

Inside this issue...

**Dunedin
Advisory** Page 2

OAK News Page 3

Stewartry Care Page 4

**Network ROI
Living Wage
Accreditation** Page 5

**Jerba
Campevans** Page 6

**Collective Architecture
Reset & Rebuild
Podcast** Page 6

**Palimpsest
Rebrand** Page 7

**Chris Walsh - AMA
New Trustee** Page 8

**Forthcoming
Events** Page 8

**First Friday
Lunch and Learn**

7th May
12noon - 1pm

Trustee Training

21st May
9.30am - 11.30am



Keeping it in the Work Family

A family-run business of over 50 years has entrusted its staff to take the reins after adopting employee ownership.

Dazzle & Inkspot Ltd, renowned for its officially licensed fancy dress products, toys, games and recreational merchandise has secured the long-term futures of its employees by transitioning to the ownership model.

The Hamilton-based firm originated as a printing company in 1969 after Tom Super took up his hobby after working at Rolls Royce. Since then, the business has adapted throughout the years with trade in stationery and office furniture, art and craft, executive toys and gift lines.

Now fronted by Tom's children; Martin, Marion and Caroline, the second-generation family business is adapting once more as it looks to reward its nine staff by allowing them to become beneficiaries of the Employee Owned Trust to whom the three shareholders sold their shares.

Dazzle & Inkspot's transition to employee ownership marked the firm down as the 100th Scottish business to adopt the model.

Director, Martin Super, sees the move as another positive step for the ever-adapting business.

Martin, said: "We have been thinking about succession for some time now, and we felt that becoming an employee-owned business was the best outcome for all who are involved with Dazzle & Inkspot.

"It would have perhaps been easier to sell the company to another business. However, we felt the best thing to do was to reward the loyal staff whom have contributed greatly to the success of the business over the years.

"By adopting employee ownership we are giving each one of our employees the chance to thrive within Dazzle & Inkspot, while continuing the incredibly hard work ethic that is instilled each day.

"We have always been a family business, and the staff at Dazzle & Inkspot are an extension of this family, and so we are simply putting in place a succession plan that will benefit those whom we care about the most."

Martin was convinced by the ownership model last year after interacting with England-based travel company, Alfa Travel. After meeting some of the directors and

(Continued)

senior management team, Martin was impressed at the vested interest they all had in employee ownership.

Dazzle & Inkspot were supported in the move by their accountants, Consilium CA and legal firm Harper Macleod LLP. Ownership Associates worked with the management team and the employees to help ensure the company's employee ownership journey got off to the best possible start.

Carole says, "Working with the Dazzle Inkspot team was such a joy and I'm delighted I'll continue to be involved with the company as their Independent Trustee."

Martin, added: "The more understanding we had about considering this succession plan for the business, the more we were convinced that employee ownership was the route to take for Dazzle & Inkspot.

"It has certainly safeguarded the future of our employees, we all work hard for each other and so this decision was without doubt the best way to move the business forward.

"We have adapted from a printing business to specialising in selling officially licensed products from some of Disney and Hollywood's biggest blockbusters. From local retail stores to a worldwide online market. Employee ownership is just the next step on our journey."



Martin Super



Directors

Dunedin Advisory 1st EOT Birthday!!



It's been a very quick and unprecedented first EOT year for the DA team! Completing our EOT status just 6 days after going into lockdown in 2020 and managing to achieve a seamless 'home working' environment for all staff within a week was no mean feat

This transition together with updating many of our systems and processes online with new technology has fast tracked the company into deciding 'blended working' is the way forward. We've also launched two microsites, the first direct to SME's in need of recovery/restructuring – [FinancialHelpScotland.com](https://www.financialhelpscotland.com) and [HelpWithDebt.scot](https://www.helpwithdebt.scot) for individuals with mounting debt issues.

