



**DIFFERENT APPROACH: Barry O'Neill, left, and Gordon Wilson**

# Carbon aiming to provide solid advice

NEW FINANCIAL-PLANNING PRACTICE FORMED AFTER THOMSON SHEPHERD BUYOUT

BY IAN FORSYTH

A NEW Scottish independent financial-planning practice has started trading after its managers acquired the majority stake in the business from Britain's fourth largest building society.

The six-strong management team at newly formed Carbon Financial Partners bought control of Thomson Shepherd, previously 75% owned by Skipton Building Society, for an undisclosed sum. The remaining 25% was already owned by some of the managers.

Carbon, with offices in Aberdeen, Perth and Edinburgh, has ambitious expansion plans. It is looking to recruit highly qualified and experienced financial planners and support staff and expects staff numbers to double from 28 over five years.

Managing director Gordon Wilson, who hails from Elgin and stays at Perth, said: "Carbon has been founded by some of the most qualified, experienced, professional and committed people in the business.

"Carbon might not be a word traditionally associated

with financial services, but it encapsulates much of what we stand for. Carbon is among the most stable of all the elements. We build long-term partnerships with our clients and aim to deliver consistent, long-term, measurable results."

The company serves clients throughout Scotland and expects strong growth as investors become increasingly disillusioned with traditional active fund management, bank-based advice and as regulatory tightening forces the number of advisory firms to contract.

Investment director Barry O'Neill, who lives near Montrose, believes Carbon is different from its competitors.

He said: "To quote bestselling author Dr Stephen Covey, we 'begin with the end in mind'. We build lifetime cash flows then work back to the return an investor needs to achieve their objectives.

"This determines the minimum risk an investor needs to take.

"We don't try and categorise our clients using meaningless terms like 'cautious', 'balanced' or 'adventurous'."