

SWS... BEST NEWS

All Change for Apprenticeship Funding

Welcome to the September issue of SWS Best News. As we move into Autumn we start to prepare for a world outside of Europe with article 50 poised to trigger the starter gun for change. Many of the early negative predictions have not come to fruition and we continue to support a buoyant temporary labour market across the UK as businesses just get on with it – as do we!

As a Group of complementary businesses we continue to focus on what we do best and that is providing industry-leading customer service in all our activities. To achieve and maintain this important objective we continue to invest in attracting talented people to the business and developing the skills of our workforce through continuous professional development. Upskilling is certainly a theme in many of the stories and news updates you will read. In particular, we are at the beginning of significant changes to the apprenticeship structure in the UK that will positively impact many of our customer's operations and indeed the broader economy.

A massive change in apprenticeship funding is on its way that will begin in May 2017 (see Matrix and FleetMaster articles) and will see companies with a £3M pay bill having to pay a 'levy'. Even the title 'Apprenticeship Levy' is misleading as the new 'standards' are not Apprenticeships as most people understand them. In simple terms, the Government were spending £1.5B via the Skills Funding Agency on Apprenticeships. The new levy, which will be paid by a minority of businesses in the UK, will raise £3B to be spent via a new system. It is hoped this will lead to building a better skilled workforce and a more competitive UK economy set to compete on the world market.

As a training provider for apprenticeship schemes through our Group businesses, this represents an opportunity to expand our services to our customers.

In this issue, we continue to celebrate the achievements of our people and I hope you enjoy reading the successes in all areas of the business. In many cases, these acknowledgments reflect the attitude of 'going that extra mile' for our customers as well as exceptional application to the task at hand. Well done to all of you mentioned this time around and I know there are many other people doing sterling work whose stories we look forward to sharing in the future.

And now to our branch programme. In line with our 'national coverage - local presence' approach to customer service, we are constantly reviewing our office locations and undertake new launches and refurbishments on a regular basis and we cover some of these stories in this issue. Our model of co-location with an existing branch to focus on a new geography before opening a new



Andrew Sweeney

branch has worked well for us and allows their teams to hit the ground running after opening. Look out for more branch openings in the near future!

Finally, I hope you enjoy the articles and stories and look forward to seeing many more new faces and reading your stories in the next edition of SWS Best News.

Andrew Sweeney
Chief Executive



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.

tel: 01926 843693
mob: 07976 284248
email: jan@marketnotions.com

Inside the Buzzing CTS Office



This is not just any office – this is the CTS office in Hemel Hempstead – where the deals are struck and top-notch service is delivered. It's a busy space with lots of activity, conversations and energy. This is the nerve centre of the business where the team coordinate their activities, so let's see what some of them are up to.

Liam Murnaghan makes sure that suppliers deliver a great service to CTS and, of course, at their best rates! And across the office Abbie Sands is busy managing the operations team who are doing a sterling job providing emergency and short notice vehicle and worker supplies for clients. Then there's Charlotte Penn who works with Abbie, coordinating the pilot scheme for the Travis Perkins Contract Driver Project. This is keeping her hands full but it's paying off, we hear, as there may be more to come in the pipeline!

In earshot of Abbie, Rebecca Stevens, who some might describe as the 'office techie', takes control of the ctsDRIVE platform, managing the likes of Furniture Village and coordinating with The Best Connection's Central Managed Service Team to cross pollinate our services! At a separate desk, Sarah Jacques diligently supports the finance & administration function giving clients visibility of cost savings on an ongoing basis.

It's a hive of activity with diverse tasks, roles and skills working harmoniously – so you can see why CTS is destined for great things!



Sarah Jacques

Happy 10th Anniversary Sarah!

Sarah Jacques – a valued member of CTS – has been working with us for 10 years. Congratulations Sarah – doesn't time fly when you're enjoying yourself?!

Sarah works in the administration department ensuring that invoices are processed correctly and supports the company's accountant with month-end functions.

