

New Year New Opportunities

Welcome to another edition of Best News. As we rapidly approach the end of the first quarter of 2015 we embrace a more positive economy with greater optimism. This presents a world of opportunity for all of us at SWS Group from which we can all benefit. As you read through the stories and news updates you will notice some common themes emerging including success, either personal or team, growth and ambition. It is exciting to see our people taking advantage of the opportunities that present themselves on a daily basis and to read the stories behind these successes.

I would like to offer my congratulations to those of you who have achieved or are chasing your personal goals whether this is reflected in promotion to more senior or responsible positions or simply meeting and exceeding objectives and targets. As we grow in size and presence as a business, we also grow in spirit and continue to foster a culture of success right across the Group. Our customer relationships also form another vital theme. Without the partnerships the business has forged, we could not survive so it is reassuring to receive such positive feedback from many of these customer relationships and learn how they are shaping the way we do business for the long term. I know there are many more unsung examples so please let Jan Blann know so they too can be featured in SWS Best News. From these strong mutual relationships emerge further opportunities with our customers as they grow, acquire other businesses and of course through the referrals they may offer. Our customers and temporary workers are our most powerful selling tool and we must continue to engage accordingly.

A growing economy will undoubtedly provide opportunity but it will also present some challenges to us as a business. We are seeing an unprecedented low level of drivers in the market and the prospect of demand outstripping supply. As a leader in this sector, we need to manage this imbalance until we return to a steadier environment. As a diverse business having to respond to changing markets and demands we inevitably experience constant change. Be it office relocations, new people joining us, coping with external compliance issues and the economy. All these facets

shape our activities on a regular basis and create opportunity. This is work as usual for SWS Group as we make the best of the impact of our own self-planned activities and respond to external pressures.

As our internal communications channel, SWS Best News continues to expand its coverage and content offering an insight into our people and activities across all Group businesses. Where possible we are working together to increase the breadth and depth of our services. This collaboration will continue to provide differentiation in our markets and help uncover new and exciting opportunities for the future. I wish you all good luck and continued success for the year ahead.



Andrew Sweeney

Andrew Sweeney
Chief Executive

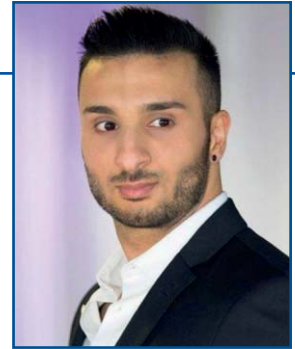
NEXT ISSUE...

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.

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CPA Welcomes Hemang Karia!



Hemang Karia

Hemang is a new addition to the CPA team in Leicester, working on permanent operations and production recruitment positions within the food manufacturing sector. His role covers opportunities from graduate positions to senior

management placements. Hemang's goal is to help expand the operations division and develop new client business.

When not at work Hemang is a model for a bridal magazine (he's the groom, not the

bride!), likes his football and a cheeky bet now and again and action films. He is also involved in a youth project within his community.

Recruitment Resourcers – Welcome to CPA!

Due to the rapid growth in employment opportunities in the food industry, CPA is gearing up for a step-change in business with the addition of two new recruits. Danielle Ashley and Libby Fearn have joined CPA as Recruitment Resourcers based in London and Leicester respectively.



Libby Fearn

The Resourcers have responsibility for sourcing and selecting potential candidates and leveraging social networking sites and services such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Danielle has recently produced CPA's Twitter profile and Facebook page which will be used to post new jobs and to source suitable applicants. In addition, they have access to CPA's extensive database of contacts which will be used to keep track of employment status, maintain accuracy of personal

information and to determine candidate suitability. The new positions will complement the consultants' roles by freeing up their time to engage in other key activities.

And outside of work . . .

"I enjoy running and was the 200m champion for my county in 2010 for my school. I also enjoy socialising with a wide range of people and I am a keen traveller," says Danielle.

