

SWS... BEST NEWS

In the March issue I referred to the restructuring of the Group. The September issue of SWS . . . Best News will include features from across the Group as it is my intention to keep everyone informed of developments through the SWS newsletter. To start this off this issue shows the Group structure along with a little background information about each company. I'm sure further items in months to come will provide much more of an insight into all the members of the SWS Group.

Andrew Sweeney
Chief Executive



Andrew Sweeney

Strategic Workforce Solutions



MATRIX

Matrix was acquired in November 2012 and provides training services to organisations across the West and East Midlands, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Herefordshire and Derbyshire. This ranges from apprenticeship programmes, NVQ's and lean principles to bespoke courses and mentoring services which are focused on improving employee performance and efficiency that directly affects bottom-line success. With over 15 years' experience Matrix is able to identify training needs within its clients' businesses and tailor courses to meet these requirements.
www.matrixtraining.org.uk

FLEETMASTER

Fleetmaster Group was acquired in October 2013 and was founded in 2001 to provide training and development to assist fleet operators meet both their legal and ethical obligations regarding safe vehicle operation. It is one of the UK's leading and most innovative training providers delivering intelligent training applications to a range of customers including logistics, utility companies, local authorities, be they national corporations or small local businesses.
www.fleetmastergroup.com

CPA

CPA Recruitment specialises in providing search and selection, advertising and executive search services to a range of blue chip and independently owned businesses spanning ambient, chilled and frozen food & beverage market sectors. The business, which was founded 26 years ago, joined the Group in March 2011 and has offices in the UK and North America. CPA Recruitment has developed into a market-leading business in its niche sector by providing recruitment and resourcing solutions throughout the food manufacturing industry. www.cparecruitment.com

TBC

The Best Connection employment group was formed in 1991. The business has an extensive network of branches throughout the UK from which it supplies temporary labour to the industrial, HGV, retail and warehouse & distribution sectors. The Best Connection supplies many blue chip clients and interviews and registers around 50,000 temporary workers annually and at any one time supplies over 15,000 workers to 1,000 clients. The Best Connection is a Sunday Times Top 250 company.
www.thebestconnection.co.uk

BES

The Bailey Group was acquired October 2012. The Group specialises in two distinct markets. Bailey Employment Services was founded in 1984 and is a multi-disciplined high street agency supplying the industrial, driving & warehouse, commercial markets, operating from Melksham and Goole.
Bailey Care Services, incorporating Truecare and Securecare, is a separate division with 17 years' experience specialising in residential and domiciliary care from Melksham, Swindon, Oxford, Trowbridge and Worthing.
www.baileycare.co.uk

CTS

CCity Transport Solutions (CTS) is based in Hemel Hempstead, north of London. The business was established in 1995 and acquired in January 2012. CTS has developed a unique web-based trading platform which enables customers to manage the supply of temporary drivers and vehicles to locations across the UK. In addition to this CTS also operates a successful haulage division.
www.citytransportsolutions.com

New Mansfield office opens for business



After a cosy year of space-sharing, the Sutton in Ashfield (Mansfield) team has moved from their colleagues at Chesterfield to temporary premises in the heart of Mansfield. The new offices, which are located on Clarkson Street, were opened on February 10th and will form the base until permanent premises are located in Sutton in Ashfield. The HGV desk has moved back to Chesterfield.

With a strong history of success and robust local relationships from the Chesterfield and Sutton in Ashfield operations, The Best Connection will now be able to provide a greater focus on addressing the employment market for the people of Mansfield and its locality.

The Mansfield team consists of Matt Wooding – Branch Manager Chesterfield & Mansfield, Adrianna Jackson, IND Consultant, Tiffany Mayfield, IND Consultant and Lauren Barke – Branch Administrator.

Mansfield is a thriving industrial town with a textiles heritage



L to R Tiffany Mayfield, Lauren Barke, Adrianna Jackson

located 15 miles east of Chesterfield and 20 miles north of Nottingham that offers the team a great opportunity to grow The Best Connection's brand.



L-R Chesterfield's, Angelika Zorek, Kat Boska, Kath Diamond & Rob Warner

Meanwhile, it is business as usual at the Chesterfield office as the team become accustomed to having fewer colleagues and more leg room at its Glumangate premises above the Derbyshire Building Society. Chesterfield remains a very important operation for TBC serving the largest town in the region. The team comprises recently promoted Divisional Manager, Rob Warner; Byron Scott, HGV Senior Consultant, Kath Diamond – Senior IND consultant, Luke Marshall, HGV Consultant, Simon Voy - HGV Consultant, Angelika Zorek, Resourcer and Branch Administrators, Natalie Wardle and Kat Boska.