Over the time she has been at CTS, she has developed an efficient system to monitor and highlight the number of penalties CTS clients receive. As a result, she has helped control and reduce costs.

Further congratulations are also due to Sarah as she has recently announced that she is expecting her first child in December.

Developing people to manage future success

In September 2015 City Transport Solutions (CTS) entered into a partnership with Hatfield University to develop staff at all levels in the organisation. This reflects CTS' aim to establish a foundation for learning within the business in order to meet its key objectives for growth, efficiency, productivity and profitability.

As a GOLD Investor in People (IIP) accredited business, CTS considers The Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) framework a perfect fit which will complement the existing IIP programme. "The Level 3 Award, Certificate and Diploma in Leadership and Management is ideal for individuals who already have management responsibilities or indeed aspirations to become a manager but no formal training. It is suitable for people who are serious about developing their abilities," said Mark Gooden, Managing Director, CTS.

CTS wanted a support structure which gave everyone the opportunity to progress within the business. This includes new starters and ensuring they feel supported as practising team leaders prior to progression to the next level of management. CTS encourages all of its managers to lead people through organisational change in order to meet key objectives for the business.

The ILM course is delivered by Hatfield University's Helen Greening and the programme was supported by Bhavni Cook, CTS's Development Coordinator. Now, let's introduce Rebecca Stevens, Charlotte Penn, Abbie Sands, Liam Murnaghan and Sarah Jacques – the candidates who expressed an interest and ability in wanting to develop as future Managers and Leaders in the business.

"The programme was delivered over 20 weeks with four main sessions requiring independent study, work on key



CTS' ILM course candidates

assignments and one-to-one sessions with the course tutor. Each candidate had to work in their own time at home and was supported by the business with some study sessions at work. I am delighted to announce that all five candidates passed the ILM level 3 programme with flying colours. Helen, the course tutor, offered feedback that "the candidates from CTS were the best and most committed people she had worked with on the programme," said Mark.

Most candidates have earned a salary increase of 5% based on their success along with additional responsibility within their roles in the business.

"I am proud of the hard work and commitment of the candidates. Our focus is now on achieving our objectives of business growth, efficiency, productivity and profitability over the next three years," added Mark.

With this in mind CTS is launching next year's Level 3 programme as well as offering the Level 5 and Level 7 programme for existing managers.

Matrix Training and the New Apprenticeship Levy



Matrix Training has seen a number of changes in the training sector over the past 16 years as each successive Government implements its own ideas on how best to invest in skills in the UK labour market, however, next year will see the most significant changes so far.

In April 2017 the Government will start collecting a Levy from all employers with a wage bill of more than £3 million and use this funding to pay for the expansion of the apprenticeship programmes across England. The levy is expected to raise over £3 billion with the intention of moving the burden of funding apprenticeships away from central government and onto employers.



Phil Hutchinson

Employers that pay into the levy will be able to claim back their levy contribution to use to pay for apprenticeship training - this is designed to encourage larger employers to take on more apprentices. Smaller employers that don't pay into the levy will still be able to access funding for

apprentices but will have to pay a contribution towards the costs of training (10%).

In addition to changes in funding, the Government are also changing the way apprenticeships are delivered. Currently, apprenticeships consist of a number of qualifications that make up an apprenticeship framework. Frameworks are being replaced by apprenticeship standards which have been developed by employer groups called trailblazers. The main difference between a framework and a standard is standards have independent end point assessments compared to the ongoing assessment of qualifications that frameworks have.

Being part of the Strategic Workforce Solutions Group, Matrix is currently investigating how best it can support the Group with apprenticeship training solutions - from using the funding to upskill existing staff - to using it as a structured programme of training for new employees joining the business.

As a training provider the planned changes represent a challenge but also a significant opportunity as the demand for apprenticeships grows.