Two exciting new office relocations to ITEK House in Glenrothes, and a move into Glasgow city centre at 2 West Regent Street have completed the upgrade of all three of our offices in Scotland including Dundee, giving us the space, technology and flexibility to meet the needs of our clients for the year ahead. It's been quite a year!!

OAK

News

There was one transaction completed in March which will be announced shortly. You'll see the fantastic news of Dazzle Inkspot which is the first of two April employee ownership transitions supported by OAK. Working with the Dazzle Inkspot team was a particularly rewarding project. This is a 50-year-old family business where the employees were very much thought of as part of the extended family – several of the employees had joined straight from school and were still there many years later. It's a great example of a business that has changed and adapted to different trading environments, moving from printing to retail to international e-commerce. The most powerful argument for employee ownership comes not from people like me or politicians or the media; it comes from employee owned businesses. Martin saw how committed employees were at Alfa Leisureplex, even in what was a very difficult market place. He also noted the drive and ambition that existed within the company. That's when he began to think employee ownership might be a good fit for his family business. The company's accountants, Consilium CA, are well versed in EOTs and they were supportive of the family's plans.

The Trustee training sessions are well attended and garnering excellent feedback. I wasn't sure if the online format would work but it seems to be the best substitute until we can hold in person meetings again. I have been asked to run similar courses for directors and you can read more about the proposal on page 8. I am always happy to run in-house courses for employee-owned companies and recently delivered a session for the Trustees of Scott & Fyfe. However, nothing beats bringing people together from different companies and swapping stories and experiences.

Speaking of which, we had another lively First Friday discussion which covered a range of topics. It was good to hear from Jerba on their



open-door policy – customers are welcome to wander in and watch production etc for example – in a bid to be completely transparent about how the company operates. We also considered using employee ownership as part of branding and several companies incorporate employee ownership into their email signature and/or emblazon some wording on uniforms. The Jerba attendees reported that customers comment positively and ask what it means. There were a couple of attendees from businesses who have recently become employee-owned, which led to a discussion on how customers react so positively to the news. Next First Friday takes place on May 7.

Huge thanks to everyone who reads, circulates and contributes to this newsletter. We're now reaching approximately 500 readers per month and it's great to see this level of interest in employee ownership news. Please do keep sending us your stories. The message is clear – employee ownership makes for good news – let's share it!

Take care everyone.

- Carole

carole@ownershipassociates.co.uk
01786 611066

Good news from Stewartry Care!

There have been some changes at Stewartry Care recently as the company continues to rise to the challenge of providing care during these difficult times. Carine McWilliam has been promoted to the post of Assistant Managing Director, Garry l'Anson is now Care and Support Lead and Sandra Telfer is Planning Lead. Maggie Young is now Quality and Admin Lead. The high standards of service delivered by Stewartry Care has been recognised by the Care Inspectorate obtaining a grade 6 of excellent for care and support. This grade ensured the company scored 100% in the recent National Flexible Framework which Dumfries and Galloway have adopted.

All staff have worked exceptionally hard during the pandemic to adhere to their high standards and all staff are now participating in twice weekly Covid testing. As an employee-owned care provider, Stewartry Care is pleased to report that it pays above the Scottish Living wage, and the hardworking employee owners can look forward to a pay increase and additional benefits around planned work.



Stewartry Care has always tried hard to minimise social isolation amongst the people they work with. Isolation is seen as one of the most serious threats for the vulnerable. Covid constraints mean the regular get-togethers are off limits, so instead the resourceful team are running online prize bingo, regular quizzes and competitions as well as their usual welfare calls.

The future of Health and Social Care provision is being debated in parliament and Stewartry Care are proud ambassadors of the employee ownership model, focussing on being one of the best providers of care in the Dumfries & Galloway area.

Network ROI receive Living Wage accreditation.

Network ROI has been accredited as a Living Wage employer.

Network ROI are an employee-owned managed services provider and operate a team of highly skilled engineers throughout the UK.