Luke Marshall



Simon Voy



Byron Scott and Natalie Wardle

Glorious Guildford opens its doors for TBC

After some initial teething problems including fire, flood, plague and pestilence (the flood bit is true at least!) Guildford can now announce it opened its doors on on the 16th of June with John Reader (manager), Jess Howard (consultant) and John Anderson (consultant) in full command.

Guildford is the county seat of Surrey and is located 30 minutes by train southwest of London. It will be servicing the busy Surrey towns of Guildford, Woking, Farnborough and Cranleigh. The branch has already developed a busy industrial plan that is currently being serviced from the Crawley office and will be adding a driving desk in the very near future.

We will keep you updated with the branch's progress. In the meantime for those of you who have never visited Guildford here are some interesting facts about the town.

- The Ford Prefect from Douglas Adams' Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy claimed to be from Guildford.
- The Stranglers were originally called 'The Guildford Stranglers'
- Lewis Carroll lived and was buried in Guildford. There is a statue of Alice Through the Looking Glass in the grounds of Guildford Castle

The Best Connection's new offices have previously been used as a Bakery, an Art

shop and an Ordinance Survey mapping centre - so it should smell great, look fantastic and will definitely be on the map!



Guildford team left to right John Reader, DM, Jess Howard, consultant, John Anderson consultant, Rene Hawkes, area manager.

Wincanton & M&S goes from strength to strength

With a host of logistical challenges ahead of them, TBC's Sheffield team recently pulled out all the stops to develop the Wincanton and M&S account. Senior Manager, Paul Young, reports on how team work addressed a 'mammoth task'.

This year saw an extremely lively start for TBC's team in Sheffield with a great opportunity to develop the Wincanton M&S account. With the Home Delivery and Equipment departments set to migrate from Bradford to their new 647,000 sq. ft. site, based at the International Rail freight terminal in Catcliffe, Sheffield, the logistics of the move were going to prove a major challenge for all concerned.

As part of the project, a number of permanent workers were given the opportunity to transfer from the Bradford site to Sheffield, along with the local Sheffield branch needing to recruit up to 80 new operatives, 40 FLT Reach drivers and a range of Low Level Order Pickers and Pedestrian/Power Pallet Truck & General Warehouse operatives. Finding 40 FLT Reach drivers alone would be 'no mean feat' given the short timescales, but adding to this with daily travel by coach to Bradford for training for up to 12 weeks was another challenge. With the coach set to leave Sheffield at 04.30am it made the task somewhat 'nail-biting' to say the least!

The task was made even tougher following a series of meetings with the various department managers as we learned the full criteria required for each FLT driver. Here are some of the challenges we had to overcome along the way:

- FLT Reach Driver must still hold their original licence, with a separate refresher licence within the last three years. They must also have the ability to lift at up to 10 metres, work a 6-2/2-10 rotation and travel to Sheffield for 04.30am, with

no public transport available to meet the coach and be willing to sit on a coach for upwards of two hours per day.

- If given the green light at this point, the operative will now attend the on-site induction, along with FLT Refresher test and medical examination.
- My recruitment team, headed up in branch by Dave Walter with the support of Lindsey Machin (Trainee Consultant) was strengthened by the secondment of Angelika Zorek (Chesterfield Resourcer) & Veronica Misejova (Resource Manager) who have proven track records for recruiting large numbers at short notice.
- Tom Cottingham was set to move to Bradford to become the interim 'onsite project manager' supporting the arrival of the 80 workers each day.
- The role varied for Tom from face to face planning with the client to travelling daily with the coach at 04.30am, ensuring daily fulfilment. Tom experienced a barrage of early morning questions from the travelling temporary workforce.

Beth Dodd (Branch Administrator) was given the responsibility to ensure payroll ran smoothly throughout the migration period, with Paul Freeman, Mark Widdup and Nikola Kasubova providing the invaluable experience for on-site support at both Bradford and Sheffield.

To say the whole migration plan from Bradford to Sheffield was a 'mammoth task' would be an understatement and one of the tougher challenges during my 16 years with TBC; however it's a great feeling to look back at what the team have already achieved, whilst working together as one, to gain the end result!

Reading Mr Men books can seriously improve your sales technique!

Some of The Best Connection's most senior people were taken out of their comfort zone recently whilst attending a new sales presentation skills course.