If you have any questions in regards to the Apprenticeship Levy or Standards, or even if you have had employers ask you about the Levy then you can contact Phil Hutchinson at Matrix Training on 01952 608866 or email phil@matrixtraining.org.uk who will be more than happy to help.



Tessa Lang

CPA Canada Welcomes Tessa!

Tessa Lang has joined CPA Canada as a Resourcer after recently graduating from the Honors Life Science programme at McMaster University. Prior to joining CPA and whilst at university, Tessa worked as a Supervisor in the restaurant industry. Tessa is outgoing and energetic and enjoys working with people - all ideal traits for recruitment!

"I am very happy in my new role at CPA and am excited to continue to learn and improve my skills in the recruitment industry," says Tessa.

TBC awarded New Supplier of the Year by Bidcorp

It was smiles all round at Bidcorp's recent Supplier of the Year and charity event as The Best Connection won the Best New Supplier category and TBC's Sue Harwood, Bidcorp's Account Manager, picked up the runner-up award for the New Account Manager. Well done indeed!



Dave Hodgson – Managing Director, Bidvest Food Logistics, presenting award to Sue Harwood

The food services giant, which incorporates Bidvest Food Services and Bidvest Logistics, was particularly impressed with how TBC managed an exceptionally challenging transition at its Hoddesdon site (Enfield) and maintained service levels throughout the process. The Bidcorp business was secured by the National Sales team headed by Sue Harwood and successfully implemented by a combination of Danny Keyes, Area Manager and Alex Dirman, Project Manager, Managed Services.

"I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to attend the Bidcorp Supplier of the Year and Charity evening. It was a great event that was made all the better by our achievements. We were originally successful with Bidvest Food Services and have been courting the Logistics side of the business for a while, so Hoddesdon was significant as it was our first Logistics site. Off the back of this success we are now having discussions about developing further sites in the New Year," said Sue.

At the event, the CEO and new MD of Logistics congratulated TBC and said they had heard lots of positive things:

"This supplier provides temporary warehouse operatives and drivers to a number of our depots. This year they supported us through a major and difficult change at two of our larger sites. Their advice, knowledge and attention to detail was commendable and the implementation was a success. Most importantly the transition for the individuals working at our sites was seamless. A real team effort – thank you! This year's Best New supplier is The Best Connection."



L to R: Danny Keyes (Area Manager), Alex Dirman (Project Manager) & Sue Harwood (Head of National Sales)



Congratulations Stephen!

Congratulations to Stephen Belton, TBC Middlesbrough, on his marriage to Rachel on 6th August. May you have many years of wedded bliss!

Training Update

In the last issue of SWS Best News the training team announced the launch of the 'face-to-face' element of the Administration Foundation Programme, so let's remind ourselves what is involved and share some feedback.

The 'face-to-face' element includes three separate training days. Day 1 - Induction day at Topaz with the consultants - includes NVQ registration and Q&A sessions with the Directors and Linda Hartley. Day 2 - Interpersonal skills - is focused on communication skills and Day 3 - Personal Organisation - covers time management.

So far, the team has delivered six days training to new and existing branch administrators. This has given the delegates the opportunity to share best practices.

Feedback on the sessions has been positive. Here are some of the comments that have been received:

"I felt the Personal Organisation Course offered me a lot of practical guidance to help with some parts of my role where I feel I'm a little bit weaker, so I found it really enjoyable as I

was able to take away a lot of useful information and skills," Ian Baker, Administrator, Carlisle branch.

"After attending the Communicating with Impact day, I feel I have learned a great deal and now understand how life-changing these skills can be and I now look forward to putting these new skills into practice," Anita Izabela Piasecka, Administrator, Coventry branch.

The team has a fully booked schedule of programmes over the coming weeks and look forward to welcoming more, enthusiastic delegates.

Your feedback is important

As part of the ongoing review of the Consultant Foundation Course we are asking all delegates and their managers to complete an online post-course questionnaire. Please ensure these are done - they are anonymous so you can be honest and constructive. Your feedback will help to ensure that training programmes remain relevant and fit for purpose. Thank You!



