

# in Stockton

## On the up for Pins and Ribbons



Pins and Ribbons's owner, Kerrie Murray

**Eaglescliffe-based home accessories business Pins and Ribbons is bucking the recession.**

In the last month the award-winning, eco-friendly company has signed-up 45 new UK stockists and launched its range of pet-friendly products.

Aimed at people who love their homes as much as their four-legged friends, pretty and practical pet cushions are the latest in the company's line-up of demand-led products.

Each design is co-ordinated with other Pins and Ribbons accessories, with the pooch and feline-friendly products complementing everything from draft excluders, memo boards and doorstops through to headboards, aprons and laundry bags.

Pins and Ribbons owner Kerrie Murray said: "As a home and animal lover I always go the extra mile to buy something special for my house and for my dogs. So it was no surprise that we received so many requests for pet beds and cushions which looked great around the home.

"Providing high quality products and listening to the views of our customers is central to our success."

This philosophy has seen the company go from strength to strength since its launch in 2006. Although Pins and Ribbons is still relatively young, the growing number of UK stockists and website ([www.pinsandribbons.co.uk](http://www.pinsandribbons.co.uk)) aimed at retailers and the public have helped the business really take off.

## Apollo lands in Stockton

**A new creative arts and education company has blasted off in Stockton Business Centre.**

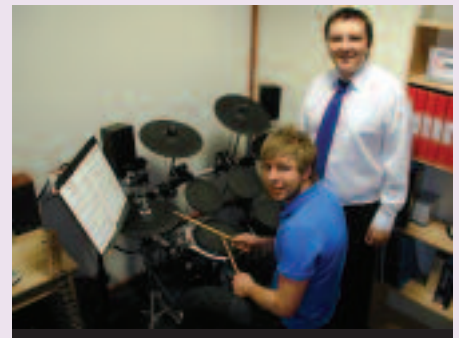
Created by Danny Allinson and Ste Sudlow, Apollo Art Ltd features a purpose built music studio where budding musicians can learn to play in a fun, relaxed environment.

Lessons are available in guitar, drums, piano and vocals and are open to all ages and abilities.

Danny said: "We're delighted to open a creative arts company in Stockton. After years of travelling around the country to work on various projects ourselves, we plan to bring more creative projects to our region and inspire local youngsters to realise their own artistic ambitions and become more involved in the arts closer to home."

The Business Centre, on Brunswick Street, Stockton, provides small starter offices and workshops for new small businesses and those looking for their first commercial premises.

For details about music lessons, contact Apollo Music Service on (01642) 345141 or for information about the Stockton Business centre log on to [www.stocktonbusinesscentre.org](http://www.stocktonbusinesscentre.org)



Ste Sudlow playing watched by Danny Allinson

## Pride in their work

**In the last five years, Stockton manufacturer Nifco UK has turned its luck around – going from a struggling business to a leader in its field.**

Its reward has been a host of national and regional awards, and Nifco was the only local company to be a finalist in three categories of the Tees Valley Sub Regional Finals of the NE Business Awards.

Nifco UK designs and manufactures plastic parts for the automotive industry, and boasts Nissan, Ford, Toyota and Honda among its key customers. The UK subsidiary of a Japanese-owned company, it currently employs 162 people.

Managing Director Mike Matthews said: "The fact that we've transformed a company that was seriously underperforming, and at risk of losing customers – or even surviving – in 2003, to being awarded some of the highest accolades in the UK's plastic industry is overwhelming.

"Winning 'Processor for the Year' is essentially like being named company of the year."

Nifco UK believes its current success and numerous awards are testament to the fact that manufacturing businesses can be successful in the North East on both a national and international platform. Mike Matthews added: "The ultimate aim is to be the number one manufacturer of functional plastic components in Europe. We're resetting our business plan every year to take us towards a level of excellence in all areas."



Nifco UK's Managing Director, Mike Matthews