On this occasion we decided to move away from in-house training and engage specialist training providers BodyTalk to improve delivery skills and presentation content within a generic rather than purely a recruitment specific environment. This resulted in a group of extremely apprehensive Managers and one Director making their way to a hotel in Stourport on Severn.

So, how did reading Mr Men books help? Most delegates when presenting sounded

clear and confident, but were fairly monotone with no real light and shade or emphasis on developing excitement or caution.

As each delegate gave their presentation, they were asked to read a passage from a Mr Men book, in the style of the Mr Men character that would enhance their presentation. For example, when the message needed to motivate the audience, Mr Happy would be chosen to speed up the pace and stimulate the listeners. Alternatively, if we needed to tone down the full-on sales delivery to get the audience to consider the benefits of our proposal, Mr Lazy who lives in Sleepy Land

would be used to slow down the pace and lower the voice, so that we could emphasise the message.



When the delegates returned to their presentation using the required Mr Men style, the impact was staggering. Try it yourself in front of a mirror at home, ideally when no-one else is about!

During the two-day experience many other techniques were learned but none to rival the Mr Men experience.

Business Development Badger puts the Spark back into Sales

Badgers are busy, resourceful creatures – not often seen, but certainly engaging and entertaining. Their greatly enhanced sense of smell allows them to sniff-out any opportunity for a good feast. Some might say they share some of the characteristics of aspiring sales professionals! So, when Marcus Jepson approached the training team about putting together a bespoke sales course which would get the 'spark' back into sales the badger concept suddenly came to life.

To keep things fresh – and badgers like their food fresh – Marcus was keen that the new training would not be in the form of a 'traditional' sales course. He was after something completely different.



At a 'brain-storming' meeting with trainers and managers from the region, key words and phrases kept cropping up, for example; fun, active, lead by example, teamwork, innovative, resourceful - all of which create an environment which promotes a positive sales culture. These were

great, reflective and positive responses but the question was – how could they encapsulate and represent these ideas and characteristics easily and clearly? After much head scratching and blue sky thinking – 'Business Development Badger' was born. All that was needed was a blistering good course.

Rising to this challenge, Fay and William set about designing and writing the course content which developed into 'Sales Spark'. They then went in search of some willing guinea pigs (notice the animal theme here) who would be the first participants to meet the badger – face to face. Worthing was the chosen venue for the two-day trial course with an audience of handpicked senior sales people eager to learn new ways of improving sales effectiveness and to take these ideas back to branch to light the 'spark' of sales. As a physical reminder of the course, each delegate was awarded a Badger (not a real one!). Business Development Badger – as he is now known - was to be taken back to branch to be part of the sales team and to help promote the Sales Spark. Not only was the new course a great success – it was also brilliant fun!



'The Sales Spark course for me personally was priceless and provided the opportunity to listen to delegates of all levels and identify what aspects of sales can be challenging and how others have overcome these challenges. I like the fact delegates are in an environment where they have the chance to brainstorm with one another about things such as how varying years of recruitment impact sales and also canvassing ability - and adding these ideas to others' repertoire which should, in turn, make them a more effective sales consultant and inspiration in branch.' Mark Bowley, Branch Manager.



Sales Spark course attendees (& badgers!)

2014 Sales Competition kicks off with a treble!

Now into its 2nd year, Darren Ainge's regional sales competition has started with a familiar face on the winners' podium (okay, office carpet!). Steve Causer - Senior Consultant, Wolverhampton branch is the first consultant to win the accolade three times, no mean feat given the competition is only 12 months old.

"What is exceptionally pleasing for me," said Darren "is that Steve took on a number of management tasks at the back end of 2013 and he has not allowed these to distract him from his primary focus of new business sales."

Well done Steve!



Alex Jones (right) who was recently promoted to multi-branch responsibility over Dudley & Wolverhampton is pictured presenting Steve with his bottle of champagne.

Level 3 Training a Great Success

TBC has introduced an exciting advanced-level Business Administration course designed to further improve vital skill sets.

Eligibility for the Advanced Level 3 Business Administration qualification requires administrators to have previously gained an NVQ Level 2 Business Administration qualification from TBC or through an external company.

Level 3 is the advanced qualification that offers eligible administrators the chance to continue with their learning and personal development. Feedback from Kanez who runs the course is that a positive response has been received with high administrator uptake. This reflects a great deal of enthusiasm, commitment and dedication from TBC staff and the value the course represents.