"I am self-confessed foodaholic and an avid tea drinker. In my spare time I enjoy creating new food recipes for my portfolio, going to the gym (to balance all the food!) and planning my next exciting trip abroad! I'm also trying to get CPA involved in Tough Mudder 2016," says Libby.



Danielle Ashley



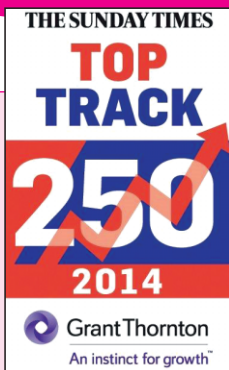
Nick Pearce

Welcome to Nik Pearce!

Nik is the most recent recruit to the CPA Leicester team. His role is to set up and develop a new desk for the Supply Chain division which will incorporate various disciplines including procurement, planning, warehouse and transport. He is also tasked with growing this side of the business so that each discipline will eventually have its own

dedicated consultant able to offer expert advice and a tailored service.

In his spare time, Nik is a season ticket holder at Leicester City and everyone at the Leicester office can testify that he has a bit of a soup addiction! His son is named Zico, after an 80's Brazilian football player.



TBC rockets in Sunday Times Grant Thornton Top Track 250

The Best Connection is positioned 105th in the latest Sunday Times listing of the UK's 250 Top Track companies which is a massive jump of 143 places on last year's position. The ranking is based on Britain's leading mid-market private businesses based on sales figures and reflects the growth and success of TBC which has been achieved through organic growth and acquisition. TBC shares the prestigious list with many familiar business names across the retail, services and utilities markets. A typical Top Track 250 company has sales ranging between £150m and £600m, is owned and run by established families and entrepreneurs, with around 30% by private equity firms and employs between 100 and 5,000 staff.

"The accolade is an endorsement of TBC's growth, success and market strength and reflects the hard work that has been put in year on year by every branch throughout TBC Group," said Neil Yorke, director. **Well done everybody!**

Oliver passes his legal training

After two years of 'on the job' training, TBC's Oliver Darley-Usmar has successfully become a qualified Solicitor. Congratulations to Oliver on his achievement! Best News asked Oliver to tell us a bit about himself.

"I studied at the University of Birmingham, graduating in 2010 with an LLB (Bachelor degree in Law). I then took the Legal Practise Course (LPC) which is a postgraduate qualification requirement if you wish to become a Solicitor, followed by two years on the job training called a Training Contract which I undertook at The Best Connection. After completing all of this I qualified on January 2nd this year!

"I have always been interested in law but I actually chose to study it at University because like so many young people I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I believed it would give me the greatest number of options. Whilst studying, however, I came to really enjoy the subject and the challenge of critical thinking about complex legal problems. I joined the University of Birmingham's Debating Society and volunteered with the Bar Pro Bono Society (services for free). I also became involved with the Debate Mate Programme which aimed to create debating clubs in areas of high child poverty which was very rewarding.

"At TBC I work on a little bit of all of the legal work we do in the Legal Services Department including Commercial Property, Employment Law, Civil Litigation and Debt and Contracts to name a few so it is varied and challenging.

"In my spare time I enjoy music and going to concerts, socialising with friends and travelling. In 2012 I spent four months touring Central America and South East Asia which was one of the best experiences of my life. I lead an active lifestyle and enjoy keeping fit by running (although I haven't been running as much as I should in the cold weather!). I am also passionate about field sports, holding a shotgun license."

I have greatly enjoyed working with everyone within the SWS Group but a special thanks is due to Virginia Martin for all of her help and support throughout my training.



Oliver Darley-Usmar

Focus on Staines

TBC has been established in Staines since 2004 following its relocation from Ashford in 2001. This makes it over 10 years old! Based in the town centre, the branch is only two miles from Heathrow Airport and sits conveniently on the axis of the M25, M3 and M4 motorways.

Since the move across town in 2013, the branch has expanded to four desks as well as adding a full-time reference resourcer to support the Airfreight Division and to cope with the ever increasing demands of the airport.

