

# quintessential

issue one



## Ensemble links to benefit schoolchildren

**Vivaldi's** Four Seasons will provide the theme to which primary six and seven children in Glasgow are set to get a taste of some cultural pursuits in conjunction with the Scottish Ensemble (above).

The Glasgow Education Project 2006 will see the Scottish Ensemble working with the Cultural Co-ordinator for all Glasgow schools and the pupils of the city's Langfauld and St Clares primary schools.

Chief Executive of the Scottish Ensemble, Heather Duncan, said: "The pupils will work together on music, dance and drama projects. A new element of the project will see classes dividing into two so that one half from Langfauld can join with one half from St Clares and vice versa. There will be a health and environment element which will see healthy eating treated as a priority subject.

"We will also be exploring the idea of transforming the pupils' communities through planting seeds and growing local gardens. Beyond this, we will be using Vivaldi's Four Seasons

as the musical background to the project.

"The workshops will be co-ordinated by our Education Director Paul Rissmann and will take place throughout January and February 2006. We expect the project to culminate in a final community concert, probably in late March."

The project is being supported by The essentiagroup which is keen to provide backing where possible to projects and charities which have a positive impact on the daily lives of children.

Susan Pollock, Market Development Controller for The essentiagroup, said: "The company sponsors a variety of good causes and we already support the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

"This project combines the arts with positive outcomes for primary children and we felt it highly worthy of backing. We are looking forward to the workshops progressing and the final night concert which should be highly enjoyable for all involved."

## Watch this space... ...get bigger

**The** company headquarters, based within the Skypark (left) in Glasgow, are set to expand premises. We are in the final stages of in-depth discussions with the owners with plans to almost double the floor space.

This will see the creation of more workstation areas, better facilities for Associates, and a new office suite, leading to increased capacity for operations.

The work is expected to be completed in just over six months. Due to forward planning, the refurbishments will have no impact on delivery of services and come hot on the heels of our Newcastle office's successful first year and the expansion of the company's facilities at Brora in the Scottish Highlands.



## The essentiagroup: at the heart of smoking debate

**To** smoke or not to smoke? Or more accurately, to legislate or not to legislate? Smoking is a key issue exercising the minds of Government ministers; pub and club owners; and the general public as issues such as health and safety; enforcement; and even human rights are being aired.

The Scottish Executive is committed to introducing a ban on smoking in public places whilst the UK Government has recently decided to opt for a partial ban in England and Wales, allowing smoking in pubs and clubs which don't sell food.

Smoking and where it can be done and by whom has never been a hotter topic and The essentiagroup is right at the heart of the debate, providing advice and guidance across the UK. Due to our position as a recognised specialist on smoking cessation and the depth of our in-house knowledge, employers are already contacting The essentiagroup direct with a variety of relevant queries.

Indeed, using the best technology available, we deliver a number of smoking cessation services. These include Smokeline (Scotland); Smokers Helpline (Northern Ireland); NHS Asian Tobacco Helpline (England); and the NHS Smokers Helpline (England).

For this latter helpline for example we are playing our part in a campaign which was launched in July this year, 'Motivation that Matters'. It is designed to show younger people how smoking can impact on their health and attractiveness.

Although aimed at a particular target audience, the campaign remains relevant to all age groups.

It follows on from a study published by the British Medical Association (BMA) in 2004 called Smoking and Reproductive Life. It revealed that certain studies pointed to male smokers being at least 50% more likely to suffer from erectile dysfunction. It is estimated that in the UK 120,000 men aged 30-50 are impotent because of smoking, though this effect is not limited to that age group. We are now dealing with calls and emails from smokers wanting to discover how they are affected and what they can do.

Many employers and people in general do not realise the ways in which smoking can impact on a variety of life areas but awareness of the subject has risen due to its topical coverage in the news.

Whatever the issues surrounding smoking ban legislation, and without taking a stance on the rights and wrongs of the new laws, we remain in a prime position to throw some light into the debate and provide real guidance on the effects of smoking and how to quit.

### helplines

- [www.givingupsmoking.co.uk](http://www.givingupsmoking.co.uk)
- [www.hebs.com/topics/smoking](http://www.hebs.com/topics/smoking)
- [www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk](http://www.healthpromotionagency.org.uk)

# Board of directors welcome new members

**Executive** Team members Peter Carragher and Michael Ward, respectively the Directors of Operations and Finance & Corporate Services at The essentiagroup, have now also become members of the Board of Directors. They join Joe Costello (also the company's Managing Director); non-executive Chairman Dr Simon Chapman; Graeme Millar and Marco Chiappelli.



