintaining her interest in Ogilvie Ross with a seat on the board. By 2018 the firm had diversified into international performance consultancy and the decision was taken to separate the business into two separate companies. “There was a significant need for a new type of business which could address the requirement for furniture re-manufacturing rather than just recycling,” Kirsteen added.

Kinross Wooden Products became Scotland’s first specialist ‘circular’ furniture re-manufacturing business, with Kirsteen as managing director. She quickly became a leading figure in the Tayside Circular Economy movement and was appointed a Green Ambassador in 2019.

The pandemic brought many challenges, but Kirsteen soon realised that the company could help frontline staff by manufacturing COVID screens for receptions and public facing areas. Home working presented another opportunity and the company started making desks re-manufactured from surplus public sector furniture. Kinross Wooden Products Company has now

expanded into a new factory, with contracts across Scotland.

Kirsteen was recently re-appointed as an executive partner in Ogilvie Ross to oversee a new area of business supporting female executives in the UK and Europe.

She is a passionate advocate for parity and equality in the workplace, leading a programme to develop female talent and maximise opportunities.

So what advice does Kirsteen have for younger women looking to build their careers? “Have faith in your abilities. You absolutely CAN do anything you set your mind to,” she said. Give it your very best and remember that you don’t have to be perfect at everything. Enjoy the work you do and feel joy in the smallest achievements – you’re learning as you go! This is a journey. Do as much good for others as you possibly can along the way.”

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