"At any one time, 60-70% of the work we do is linked in some way to the airport. We have staff on assignment involved in handling and processing air freight bound for destinations across the globe or loading the in-flight meals onto British Airways flights from one of the five terminals. Also, because Heathrow Airport can

be affected by factors both at home and abroad, such as national holidays or adverse weather conditions, it is imperative we can react immediately to meet the demands of our clients," said Peter Sutherland, Branch Manager.

With the planned expansion of the airport to include a further runway in the next few years, the opportunities for business development at Heathrow will only increase. As the reliance on airfreight and fast-moving shipments increases globally, it is an exciting time for the staff at the branch.

The Staines team comprises Peter Sutherland (BM), Tom Smith (DM), Kashminder Taneja (DM), Hiten Pankhania (SC), Alasdair Lynch (cons), Nafisa Bhatti (cons), Steve Williams (trainee cons), Laura Viviani (trainee cons), Natalie Jones (admin), Deepika Ubbey (admin) and Rippal Shaikh (resourcer).

Dorset Waste Partnership endorses TBC relationship



When The Best Connection engages with clients the result is often a long-term partnership based on trust. Dorset Waste Partnership is a good example of one such relationship.

The Dorset Waste Partnership (DWP) was launched in April 2011, bringing together seven Dorset councils in an equal partnership to provide waste, recycling and street cleaning services on behalf of the partners. The DWP is not a separate legal body; it is hosted by one of its partners, Dorset County Council, which employs its

staff and provides its support services.

Since 2013, TBC has been helping the team at DWP to deliver a first class service to the area. In fact, the relationship is so successful that Robin Hildreth, Operations Manager (Purbeck) has acknowledged TBC's staff in a glowing testimonial. Those singled out for praise were Tom Anderson, Ray Bell, Kenny Bridge, Cliff Casburn, Boyd Cater, Steve Chapman, Dan Damen, Lee Delaney, Tony Finney, Steve Hesford, Rob Jeffery, Jon Miller, Ark Maciesiak,

Steve Payne, Vince Humphreys and Paul Chappel.

A special mention was made for Ray Bell, Tony Finney, Steve Hesford, Ark Maciesiak and Vince Humphreys who were said to have gone the 'extra mile' in the course of their duties.

"I would also like to say thank you, to you and your team for the professional service you have given us and look forward to our continued relationship," says Robin Hildreth.

Well done to all involved.

Temporary worker's endorsement sings TBC's praises

Feedback from our clients is always important and in this issue of SWS Best News we would like to share a particularly warm and honest endorsement of our service from a temporary employee – Sue Wozniak - who undertakes cleaning duties for three client companies and also TBC Ipswich. This is her account.

"I like to give credit where it's due and for a while now I have wanted to express my appreciation and gratitude to everyone at TBC as a temporary recruitment business and in particular, to Phil Hopkins as my main point-of-contact since I started in May 2013.

"I have a lot of employment experience (36 years, involving several jobs in a variety of locations and employment fields) and I can honestly say TBC is in the top of my best experiences of employers. Sadly, I have found that inept and inadequate management of staff is all too common with employers, making me even more appreciative of TBC. My treatment with the company has been exemplary. TBC staff have been friendly and approachable, supportive and considerate in putting the employee first, perceptive and a good judge of character with regard to the qualities of the employee i.e., offering suitable assignments. In addition, I have experienced the company to readily provide positive feedback where due (e.g., to myself for reliability, quality of cleaning work), pro-active in offering and suggesting additional suitable assignments and using their initiative (for instance when I first applied for cleaning work, but mentioned my administration experience, I was given an administration assignment with a cleaning company).



Phil Hopkins pictured with Sue Wozniak

"TBC also maintains regular contact (for instance, before I started cleaning TBC's offices I was receiving weekly phone calls or texts to check on my availability for the following week; giving and inviting feedback, asking how I was progressing, etc.). Since starting cleaning TBC's offices, I have come into regular contact with other TBC staff and found them to be similarly polite, considerate and professional . . . I very much enjoy cleaning there!