L-R – Trainer Kanez Khan, Humera Waqar, Edyta Korczak, Linda Hartley HO, Lisa Parsons, Malwina Gosik & Sofia Rolo



Congratulations John!

Congratulations to John Crane, TBC Redditch Branch, who has been promoted to Senior Manager with responsibility for Tamworth, Redditch and Swindon branches.

The Best Connection expands into Cambridge

The Best Connection is opening an office in Cambridge. Located opposite Cambridge Retail Park at 275 Newmarket Road, the new branch is ideally placed to provide easy access for those seeking temporary work and requiring advice and face to face meetings.

The expansion into Cambridge reflects the increased demand for temporary staff in the driving, industrial, retail and warehousing & distribution sectors to support the region's thriving businesses.

"We are delighted to be open for business with a direct presence in Cambridge. We are entering uncertain times following our forthcoming exit from the EU but are confident that it will strengthen the temporary employment market in the UK. We have invested heavily in the region over a number of years and will continue to do so to ensure our customers receive the very best service from our branch network," said Neil Yorke, TBC's Director.



L to R: Dipak Patel, Scott Burley, Joseph Felton, Tim Skull & Steve Leather



Steph Delahaye being congratulated by Peter Christie, Divisional Manager, TBC Redditch

Steph Delahaye lifts the trophy

Steph Delahaye of TBC Redditch branch has lifted the trophy for the Quarter 2 sales competition. Steph did a sterling job to fend off rivals Chris Prince from Tamworth, who took 2nd place, and Louis Cunningham from Swindon who came 3rd. Steph achieved a creditable 65 points, however, margin generated for the year is becoming a closely run race! Well done Steph, Chris and Louis.

First impressions count!

It's always insightful to receive feedback on what it's really like joining the SWS Group and how expectations meet the reality of the day to day work. Leanne Sabin, Industrial Consultant, has volunteered her thoughts since joining the team at Bailey's Goole. Leanne was recruited with the help of Andy Guest.

"I have worked in the recruitment industry for just over three years. Over that period, I have experienced many different aspects of the role across various sectors including driving, care services and now managing an industrial desk.

"The most enjoyable part of my role is working with clients and building relationships. In my new position I have found the balance of working with temporary workers and clients is perfect. Whilst recruitment is challenging at times, it is also immensely rewarding and offers variety and no two days are ever the same. I am very happy to have joined the team at Bailey's and look forward to a long, successful career in recruitment.

"My first impressions of Bailey's have been very good and I can honestly say this is the best agency I have worked for. The amount of respect and support given to clients and temps from the Bailey's staff is unbelievable. Everyone goes out of their way to ensure others are happy and doing what they do best, which is rare to see!

"I am looking forward to my future here and would like to thank everyone in the office for making me feel so welcome."



Leanne Sabin

Flying the Flag!

Remember Euro 2016? How could we forget! But there were some positives that came out of the event – and not across the English Channel but here in sunny Goole.

To support the team and to celebrate the broader international occasion, the Bailey office window became the focus of interest as it was adorned with the colours of various national flags.

We discovered that the phantom window dresser was Paigen Tabiner. Clearly some hidden creative talent in our midst!



L to R Thomas Booth, Paigen Tabiner & Daniel Jackson

Dragon Boat Race



Move over Hawaii 5-O! Here comes the dragon express!

In the spirit of collective charity, the 'crew', from BES Goole, joined forces with customer, Howdens Joinery, to raise money in Northampton for the Air Ambulance Service.

The team donned their safety jackets, raised their paddles and set off on the streamlined dragon boat. To keep the vessel on the straight and narrow, a 'drummer' sat at the 'head' and kept the rowers' stokes in time whilst the rudder-man, at the tail end of things, made sure collisions were avoided at all costs!

"We had a fantastic two days away with many families and children enjoying the fun. Everyone loved the event and had a good time. I would like to say a big 'thank you' to Howden's for including our temporary staff in the event," said Michelle Oxborrow, Manager, BES Goole.