With so many administrators wanting to start as soon as possible, an online test which consists of Information & Communication Technologies (ICT), Maths

and English questions, has been set up as part of the acceptance process. Feedback so far has been great! Alex Ingram, senior payroll administrator, TBC Stoke, gave Best News her thoughts on the course:

"I have worked for The Best Connection Stoke branch for seven and a half years. During my time here I have worked closely with Kanez on many things, the main one being my NVQ. I am currently working towards NVQ Level 3 Advanced Business Administration. Kanez is always available to help me if I have any queries or problems at any stage of the process and is extremely helpful and patient.

"I decided to further my NVQ training when the opportunity was offered to me as I felt that it would be beneficial to my current role and will help with furthering my career with The Best Connection. The NVQ 3 has been a different process to the NVQ 2 with most of the work so far being based online, meaning it is easier to keep track of

what stage I'm currently at and how I'm performing so far. The greatest thing is that there is no paperwork! So far the whole process has been easy to understand and manage. This has been helped by the good communication from Kanez, explaining what I need to be doing and what will happen next. The main thing that I'm most looking forward to is receiving my award for passing the course – all being well!"



Alex Ingram

Celebrating the life of a colleague -A tribute to Dave Vessey

In March this year we received the terrible news that Dave Vessey had passed away. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to his wife, Rona, family and friends for their sad loss. In a tribute to his time at The Best Connection Russell Grantham reflects on his friend and colleague.

"David Vessey joined The Best Connection, Derby, in June 2004. Coming from an engineering background Dave used his local knowledge and likeable personality to quickly establish his own client base in the area, many of which we supply to this day.

He was a real 'people person' and soon found his niche as Onsite Coordinator for Wincanton. A true testament to Dave's ability in this role was when the client informed us about their relocation to Marchington, insisting that Dave remained a part of 'their team.'

Dave was a much liked, respected and valued member of The Best Connection who could always say or do something to put a smile on your face - those of us who worked alongside Dave still have fond memories that continue to make us smile.

In his spare time, Dave was a keen sportsman and proudly followed Derby County Football Club and Stainsby Hall Cricket Club. His involvement in Stainsby Hall began by taking an interest from his colleague Alan Worth which progressed to helping the club sell raffle tickets and even trying to recruit the

opposition's best players! When asked why he helped out at the club he simply replied that everyone had been so welcoming to him that he wanted to give something back in return."

Lee Harris added: "Dave will be sorely missed by all the team in Derby. He always had time for everyone, even in the most challenging circumstances. Dave led by example at all times and was a credit to the branch in that role and latterly Onsite in Marchington."



Dave Schilling's Regional Canvassing Competition

The results are in, verified and the winners announced!

Last year's regional canvassing competition saw Rob Mittell, manager of the Ipswich branch, win the competition with an outstanding performance finishing on a score of 314 points. Rob joined TBC in August 2003 and will be involved with the opening of the new Norwich branch this spring. In second place, he was followed closely by Mike Williams, Divisional Manager of the Northampton branch with 290 points. Mike has been with TBC since April 2006. Coming a close third was Jenny Jackson, Senior Consultant at Peterborough branch. Jenny joined TBC in December 2008 and did exceptionally well to finish third on a creditable 261 points. Jenny has run a very successful driving desk that was sixth in the company's rankings last December.

"I am very proud of each of them and will be watching this year's competition closely to see who will snatch the top slot," said Dave Schilling.



Jenny Jackson accompanied by Steve Leather (on left) senior manager & branch manager, Dipak Patel



Mike Williams (centre), Dave Schilling (left) & Jeff Williams, senior manager



L to R Steve Leather, Rob Mittell & Dave Schilling

Rob Mittell promoted to Branch Manager

Rob was featured in the last issue of Best News as someone that has moulded his career with TBC. In this issue we congratulate Rob on his promotion to Branch Manager.

TBC did not previously have a branch in Ipswich, so initially Rob worked from the Peterborough branch starting the Ipswich plan in September 2011. Following the success of his activities the doors to the Ipswich office opened in April 2012. Since then, the branch has come a long way and now runs an HGV plan that was ranked number 1 in TBC's tables in June 2103 and has consistently been ranked in the top 3 of The Best Connection's league table. The HGV plan has a client base of around 50 with between 40 and 50 drivers out per day – this peaked at 60 in April this year.

The industrial plan currently has around 45 temporary workers out per day and has recently won a contract with DHL NHS which on average uses a further 20 people a day, peaking at 40. This is due to go live at the end of June.