"All the above are not only the right way to treat staff, but create confidence, improve motivation and performance and encourage loyalty. Working for TBC has been a God-send for me and I very much hope to continue being a temporary worker with you for the long-term."

As well as providing excellent customer service, it is no coincidence that Phil Hopkins (Industrial Consultant 1) also won the Ipswich branch new margin competition for 2013/2014 bringing in over £25,000 worth of new client margin for the year. A huge 'well done' to Phil on what is an excellent achievement for a new office in a new area!

Fleetmaster runs apprenticeship workshop in Worksop

wilko.com



When Canute Group, one of the fastest growing global supply chain providers in the UK, decided to offer driving apprenticeships, Fleetmaster was at hand to help find the right candidates.

Canute had committed to recruiting Driving Apprentices to operate its fleet of vehicles at Wilkinson's Distribution Centre, Worksop. The company was planning to take on board four Apprentices on a two-year Driving Goods Vehicles and Transporting Freight by Road Apprenticeship.

In December 2014 Fleetmaster advertised for interested candidates and received over 60 applications. These were

shortlisted to 12 hopefuls who were invited to a recruitment day that was held on Wilkinson's site. Throughout a full and informative day the candidates were given an introduction to Fleetmaster, Canute Group and Wilkinson's, followed by an overview of apprenticeships and the role. Later in the day came some team activities, literacy and numeracy tests and a tour of the facilities. The candidates also experienced how to drive a truck which they all thoroughly enjoyed.

Over the two-year training period, the lucky candidates will complete their Category C (Class 2) and Category C+E (Class 1) driver's licences. All training on the Apprenticeship framework will be undertaken by Fleetmaster Training.

Fuel Efficient Driving – Top Tips from FLEETMASTER Part 1



Although we are experiencing the lowest fuel prices in years, the cost of fuel is always a major overhead in any transport-related business. The price of oil is out of the operator's control but there are practical ways of improving fuel efficiency and reducing costs. In this edition of SWS Best News we look at Part 1 of FleetMaster's tips for fuel efficient driving.

Top Tip 1 Choose the right vehicle! Trading in your pride and joy fuel guzzler for an eco-friendly sensible alternative may be an emotional battle! What FleetMaster would say is that it always pays to choose your vehicle wisely. Think about what you'll use it for, where you'll drive it and how many miles you'll do. Then choose a vehicle that does the job but doesn't have size, performance or features that you'll hardly ever use. For every 5% a vehicle's tyres are underinflated, fuel consumption increases by 1%. Remember that even a single mile-per-gallon extra on that official combined economy figure can mean big savings when multiplied out over the years that you could be running the vehicle.

Top Tip 2 Get it serviced! Vehicles are more efficient when they're firing on all cylinders, so to speak. Modern vehicles require far less maintenance than they used to but ignoring the service intervals laid down by the manufacturer is a recipe for all kinds of trouble, including reduced fuel economy. When that little spanner illuminates on the dash, it's time to book it in at the garage. Do not wait another 3,000 miles or so!

Top Tip 3 Keep it well oiled! We all know that we should check the engine oil in our vehicles on a regular basis but how many of us actually do it? If you don't, you should and if a top-up is needed, you should also make sure you use the right kind of oil for your vehicle. Details of the manufacturer's recommended oil should be in the handbook. The oil acts as a buffer between the engine's mechanical parts, so looking after your lubricant helps keep everything running smoothly and efficiently.

Top Tip 4 Inflate your tyres! A big part of improving your vehicle's fuel efficiency is reducing the amount of energy that's needed to move it along the

road. It doesn't take a nuclear physicist to realise that if a vehicle's tyres look like they're under inflated, the engine's job is going to be that much tougher than if they were correctly inflated with high pressure air. For every 5% (equivalent to around 2 PSI) that a vehicle's tyres are underinflated, fuel consumption increases by 1%. Tyre wear increases too. Check your tyre pressures every month and re-inflate them to the manufacturer's recommendations where necessary.