Euro 2016

When Daniel Jackson, Commercial Recruitment Controller at BES and Tom Booth, Driving Desk Consultant, decided to follow the Euro 2016 soccer extravaganza, they embarked on a holiday of a lifetime – with a few surprises thrown in! This is Daniel's story.

"This summer, myself and Tom ventured on the greatest holiday of our lives when we travelled to France to see Euro 2016. We had tickets for nine games including England v Russia in Marseille, Slovakia v England in Saint-Etienne and Northern Ireland v Germany in Paris.

"On our first night in Marseille, we were watching France playing Romania. About an hour into the game, I went to buy

a drink. As I was stood beside the big screen, I saw thousands of people watching the football – some standing, others sitting. Many were singing, everyone was smiling and having a great time. It was at this point I felt like I was a five-year-old child who had just discovered how to kick a football. It was exciting!

"A few days later, we sang our hearts out as we watched England taking on Wales in the Paris fan zone and screamed when Sturridge scored the winner in the last minute.

We stayed on to watch the rest of the games and took the Paris Metro back to our digs at 11pm.

"On our way back, we stumbled upon Martin Keown, Rio Ferdinand and Robbie Savage sat at a bar drinking the night away. Tom was left speechless and had his photograph taken with everyone! It was a day to remember and the tournament highlight for us that ended with a take-away pizza consumed by the Arc de Triomphe before venturing back at 4am.

"Other great memories included playing keepy-uppy in the many fan zones; watching the Iceland fans sing non-stop for 90 minutes (especially the Viking war chant) and meeting Arsene Wenger before the Northern Ireland Germany game."



L to R: Rio Ferdinand & Tom Booth



Thomas, 1st left & Dan, 2nd left at the Euros Fan Park

10 years at TBC!

Congratulations to the following TBC employees who have celebrated 10 years with the company!

Paul Tavinor

Senior Manager, Leicester

Martin Miller

Divisional Manager, Leeds

Paul Cooper

Senior Consultant, Sheffield

Christopher Gordon

Branch Manager, Southampton

Martin Gibson

Consultant, Derby

Julian Thomas

Talent Acquisition

Annette Thompson

Branch Administrator, Redditch

Sam Taylor

Divisional Manager, Derby

Jessica Ball

Branch Administrator, Burton

Paula Cherry

Senior Consultant, Newcastle

Shaun Walker

Senior Consultant, Hull

Daniel Coley

Divisional Manager, Leicester

Debbie Shore

Branch Manager, Mansfield

Sean Marten

Branch Manager, Crawley

Lee Bennett

Branch Administrator, Cannock

Paul Atkinson

Senior Manager, Crewe



Paula Cherry receiving her 10 year service award from Jeff Gray



Martin Gibson (left) being presented with his 10 year service award



L to R Sean Marten with Rene Hawkes



Julian Thomas at his 10 year anniversary presentation

Burning Badger Update

The Burning Badger sales competition has continued to be a great success and a lot of fun as the southern teams compete head-on for prestige and prizes! This year, over 13 weeks of competition, there has been an incredible 314 new clients won - 65 more than last year! What a fantastic achievement.

And so to the results:

1st Maidstone

– proud winners of the Prestigious Badger Trophy



L to R: Rene Hawkes Area Manager, Carl Davis Branch Manager, Paul Joyce, Consultant & Henry Gebbert, Senior Consultant

2nd Southampton



L to R: front with the Badger, Chris Gordon Branch Manager, back row Gary Watts, Divisional Manager, Luke Tucker C1 HGV, Marcus Jepson Director & Amy Baird SC IND (on a 'dress down' day!)