The Ipswich branch now has a team of four consultants as well as two administrators and the branch is currently achieving around £8500 net margin per week.

The plan for Norwich branch is to initially launch one HGV and one Industrial plan; the team already services a small client base in the area. Consultants are currently being recruited for Norwich.

It is no coincidence that prior to Rob's recent promotion, he was winner of last year's 2013 regional sales competition. This

effort and consistent performance has also afforded Rob the additional opportunity of opening the Norwich branch, which is sure to be another success story – Rob's duties will be split between the two offices.

Congratulations and good luck to Rob and the Ipswich and Norwich teams.



L to R Dave Schilling, Rob Mittell & Steve Leather

Andy Wilson promoted to Area Manager

Fresh from his recent promotion to Area Manager, Best News takes a look at the private world of TBC's Andy Wilson.

Tell us a little about your background and what has led to your recent promotion . . .

"I started my career working for various charity fundraising companies on behalf of NSPCC and the newly launched Air Ambulance Service in a sales capacity from 1990 to 1997. This involved 13-hour days and a lot of evening and weekend work. Although the work was emotionally rewarding, I wanted a job with normal hours and a career path so I applied for a position as trainee HGV consultant at The Best Connection, Walsall, in April 1997 at the age of 23.

"After much hard work cutting my teeth in the business I achieved promotion from 'Breakfast Organiser' to HGV Divisional Manager by 2002 and then went on to successfully spearhead the opening of new driving divisions in Derby and West Bromwich.

"During Christmas 2006 I had a 'social engagement' with my Regional Manager, Lee Harris, and at some point during our conversation, was persuaded to take on responsibility for the Chesterfield branch in the New Year of 2007. The office was 100 miles from my home and had 14 temporary workers – he must have been very persuasive! In retrospect, this was a great move and the branch has gone on to be a very successful operation, leading us to open the new Sutton in Ashfield Branch some 12 miles away, in February 2014. This has generated further career opportunities for others and as it is my 4th location has also resulted in my recent promotion to Area Manager."

Which achievements are you most proud of?

"I am most proud of seeing how colleagues from my area have gone on to become successful managers right across the country. Some of these are familiar names in TBC such as Rob Mittell, Wayne Tighe, Andy Woodvine, Rob Warner, Sam Taylor and Matt Wooding, most of whom joined my area as trainees. Hopefully I helped them a little to forge their careers. I am also proud of being involved in driving-specific issues such as helping to formulate the driver tech course and my involvement in TBC Driving Steering Committee and attending REC Driver Meetings. In addition, I am someone that staff at all levels from around the country seem happy to contact for driving-related advice if required.



Andy Wilson

From a personal perspective, managing to lose five stone, my sanity and almost all my hair in the past five years has been a sign of the times. That's recruitment management for you!"

Outside of TBC what do you like to do?

"When I'm not working I like to spend time with my wife, Jo and six-year old daughter, Chloe. I also like to eat the hottest curries possible (I have successfully introduced the Phaal challenge (it's hot!) to most branches) and I enjoy playing golf. I have recently entered the largest UK Amateur Golf Competition, 'The 2014 Trilby Tour' which will be screened on Sky Sports."

Congratulations to Andy on his promotion and we wish him continued success.



NEXT ISSUE...

Could you please contact Jan Blann if you have any topics for inclusion in the next issue of Best News or with subjects for future Press Releases.