Top Tip 5 Choose the right tyres There are lots of different tyres out there on the market and most motorists have felt the temptation to simply fit the cheapest. That's not the way to go if saving fuel is your top priority though. Specialist eco-friendly tyres might cost a little more than the bargain basement options but they're designed to save you money in the long run. These tyres use special rubber compounds with lower rolling resistance that can lead to fuel savings of up to 5%.

Top Tip 6 Choose the right fuel Some motorists report that using premium or high octane fuel improves their vehicle's economy but the oil companies are usually careful not to make claims to this effect. Such fuels often contain more advanced detergents which will keep a vehicle's engine cleaner and this can have efficiency benefits but there are no direct economy gains from choosing a higher octane fuel than the vehicle's manufacturer recommends. What can help is buying your fuel from a reputable retailer to ensure you're getting the best quality product for your money. Shop around and if you find that a certain brand of fuel gives you better economy and value for money, stick with it!

Watch out for more driving efficiency Top Tips from FleetMaster in future issues.

Where have all the drivers gone? – Mike Cooper reflects . . .

One of the biggest threats to the UK's economic recovery is the shortage of LGV drivers.

From the end of 2008 and continuing throughout the recession, the need for goods to be transported on our roads drastically diminished. The lack of work opportunities and the inevitable drop in pay resulted in many professional drivers leaving the industry. A dearth of young recruits has led to an ageing population within the driving sector which can only add to the problems ahead. In addition, European-led legislation has forced the UK into implementing CPC qualifications as a pre-requisite to be able to drive a tachograph monitored vehicle; no card, no career.

Despite the need for drivers to complete this training, during 2014, there were still many who by mid-year had not even embarked upon their first module! The reasons for this are varied, but many drivers resented the thought of going back to the classroom to be told how to do the job. This is particularly

true of the older drivers, many of whom have opted to retire rather than retrain. A perceived drop-out rate of 5% would have a significant impact on the availability of professional drivers throughout the UK. It has been estimated that approaching the last quarter of 2014 we already had a driver shortage of around 60,000.

As the demand for drivers began to increase into peak business periods, wages inevitably rose, resulting in temporary drivers able to choose their assignments and permanent drivers considering temporary work due to the higher rates of pay. Some ex-drivers returned to the industry, but first needed to gain CPC qualification. However, the expected influx of EU drivers, possibly from Romania and Bulgaria, did not seem to materialise.

So, how will companies obtain the drivers they need throughout peak?

With our help, many clients improved their forward planning, enabling them to book

drivers well in advance. In this way and by guaranteeing long-term work, clients were able to attract and retain drivers, even when pay rates increased. We must continue to educate clients as to how to make themselves the assignment of choice; not just regarding pay rates, but how drivers are treated and spoken to. When questioned the priority of most drivers was to be treated with respect. Be aware that when shortages hit, it is the drivers who will determine where they want to work. It helps to be flexible, if the clients' insurance does not require the usual 180 days' experience for DNA, consider newly qualified drivers.

Hopefully, in 2015 we will have a number of newly qualified or upgraded drivers from our association with FleetMaster. Additionally, should you wish to utilise EU drivers, ensure that they either have a UK driving licence or have passed a thorough assessment to drive in the UK and are in possession of an authentic CPC card, issued by their home country.

Focus on Exeter - Dan Whitely, Branch Manager

I joined The Best Connection in November 2013 following three years at a recruitment business as a national sales manager for the retail sector. I left after a successful period winning contracts including May Gurney (now Kier) and the Co-Op in order to achieve a better work-life balance since I had been spending most of my time away from home.