3rd Ashford



L to R: Rene Hawkes, Area Manager, Fiona Nayer, Branch Manager, Robin Harris, Senior Consultant HGV, Kerrie Alexander, Administrator, Sammy Groves C1 IND, & Jessica Stemp, C1 IND

Golden Boot Award

This year's Golden Boot for outstanding personal achievement goes to Rob James of Poole who achieved a creditable 36 new visits and 18 new clients in the 13 weeks of the competition. Rob has only been with TBC for four months and comes from a background in driver training. Well done Rob!



Rob James wins the Golden Boot Award

Carer of the Quarter Award

Tracy Jacobs, domiciliary and residential care worker for BCS Swindon, has been awarded the company's first Carer of the Quarter Award and received an engraved award statue, certificate and a high street voucher. Well done Tracy!

Tracy is the first care worker to receive this newly created award that follows-on from the Carer of the Month Reward Scheme which each branch runs separately.

"I was really surprised - I didn't expect it, I feel I am only doing my job but I'm really pleased to be given the award," says Tracy.

The winner is selected through an anonymous process. Nominations are sent to the Operations Manager along with the reasons why they should be considered. None of the names or locations are revealed during the selection process. Tracy was put forward by the Swindon Branch.

One of the reasons Tracy's nomination stood out was her positive attitude towards work. Her willingness to help out

demonstrated a great enthusiasm for the job and true team spirit. This is complemented by a thirst for knowledge and personal improvement.

"We are delighted to present this award to Tracy. She has many admirable qualities not least a great sense of humour. She is constantly learning new skills and developing her knowledge and I am sure she will do very well in the future. Well done Tracy," said Lisa Rothnie, Operations Manager.

Tracy also received Care Worker of the Month award in December 2015.

"I think Tracy has shown an amazing commitment and dedication to a completely new role for her in the time she has been with Baileys. She has real potential in developing a successful career within Social Care. Congratulations Tracy - well deserved!" commented Jayne Knight, Registered Branch Manager, BCS, Swindon.



L to R Jayne Knight, Swindon Registered Branch Manager, Tracy Jacobs, Domiciliary and Residential Care Worker for Swindon and Lisa Rothnie, Operations Manager, BCS

Welcome Claire!

We would like to say a huge welcome to Claire Watson, new Care Co-Ordinator at Bailey Care Services in Swindon.

"I was looking for a new challenge - something more exciting and different to what I've done before. I have been involved in the care industry since 2005 and have a varied background working in different aspects of care. I have worked in residential homes which provide care for clients with learning disabilities and the elderly with different levels of needs," says Claire.

Claire has achieved a Diploma Level 3 in Health and Social Care. Outside of work Claire enjoys cake decorating, dog training, and spending time with her family.



Claire Watson



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Louise Kilford, Care Coordinator at Bailey Care Services, Abingdon, on the birth of her beautiful twin boys, Casey and Callum, on 11th May.

Louise visited the Abingdon office with the boys during Carers Week in June for a well-earned cup of tea and a slice of cake!

L to R: Fiona Jones, Coordinator (with baby Callum), Louise Kilford - Coordinator (mummy), Lesley Bumpass, Administrator (with baby Casey) & Peggy Brookes, Coordinator



A Day in the Life of . . . Julie Charters

Senior Coordinator, Bailey Care Services

How did you get into the care sector? My elderly father was very ill and we had carers coming in to help him. I thought perhaps I could do a better job, so that's exactly what I did. I gave up work and cared for him and when he passed I went into care work as a vocation.

What is it about care work that gets you out of bed in the mornings? Caring is the best job in the world. I enjoy helping people to become independent in their lives. It is really important to deliver the best care possible to people in need. I have always felt that way.

Do you have pre-work duties? I have a son, Jake, who is 22. He has just finished University and started his first temporary job with Bailey's on the industrial desk. I make his lunch and drop him off at 6am. I also have a dog named 'Dizzee' that I adore – he's named after the rapper (and is a bit of a rascal!). I have to make sure he's fed and loved before I leave!

How do mornings differ from afternoons? Mornings are chaotic as there is always lots of last minute cover required due to clients' own staff off sick. The pace normally stays the same until Wednesday afternoon.

