

Pro-Chancellor,

James Gibson Fleming is a passionate ambassador for the county; working actively to attract new business and talent to the region. A keen supporter of local charities, he champions the work of the community in his role as Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset.

Having managed the family's Ranston Estate since 1981, James has developed a wealth of business expertise which he continues to share for the benefit of charitable causes. Since 1994 he was pivotal in the development of Cancer Care Dorset, providing 16 domiciliary nurses for families affected by cancer in Dorset. When the charity merged with Joseph Weld Hospice - to create the Weldmar Hospicecare Trust - James became its Vice President. Today, the charity is the only agency providing specialist palliative care in north, south and west Dorset, and is regarded as one of the best hospice organisations in the country.

James is passionate about attracting business to the region, recognising that employment growth is vital for the rural economy. He is a Trustee of the Talbot Village Trust, and has been instrumental in the transformational masterplan for the area around the university's Talbot Campus. The Talbot Project involves several partners, and the process of gaining national approval for the ambitious scheme has led James to develop a new belief in the "art of the possible".

James's desire to revitalise the region's economy has recently led to the launch a new telecoms business, focused on improving services to rural communities. The business - Wessex Internet - is founded on the principles that improved internet speeds will enable more people to work out of the county and therefore invest their time and resources in the area. Living in a rural area, James is no stranger to the frustrations of slow broadband!

James's message to today's graduands is to look to Dorset as the destination for a future career. Harnessing the collective skill and knowledge of graduates will enable the county to become a major centre for enterprise, creativity and commerce. What better place to live and bring up a family; as well as to work

Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present James Gibson Fleming, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Business Administration, *honoris causa*.