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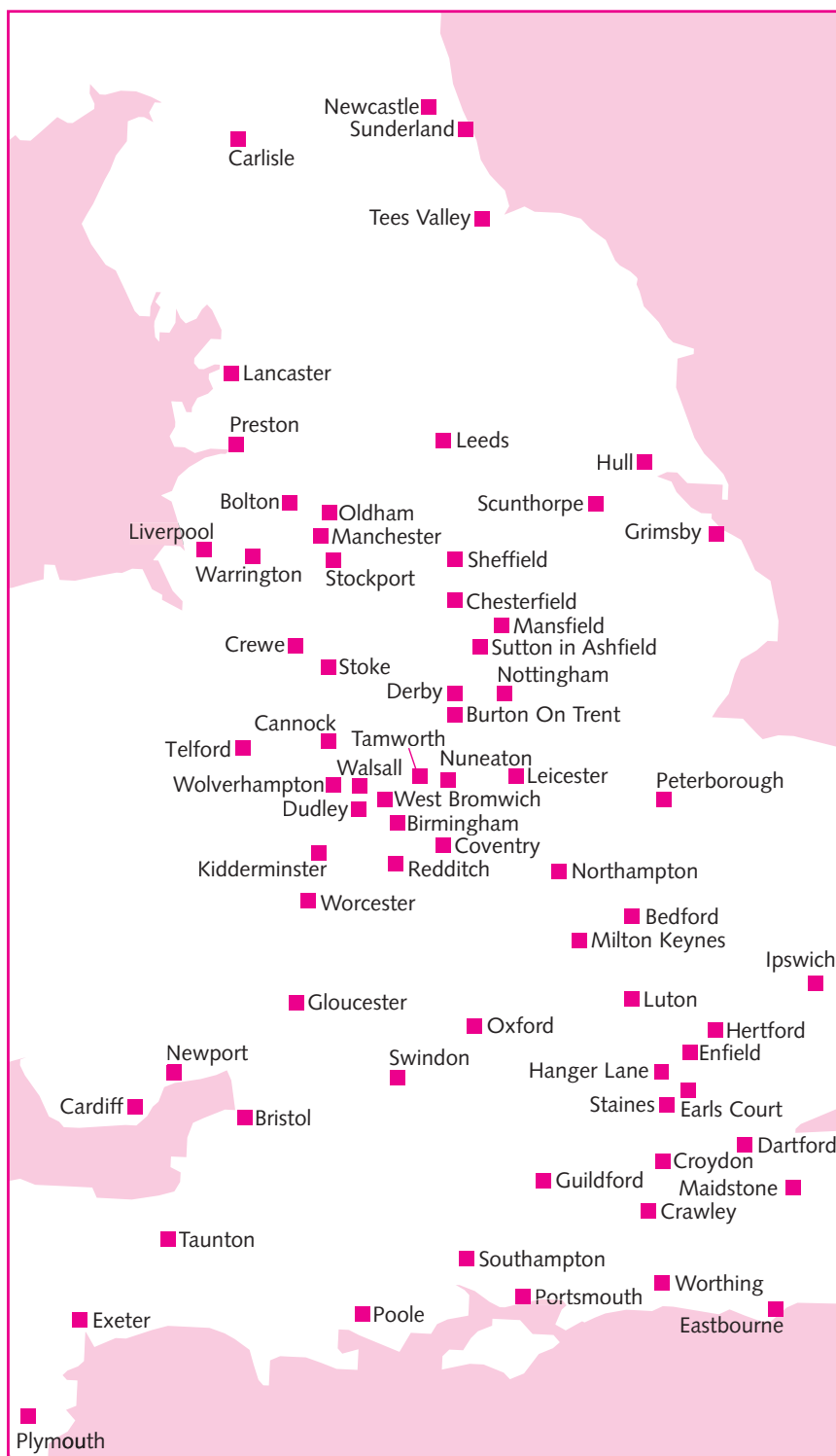
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Crawley	01293 515333
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Derby	01332 291444
Dudley	01384 253201
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Enfield	0208 362 1430
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Gloucester	01452 383303
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Guildford	01483 546241
Hanger Lane	0208 998 9910
Hull	01482 610160
Ipswich	01473 210584
Kidderminster	01562 66555
Lancaster	01524 383438
Leeds	0113 243 1033
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Liverpool	0151 236 0111
Luton	01582 405 444
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Manchester	0161 237 9333
Mansfield	01623 857976
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Newcastle	0191 230 2007
Newport	01633 842164
Northampton	01604 629888
Nottingham	0115 958 5880
Nuneaton	02476 382211
Oldham	0161 626 4222
Oxford	01235 550077
Peterborough	01733 555672
Plymouth	01752 672222
Poole	01202 682282
Portsmouth	0239 286 4411
Preston	01772 201777
Redditch	01527 591141
Scunthorpe	01724 876111
Sheffield	0114 275 8181
Southampton	0238 033 3188
Staines	01784 450555
Stockport	0161 968 1964
Stoke	01782 209666
Sunderland	0191 567 1100
Sutton In Ashfield	01623 857976
Swindon	01793 542211
Tamworth	01827 53333
Taunton	01823 330621
Tees Valley	01642 672655
Telford	01952 898242
Walsall	01922 639000
Warrington	01925 629666
West Bromwich	0121 553 7755
Wolverhampton	01902 773000
Worcester	01905 731777
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The Best Connection

EMPLOYMENT GROUP

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Opening soon: Basildon + Norwich

For a complete list of branches and contact details,
please visit www.thebestconnection.co.uk