What would you do without your mobile phone? Without my mobile phone – life would be lovely! Seriously, the desk wouldn't survive without it – it's crucial. Like millions, I miss it when I don't have it!

What makes you laugh a lot at work? 'Hysteria!' makes me laugh – usually from the clients when they ring up! As I have been in their position many times I know that when you get to the point of ringing you are pretty desperate for cover. I empathise with their situation and, as the saying goes, 'if you don't laugh, you'll cry' so usually a little light hearted banter during the call helps.

Has your day job evolved naturally since you joined BCS? Yes, absolutely. My role was developing naturally and then I was thrown in at the deep end following Graham Bailey's departure. Running the whole desk makes me feel like superwoman and I love it!

What do your friends and family think about the work you do? My husband, Andy, really appreciates the job I do. He does 'big -up' the role of caring and the work I do which is kind. He's a great advocate and bangs the drum for the care industry. The kids aren't so keen because I'm on-call. I have my on-call bag with me everywhere I go so that I can be contacted when necessary.

What is the most challenging part of your day to day job? Getting it all done – there just aren't enough hours in the day! Certainly, managing carers' personalities can be a very challenging part of the job.

Do you have any obsessions? Chocolate, fizzy drinks, tidiness?! I think I am quite a perfectionist! I like gin, but not at work ☺, and I confess to having a penchant for sausage rolls during work time!

How do you balance work and play? Work fits in with normal life. My on-call bag and phone go with me everywhere. It doesn't change or impede my life. It's just the way it is!

National Carers Week 6th to 12th June 2016



National Carers Week is an opportunity to highlight the valuable work and challenges that carers face, and their dedication, regardless of whether they are paid-for or volunteer across the UK.

This year's theme was 'Building Carer Friendly Communities'. Communities are being encouraged to look at how they can become 'carer friendly' and use a checklist to help identify the strengths and weaknesses associated with supporting carers in the local area.

During the week Bailey Care Services' branch managers organised free afternoon tea to celebrate National Carers Week and its care workers in their local communities.

The team at BCS Swindon went the extra mile - in addition to afternoon tea being available at the branch office, for those care workers who could not attend the branch - staff and other care workers delivered cake to them and for the clients they were visiting! Also, a raffle was organised with many prizes including a lovely cake made by care co-ordinator, Claire, as well as a beautiful bouquet of flowers kindly donated by The Flower Shop in Swindon. The raffle raised £31.24 for Fisher House Foundation.

Fleetmaster discuss Apprenticeship Funding

FleetMaster can testify that being part of the SWS Group has its advantages. When you have expertise in certain areas, you can share this with other companies in the Group to offer a broader set of services to customers where there is synergy. A good example is the current exciting development taking place in apprenticeships.

FleetMaster works with many national employers to deliver apprenticeship programmes and is able to fully support customers of The Best Connection with delivering every aspect of the new approach. So, when you have the chance to discuss these changes with your customers, remember to direct them to Fleetmaster as this will strengthen your customer relationships. FleetMaster will be delighted to support any employer, whether a national business or local branch.

Fleetmaster Apprenticeships are available to support key logistic-based positions such as driving roles, warehouse operatives and traffic planners and also supporting roles such as administrators, customer service personnel and management.



The Future of Apprenticeship Training in the UK

The Government has proposed to introduce significant changes to Apprenticeship training and funding with the introduction of the new 'Digital Apprenticeship Service' and 'Apprenticeship Levy'.

With the new funding mechanism comes a new approach to delivery underpinned by new apprenticeship standards that will improve the structure of the qualification, its content and quality of delivery. The new standards include an independent assessment on completion.

Below is a summary of the proposed changes that are set to come into play in April 2017.