The real Living Wage is the only rate calculated according to the costs of living. It provides a voluntary benchmark for employers that wish to ensure their staff earn a wage they can live on, not just the government minimum. Since 2011 the Living Wage movement has delivered a pay rise to over 250,000 people and put over £1.3 billion extra into the pockets of low paid workers.

Keith Bevan, CEO, said "At Network ROI we are proudly employee-owned and we're



delighted to join a movement of employers who recognise the true cost of living in the UK. We have built up a strong culture with our employee-owners through having a shared vision and values. We believe people are the heart of our business; therefore recognising, rewarding and empowering employees in our view is not just the right thing to do but is the key to our continued success"

Jerba Campervans becomes only Scottish converter officially qualified by Volkswagen

Campervan converters have been recognised as a Motorhome Qualified Converter by VW



Jerba Campervans has become the only converter of its kind in Scotland to be officially recognised by Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles [VWCV] as a Motorhome Qualified Converter, one of only 3 converters in the UK.

Jerba received the qualification after meeting rigorous standards and obligations set out by VW.

VW Specialist Sales Manager, Nick Axtell, said: "The reason we created this scheme was to highlight the importance of quality control to our customers. We want to direct customers to companies we've qualified in the scheme, safe in the knowledge that each firm can deliver on the safety promises and obligations we expect at VWCV."



"With this in mind we have highlighted few companies that encompass our beliefs and meet our standards, and we are delighted to have them backed by this scheme."

VWCV identified Jerba Campervans as a significant operator, with the North Berwick firm

taking a keen interest throughout the scheme's inception.

Nick added: "We wanted to spotlight companies that have good ethics and ethos, and those who want to build a continuous business we can form a long-term relationship with."

"Out of all the companies we've dealt with, Jerba has been one of the best simply because of its expertise in our industry."

"We've visited the Jerba factory numerous times prior to lockdown, and gotten to know the staff's excellent approach to customer care, and we really relied on the company's knowledge and feedback to and really drive our scheme."

"The co-founder Simon Poole has been a champion of it really, and it's been valuable to have his enthusiasm."

Jerba will now be able to display the VWCV Motorhome Qualified logo on its website as well as utilising promotional materials from VWCV.

Co-founder of Jerba Campervans, Simon Poole, said: "This has been many years in the making, and we couldn't be happier to finally achieve this qualification."

"It means a great deal to us, not only by sharing it with our customers, but it is recognition for the team and the incredibly high standards they uphold each day."

"Having recognition from VWCV vindicates our work and the effort which goes into each campervan."

"We hope this qualification will display to many customers who are seeking to buy a campervan that Jerba Campervans is regarded as one of the UK's finest converters." **(Continued)**

The qualification comes after the employee-owned company became the first automotive business to achieve the Fair Tax Mark certification, joining a growing movement of responsible businesses who have declared what they pay in tax.

Jerba was also awarded with a Good Business Charter accreditation, demonstrating how its ethos applied throughout its business, from its commitment to work-life balance and paying the living wage, to its tax arrangements, supplier relationships and customer care.

Jerba Campervans was launched in 2006 and specialises in converting and customising VW Transporter vans for those passionate about adventure and the outdoors.

The customers' needs have been at the forefront of the business since it was founded in 2006 by Simon and his wife Cath, who after hiring and buying campervans themselves realised they could improve the design and user experience.

To find out more about Jerba Campervans, visit www.jerbacampervans.co.uk



Collective Architecture star in podcast series

We are very lucky in Scotland to have a body that has the prime purpose of promoting employee ownership. Co-operative Development Scotland (CDS) has produced a number of podcasts designed to increase awareness of employee ownership and inclusive business models. The recent series featured Jude Barber, director of Collective Architecture. Collective Architecture is one of the trailblazers in Scotland's employee ownership story, being an early adopter of the

model back in 2007. The award-winning practice had been set up by Chris Stewart in 1996. Chris had the vision of a more inclusive and open model of ownership for the 12 staff. It's worked well for the practice. Recognised for their superb work winning so many awards, there are now 50 staff members and an Edinburgh office was opened in 2016. The Glasgow based employees are getting ready to relocate to a new office which they have bought and designed themselves.

