A Meeting of Minds Scotland

Wednesday 4 November - Apex Dunblane Hydro Hotel

Evening Before – 3 November		
1900-2230	**Networking Drinks and Dinner**	Seated for dinner at **19:45**
		Schedule of the Day
0830-0900	**Coffee and pastries**	**Informal networking** over coffee
0900-0920	**Keynote**	**Welcome** - incorporating the highlights of the Scene Setter research. With **James Goad**, Managing Director, Owen James Events
0920-1000	**Keynote**	**Expert insights on the geopolitical and economic landscape**
1005-1115	**Roundtable Session**	*Please refer below to get a feel for the topics that will be tabled for discussion within the roundtables*
1115-1135	**Morning Coffee**	Grab a refreshment and catch up with your peers
1135-1205	**Networking**	**Structured networking** - an opportunity to meet some new faces
1210-1320	**Roundtable Session**	*Please refer below to get a feel for the topics that will be tabled for discussion within the roundtables*
1320-1415	**Lunch**	**A seated formal lunch**
1415-1455	**Keynote**	**Trust, Empathy & Judgement - The past and future of financial planning**
1500-1610	**Roundtable Session**	*Please refer below to get a feel for the topics that will be tabled for discussion within the roundtables*
1615-1645	**Keynote**	**The Wealth Firm of Tomorrow - Strategy, culture and competitive**
1645-1800	**Fizz and Farewell**	We thank you for joining us and bid you farewell

a meeting of MINDS

owenjames

A MEETING OF MINDS SCOTLAND

Wednesday 4 November, Apex Dunblane Hydro Hotel, Perth Rd, Dunblane FK15 0HG

Contents

Agenda overview:

The Scottish financial advice profession is entering a defining period of transformation. Increasingly, success will be determined by how effectively firms build scalable operating models, equip their people with new capabilities, use data to make better decisions and create deeper, more valuable client relationships.

This agenda has been designed around these changing priorities to explore how Scotland's leading advice firms can build the capabilities, operating models and client propositions that will define success over the next decade.

ROUNDTABLE THEMES TABLED FOR DISCUSSION

GEOPOLITICS & THE ECONOMY

1. Preparing for the next planning landscape after the autumn budget

Following what is likely to be another significant budget, and given Scotland's distinct tax regime, this session will explore Scottish-specific planning considerations and emerging complexities, including:

- The practical implications of the latest tax and pension reforms
- Where advisers should revisit existing client strategies
- Turning legislative change into meaningful client conversations
- Preparing for the next wave of policy reform

2. Investing through geopolitical fragmentation

From US policy and European competitiveness to trade tensions, energy security and defence spending, firms are navigating a fundamentally different investment landscape. This session will explore how Scottish wealth managers can position portfolios and communicate uncertainty with confidence, including:

- The structural shifts reshaping global markets beyond short-term headlines
- How geopolitics is influencing asset allocation and portfolio construction
- Whether traditional diversification still provides sufficient protection
- Helping clients understand uncertainty without encouraging short-term decisions
- Preparing portfolios for a more fragmented global economy

REGULATORY CHANGE

3. The FCA's next chapter

The regulatory conversation is moving beyond Consumer Duty towards innovation, AI, targeted support and data-led supervision. Firms now need to understand not only what the regulator expects today, but where regulation is heading next. This session will explore:

- The FCA's evolving priorities around innovation and technology
- How AI is changing supervisory expectations
- The future of targeted support and simplified advice
- Preparing for more data-driven regulation
- Turning regulatory change into commercial opportunity
- Demonstrating and evidencing good client outcomes in practice
- Measuring fair value, suitability and Consumer Duty through data and MI

YOUR BUSINESS

4. Evolution or revolution? Defining the advice business of 2030

AI, changing client expectations, consolidation and new operating models are transforming wealth management, and the question is no longer whether firms will change, but whether the changes represent gradual evolution or fundamental disruption. This session will explore:

- Which business models are proving most resilient in the UK and internationally
- How AI, consolidation and regulation are reshaping competitive advantage
- Whether traditional advice firms need to rethink their operating models
- What CEOs should prioritise over the next five years
- The characteristics likely to define tomorrow's market leaders
- Whether standardisation, central propositions and AI enhance or restrict adviser judgement

5. Where does growth come from now? Productivity, capacity and the new advice economics

As consolidation matures, attention is shifting from buying growth to creating it. Firms are increasingly recognising that sustainable growth will come not simply from recruiting more advisers, but from redesigning operating models, improving productivity and making better use of technology and data.

This session will explore:

- Where the next phase of organic growth is most likely to come from
- Improving adviser productivity without compromising client experience
- Whether firms can grow without significantly increasing adviser headcount
- Redesigning operating models to improve capacity and profitability
- Using AI, automation and delegation to increase advice capacity
- Measuring growth beyond assets under management

6. Scaling successfully – What happens after the deal?

Consolidation has become an established feature of the wealth management landscape, but completing an acquisition is only the beginning. The real challenge lies in integrating businesses, systems, people and propositions while maintaining client trust, adviser engagement and operational efficiency. As firms pursue scale, attention is increasingly turning from buying businesses to building stronger ones.