The Apprenticeship Levy:

- Will come into effect on the 6th April 2017
- The Levy is payable by employers with a total pay bill of £3m per year
- The Levy amount is paid monthly. Funds that are not used within 18 months expire and cannot be redeemed
- The levy will be charged at a rate of 0.5% of your annual pay bill. Employers will have a levy allowance of £15,000 per year to offset against the levy payable. This means they will only pay the levy if their pay bill exceeds £3 million in a given year

- A 10% top up to the funds that an employer has to spend on apprenticeship training in England will apply. Therefore, for every £1 deposited in the account, the employer will actually have £1.10 to spend
- For employers that exceed their Levy payment, the employer can top up their digital account to cover additional apprentices. The top up is referred to as a co-investment and it is expected to be 10% by the employer and 90% by the Government of the agreed delivery cost
- The levy allowance will operate on a monthly basis and will accumulate throughout the year
- The employer will select a training provider from the approved list of providers
- Employers will be able to view funds available within their digital apprenticeship account. The funds can then be used to pay for the training and assessments of apprentices

Employers that do not pay the Levy

- Employers that don't pay the levy will not need to use the digital account element of the digital apprenticeship service until at least 2018. Government guidance and support will be issued to these employers prior to this happening
- From April 2017, the Government will ask non-levy paying employers to make a contribution towards the cost of their apprenticeship training, this will be referred to as co-investment
- The co-investment has been proposed as 10% by the employer and 90% by the Government of the agreed delivery cost, which must not exceed the maximum cap for the apprenticeship standard

- The employer will be asked to pay this directly to the provider. This payment will be spread across the lifetime of the scheduled apprenticeship delivery

What can the funds be used for?

- The apprenticeship levy funds cannot be used by the employer to pay for wages or for training that falls outside of the apprenticeship standard
- Funds can only be used towards the cost of training and end point assessment of the apprenticeship standards
- Each apprenticeship is allocated a funding cap. Delivery costs agreed between the employer and provider cannot exceed the maximum cap

More about the digital apprenticeship service

In addition to the digital account that forms part of the digital apprenticeship service, employers will also be able to access the following through this service. (This also applies to non-levy paying employers)

- Select an apprenticeship framework or standard
- Choose a training provider(s) to deliver their training
- Choose an assessment organisation
- Post apprenticeship vacancies

SWS Vacancies!

Below is a sample of our current internal vacancies; for a full listing please visit www.thebestconnection.co.uk/careers

SWS Featured Vacancies

Bailey Care Services – Registered Branch Manager/Recruitment Lead - Abingdon

TBC Redditch - Senior HGV Consultant

TBC Cardiff – Branch Manager

TBC Stockport – Industrial Divisional Manager

CPA Leicester and Watford – Permanent Senior/Recruitment Consultants

TBC Birmingham – Senior Consultant (both Industrial & HGV Desks)

TBC Project Co-Ordinator – Implementing new onsite contracts, to include National Travel

TBC Telford – Senior HGV Consultant

TBC Swindon – Branch Manager or Industrial Divisional Manager

TBC Middlesbrough – Senior Industrial Consultant

TBC Newport/Cardiff - Senior Consultant (both Industrial & HGV Desks)

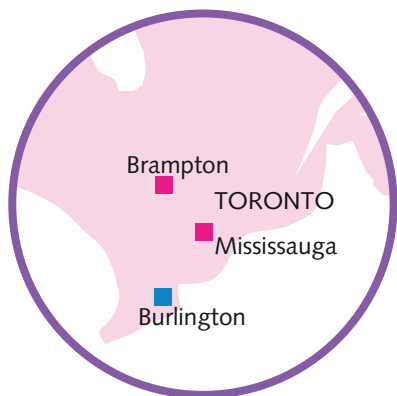
Group Training and Development Consultant – Full training provided, Halesowen based

The Best Connection has identified the following locations for future branches and has opportunities for current or aspiring Senior Consultants and Managers:

• Basildon • Chelmsford • Stratford • Swansea • Hereford •

Please contact Andy Guest if you are looking to relocate or further your career call **0121 504 3065** or email andy.guest@thebestconnection.uk

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