The employee owners at Collective have made every effort not to become complacent. Back in 2007, there was little knowledge around about how to "do" employee ownership. And of course, what is appropriate for 12 people might not fit with a workforce of 50 plus. The team reviewed their structure, and made some changes to reflect the growing employee base and changing environment. It's an absorbing story which you can listen to here :

cdsblog.co.uk/reset-and-rebuild-podcast-episode-2



New look for Palimpsest



the typesetting professionals

The employee owners of Falkirk based book production business, Palimpsest, have been busy designing a rebrand for the business. Renowned as the UK's market leader in the provision of typesetting and pre-press services to the publishing world; Palimpsest has been responsible for the typography of some of Britain's bestselling books such as Elton John's autobiography, 'Me', Billy Connolly's 'Tall Tales and Wee Stories', and Matt Haig's 'The Midnight Library'.

Palimpsest also contributed to the wizarding world of Harry Potter by designing and typesetting JK Rowling's 'Order of the Phoenix' and a special edition of both 'Fantastic Beasts' screenplays for dyslexic readers.

It is hoped the rebrand, which was entirely driven by the employees in-house, will reflect a new direction for the firm as it seeks to expand the business in the coming months and continue to blossom under employee ownership.

Palimpsest Branding Coordinator, Michelle Walker, said: "We have been working on a rebrand plan for some time now and we are delighted to see it has taken shape the way we planned.

"All of the work has been carried out by our dedicated team in-house, from the logo design to the website restructuring. Each member of our 21 strong team has played an integral role in the planning process.

"Our improved designs mark a new chapter for Palimpsest as we continue to seek opportunities to expand the business into other areas in the publishing sector.

"We're a UK leader in our market, working with the country's leading publishers, and so we are excited to showcase our new look to all of our clients and customers."

Since 1994, Palimpsest has contributed to more than 60,000 books and ebooks. The company offers a comprehensive range of pre-press services, including: typesetting, proofreading, digital publishing, design and reprographics, as well as a complete end-to-end project management service for publishers and self-publishing authors.

The company's transition into employee ownership has helped facilitate Palimpsest's



rebrand.

Andrew Dowell, Employee Director at Palimpsest, said: "Becoming employee-owned has given us a lot more scope to make the changes we think would be beneficial to the company, and has ultimately facilitated the rebrand. We feel the new image reflects who we are and reinforces that the future of Palimpsest is in our hands."

Chris Walsh: New Trustee for AMA



“I am proud to have been involved with the delivery of high profile and awarding winning buildings at AMA over the last 7 years. It is a pleasure to assist the practice in continuing to deliver innovative and thoughtful solutions for our clients as we evolve following employee ownership”

Award winning architects AMA decided to appoint an additional employee Trustee to strengthen the voice of the employees within the Edinburgh based practice. Chris Walsh topped the poll and is delighted to be elected to the position.

The practice has just celebrated one year in employee ownership and has gone from strength to strength. The architects are delighted to have been awarded some new high profile projects recently and the future pipeline is looking very bright.

Forthcoming Events

We're launching a series of "Round Table" discussions centred on particular topics to those involved in the employee ownership world. The first event will take place in May and will be a discussion on leadership in employee-owned firms. This session will be led by Barry Matheson, qualified leadership coach with 30 years' senior management experience. Future events will explore funding employee ownership, ownership culture, leveraging employee ownership to increase profitability and recruiting in EOBs. Numbers will be limited to optimise discussion.

In response to requests, we're running a development programme for employee elected or newly appointed directors within employee-owned businesses. These events aim to equip new directors with the basics of the board position. The plan is to run 4 half day sessions to cover the



role of the director including legal responsibilities, interpreting and using management information, strategic planning and leadership & engagement.

More information will be issued shortly but do let me know if either of these programmes will be of interest to you.