Peter Carragher



Mike Ward



A school on the outskirts of Glasgow whose pupils have special educational needs, has struck a partnership agreement with The essentiagroup. It is a move that will see its senior pupils gain unprecedented work experience. Drumpark School and Nursery in Coatbridge will also see their teachers joining pupils in working with the company and witnessing at first hand the demands of operating in a thriving private sector business.

The move came about through the Scottish Executive's 'Determined to Succeed' programme which is aimed at introducing enterprise into education. The partnership will see Associates from the company providing support in the delivery of relevant parts of the curriculum as well as Public Relations advice. Staff exchange programmes are also planned in the areas of quality, training, information technology, commerce and environmental awareness. The school caters for pupils who have learning difficulties - sensory problems, communication disorders, and behaviour problems. It has 200 pupils within its Language

& Assessment Unit (Nursery), mainstream nursery, primary department, secondary department and post-16 provision. Pupils are aged 3-18 years and there are 27 teachers - all mainstream trained with extra qualifications in 'Special Education'. Managing Director Joe Costello, said: "We are extremely pleased to be working with Drumpark School and Nursery. We believe our Associates will learn as much from the teachers and pupils as we hope they will from us. "Determined to Succeed is an excellent idea with admirable aims and objectives. It will provide young people with greater understanding of the personal skills essential to working in business. We are sure this will be a long and fruitful relationship." A spokesperson for Drumpark School and Nursery said: "The essentiagroup will provide our pupils and staff with invaluable experience thanks to the Determined to Succeed programme. It is vital that our pupils have an opportunity to understand the demands of industry and this agreement will ensure that happens."

**Ground-breaking** technology has ensured a time of birthday celebrations and awards for The essentiagroup's Newcastle operation. Connexions Direct is delivered from Newcastle, a central service for 13-19 year olds offering support in all areas that impact their life, including careers, relationships, learning, money and housing. The technology used is state-of-the-art and it enables young people to receive one-to-one advice through four contact channels. These include advisers online (webchat), telephone, as well as email and SMS text. The service is available 18 hours a day from 8am-2am and is seeing remarkable take up, and now Connexions Direct has also collected a 'People's Voice' Award for Best Government website at the prestigious and international Webby Awards. Heading up the team in Newcastle Contract Centre Manager Pauline Ironside who reflected on having passed a year of operations: "Our first year has seen us establish the service by achieving positive results month on month. I'm looking forward to our team building on the success of Connexions Direct in year two."

Client Manager Simon Merchant (below with Pauline) said: "It has been a demanding first year in which everyone worked really hard to make the service a success. Our next challenge is to make sure we don't let that work go to waste and grow the service in exciting and even more innovative ways."



## helplines

- [www.connexions.gov.uk](http://www.connexions.gov.uk)
- [www.determinedtosucceed.co.uk](http://www.determinedtosucceed.co.uk)



Main floor Glasgow office

# Providing CALM for young men with serious needs

The average ocean liner these days carries 2,000 souls. Imagine 18 liners, full of passengers, ready to set sail in a huge convoy from the shores of Great Britain. That's 36,000 people - the same amount of people we have calling just one of our advice lines in particular, during the course of a year. What is at first an interesting fact though, takes on a different slant when the advice line in question is for the Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM), which is targeted at the key suicide risk group of men aged between 15 and 35. That's over 36,000 calls from young men seeking help, every year, and just from England. Since 1997, the CALM confidential phonenumber has been funded by the Department of Health and marketed in such a manner that it became associated by young men with sport, music and entertainment, rather than Government or health services. Now there are changes afoot and CALM is relaunching as a charity and will have responsibility for managing the advice line contract independently. The essentiagroup has won the contract to continue delivery of the service and it will be supported by a website which will offer a variety of interactive elements.

Managing Director for The essentiagroup, Joe Costello, said: "CALM recognised that we have built up a considerable level of knowledge and expertise in delivering this service over the past years. We know for instance that research has revealed the targeted audience felt unwilling or unable to access traditional help services. "We have been able to deploy people to the service with real skills and relevant backgrounds in this difficult field, and employ the latest technology in ensuring men can easily contact us in complete confidentiality. The addition of website support will increase the demand on our expertise and we're ready to provide all the help necessary. "We are extremely pleased to have been successful in being contracted by CALM and look forward to working in close partnership to assist the people who need it most, their callers."

## helplines

- CALM is serviced by a dedicated team of advisers
- CALM phonenumber: 0800 585858
- [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)