This session will explore:

- Integrating investment propositions, operating models and client service standards
- Bringing together technology platforms, data and operational processes without increasing complexity
- Aligning cultures, leadership teams and adviser behaviours across merged businesses
- Balancing standardisation with adviser autonomy and entrepreneurial culture
- Using AI and automation to support integration and improve scalability
- Measuring whether acquisitions are genuinely creating value for clients, advisers and shareholders

YOUR CLIENTS

7. Beyond the Great Wealth Transfer – Reaching the clients advice still isn't serving

The Great Wealth Transfer presents a significant opportunity, but large sections of the population remain outside traditional advice models. Targeted Support, digital engagement and more proportionate advice models could help firms broaden access while creating future growth.

This session will explore:

- How firms can engage younger and under-served clients
- Bridging the gap between guidance and regulated advice
- The commercial opportunity created by Targeted Support
- Using technology and data to widen access
- Building relationships before significant wealth events
- Preparing the next generation of long-term clients

8. Trust in the Age of AI W- ill technology strengthen or weaken advice?

Trust remains the industry's greatest competitive advantage, but as AI becomes increasingly visible within client interactions, firms must determine how technology enhances rather than undermines confidence. This session will explore:

- Where clients are comfortable with AI - and where they are not
- Balancing automation with human judgement
- Using AI to strengthen rather than replace relationships
- Transparency, disclosure and ethical considerations
- The future role of advisers in an AI-enabled profession

TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

9. AI implementation and why strategy isn't the hard part anymore

Most firms have identified where AI could add value, the challenge is embedding it into day-to-day operations, changing behaviours and delivering measurable business outcomes. This session will move beyond AI theory to practical implementation, including:

- Building the data foundations AI depends on
- Why governance and data quality determine AI success
- Embedding AI throughout the client journey rather than isolated use cases
- Creating operating models capable of supporting AI and Targeted Support
- Building governance, oversight and evidence into AI deployment
- Creating a practical roadmap for firm-wide adoption

10. Why operating models - not technology - have become the biggest implementation risk

Technology is advancing rapidly, yet many firms continue to struggle with adoption. Increasingly, the barriers are cultural rather than technical, with leadership, trust and behaviour determining whether AI succeeds or fails. This session will explore:

- Why technology projects fail despite good software
- Balancing adviser autonomy with consistent client outcomes
- Standardising workflows without reducing professional judgement
- Creating operating models that support AI adoption
- Leadership behaviours that encourage change
- Building organisations capable of continuous innovation

11. Is AI readiness the new measure of firm value?

With AI becoming an increasingly important consideration in mergers, acquisitions and firm valuations, buyers are beginning to assess technology maturity, data quality and AI capability alongside traditional financial metrics. This session will explore:

- How AI capability is influencing acquisition attractiveness
- Why data quality has become a strategic asset
- The operational characteristics buyers increasingly val
- Future-proofing firms through technology investment
- Whether AI readiness is becoming a competitive differentiator
- Whether data maturity and operating model readiness are becoming due diligence priorities

YOU & YOUR PEOPLE

12. Building the future-ready workforce

Technology is reshaping every role within advice businesses, creating demand for new skills, different career paths and new approaches to leadership. Firms must prepare their people for continuous change while attracting the next generation of talent. This session will explore:

- The skills advice businesses will need over the next decade
- Developing AI capability across every level of the organisation
- Rethinking recruitment, learning and career development
- Creating future-ready leadership teams
- Building organisations that continuously adapt

13. Protecting culture while transforming your business

Growth, consolidation, AI and regulation are placing unprecedented demands on leadership teams. Maintaining culture while driving transformation has become one of the defining challenges for business leaders. This session will explore:

- Protecting culture through periods of rapid change
- Aligning leadership behaviours with business transformation
- Retaining talent during organisational change
- Building resilient, adaptable teams
- Leading confidently through continual disruption
- Balancing entrepreneurial adviser cultures with increasingly standardised operating models

PRODUCTS & PROPOSITION

14. Portfolios for a new market regime

Persistent inflation, changing correlations and geopolitical uncertainty are challenging long-held assumptions about portfolio construction. Firms are increasingly reassessing diversification, resilience and the role of alternative investments. This session will explore:

- Whether traditional diversification remains sufficient
- The growing role of alternatives and liquid diversifiers
- Building more resilient portfolios for uncertain markets
- Understanding concentration and hidden portfolio risks
- Communicating changing investment philosophies to clients

15. Retirement planning after the great tax reset

Changes to pensions, inheritance tax and retirement income strategies are prompting advisers to rethink long-established planning assumptions. Retirement advice is becoming more integrated with estate planning, tax and intergenerational wealth transfer. This session will explore:

- How recent tax changes are reshaping retirement planning
- Blending guaranteed income with flexible investment solutions
- Managing longevity, sequencing and inheritance objectives together
- Helping clients navigate increasing uncertainty
- Building retirement propositions fit for the next decade