

## SNP lash housing group fee

THE SNP today threw their weight behind a campaign against fees being imposed on householders in Glasgow for unwanted improvements.

Protesters are furious Glasgow Housing Association are demanding the city's 26,000 homeowners pay bills of between £6000 and £8500 within a year. Glasgow Save Our Homes Campaign claim they are not consulted on the work, which covers improvements like cladding, roofing and painting.

The SNP's Sandra White today said: "GHA is forcing innocent people into debt."

## Offices on party spirit binge alert

GLASGOW office workers are to get lessons on how to handle their booze in a bid to battle the Christmas binge drinking frenzy.

Health professionals will be visiting offices across the city to give hour-long workshops ahead of the Christmas party season.

The scheme was announced today at the launch of the City Centre Alcohol Action Group's Play Safe campaign.

CCAAG chairman Willie Caie said: "Play Safe is about educating people to think about their well being as they head out to office parties over the festive season."

## Finance firm to add 500 jobs

A FINANCIAL company are to create 500 jobs in Glasgow over the next three years.

Barclays Wealth, who are already based in four sites in the city, have secured four floors in the prestigious Aurora building to house their expanding workforce.

The company currently employs 1,200 staff in Glasgow.

Frank McGarahan, from the firm, said: "We have ambitious growth plans and aim to add 500 roles within the next three years."

The jobs boost was welcomed by Deputy First Minister Nicol Stephen.

## Fears for missing climbers

MOUNTAIN rescue teams searching for two missing ice climbers said today it was feared they were caught in an avalanche.

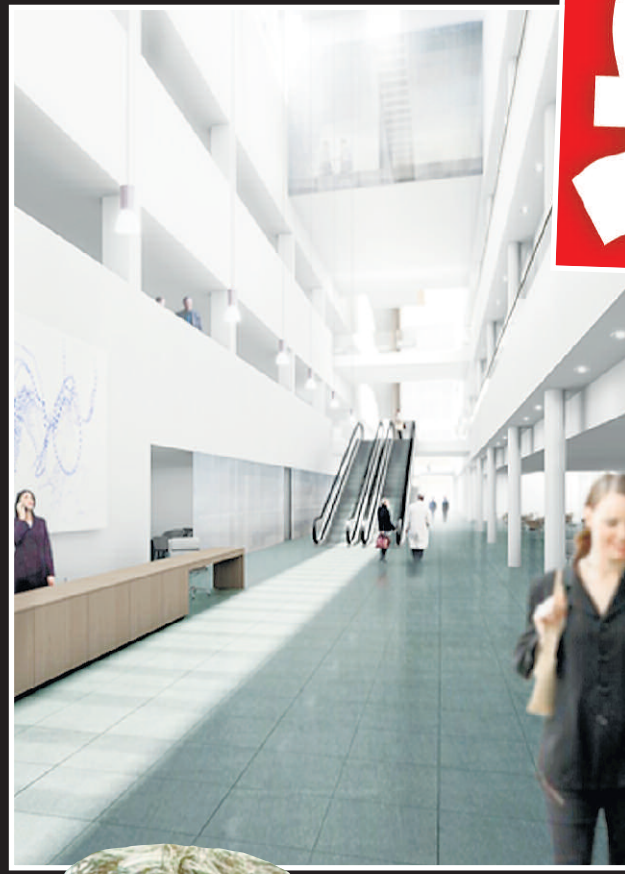
A helicopter from RAF Lossiemouth has joined the search for the two young men on Coire an t-Sneachda in the Cairngorms.

Both are from the Aberdeen area. One is in his teens and the other in his early 20s.

The alarm was raised last night when they failed to turn up at a pre-arranged point. Conditions today are described as "dreadful", with winds of up to 70mph.



**STATE OF THE ART:** The artist's impressions, main picture and below, show how Stobhill will look after the revamp



**£100m**

**INJECTION OF HEALTH KERR FOR STOBHILL**

## Minister kicks off hospital building work



**THIS is how the new £100million hospital at Stobhill will look when it opens in 2009.**

Health minister Andy Kerr this morning cut the first sod of land on the site where the state-of-the-art facility will take shape.

It will be built alongside the existing hospital and will become a major part of the new Stobhill Campus. Staff have already seen three old ward blocks demolished to make way for the new building.

The hi-tech hospital, which will

**CARE PLEDGE:** Health minister Andy Kerr

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be known as an ACAD or ambulatory care and diagnostic unit, will be joined on site by a mental health unit, a minor injuries unit and a 74-bed clinic.

Stobhill's revamp is part of a huge £750m investment to modernise Scotland's health facilities. The three-year building project in the north of Glasgow will create hundreds of construction jobs.

Once completed, Stobhill will become one of the biggest hospitals in Scotland, measuring 30,000 square metres over four floors.

Kerr said the new Stobhill will be one of the most modern and

well equipped in the country.

The minister also hailed the project as "a model for future hospital planning".

Kerr said: "The enhanced surgical and diagnostic facilities, including MRI scanning at Stobhill for the first time, will allow patients from North Glasgow, East Glasgow and East Dunbartonshire to receive their treatment locally.

**Boost**

"I believe that change in the way health services are delivered across Glasgow can only strengthen quality of care."

Sir John Arbuthnott, chairman of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, said: "The development of the new hospital is at the heart of plans to transform the Stob-

hill site and ensure it remains one of the city's key health locations for decades to come.

"It will also provide a major boost to the local economy with hundreds of new construction jobs created during the period."

Bob Anderson, general manager of the main contractors, Balfour Beatty, added: "We can now focus on making the plans for this new state-of-the-art hospital a reality."

Work is also now underway on building the new £100m Victoria Hospital. It will replace the ageing Victoria Infirmary in Langside when it opens in 2009.

NHS chiefs say that 800,000 patients in the Glasgow area will be covered by the new facilities in the north and south of the city.