After meeting Darren Pollard and hearing about the exciting opportunity in Exeter and learning about the board system, which I had previously used during my time with another company, I leapt at the chance to go back on the 'tools'. When I first started in November we had 17 temporary workers out on industrial and about 25 drivers out each day on the driving plan. I quickly realised we had a lot of work to do!

Luckily I had the support of Jerome Francis and Paul Crocock who many of you will know from Birmingham. With the support of Jerome on a day-to-day basis we started to build the business and the team around us. In February 2014, we employed Ryan Foley who was a complete rookie to recruitment. This gave us the opportunity to develop the driving business and I am pleased to say we managed to develop the plan up to speed very quickly. Ryan has now been with us for 12 months and is going from strength to strength.

In April 2014 Holly Daly – another newcomer to recruitment - joined the team. This allowed me to come off-plan to help Holly and Ryan develop their sales skills and to learn some general tricks of the trade. As a result of Holly's input we managed to quadruple the plan's

value from April to November. What is really pleasing is that both our trainees in Exeter have really taken to recruitment and are achieving high margins. All of this growth is brilliant but without a great administrator the branch can't function properly and this was a key part of our success so credit is also due to Dagmara Kruk who joined our team in March 2014.

The team are reaping the rewards of their hard work and in January 2015 we achieved around double our margin compared with the same time last year. I would just like to say thank you to Ryan, Holly, Dagmara and Jerome since without your support we would never have reached these heights.



L to R Ryan Foley (Ind Con), Dagmara Kruk (Branch Admin), Holly Daly (Ind Con), Jerome Francis (Snr Con HGV), and Dan Whiteley (BM)



the heart of health and safety

Matrix gains IOSH approval for Health & Safety training

Matrix Training has gained approval to deliver the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Health and Safety courses. The company is planning to offer the Managing Safety Course to employers this spring. The four-day course aims to develop health and safety knowledge and practice for managers, supervisors and team leaders across all industries.

The course covers risk assessment, controlling risks, understanding responsibilities, identifying hazards, investigating

accidents, measuring performance and protecting the environment. Assessment is by test and assignment which leads to a recognised qualification in health and safety.

The IOSH is the only Chartered body for health and safety professionals in the world and services 37,000 members across 85 countries. Working with a range of organisations it raises awareness and sets standards in health and safety through guidance, the provision of resources and the development training courses.

Matrix Goes Paperless with OneFile



Onefile

Matrix Training is one step closer to reaching a paperless operation with the adoption of OneFile Nomad e-portfolio for training and assessment. OneFile Nomad is an online application designed to deliver assessments for apprenticeships, QCF, NVQ, BTEC and all other criteria-based qualifications.

The application gives learners access to their assessment portfolio 'on-the-go' to complete assessments wherever they are. Assessors can then plan and assess learners' work in e-portfolio and review with associated reports as part of the process. A mobile App complements the service and provides learners with broader access. The new system provides an effective electronic assessment tool which is flexible for both

learner and assessor. It is this flexibility that will deliver huge benefits to learners, allowing self-paced learning that can accommodate work extension times if required or provide additional assignments to suit the learner's current workload and studying capacity.

TBC's Kanez Khan was the first assessor to test the OneFile online system on behalf of Matrix prior to launch. It was initially trialled with administrators who completed their Level 3 Business Administrators qualification in 2014 with great feedback. Due to the success of the trial, Kanez has adopted the solution for her most recent Level 2 learners. In addition, Matrix assessors have also rolled out the system to all of their

learners and are benefitting from the flexibility the system offers in promoting broader contact through multi-media including email and live chat.

For Matrix, the adoption of OneFile will help the business to drive higher levels of achievement by allowing assessments to be undertaken at any time. In addition, it enables Matrix to train remotely and to extend its reach across the UK as well as offering the potential to expand to international markets.

As well as reducing the amount of paper consumed, the service will cut travelling costs and help to position Matrix as an innovator and leader in its sector.

Harpreet wins 'The Best Suggestion' scheme

You can never have too many good ideas and even the small ones can make a big difference to the way we work. To encourage people to use their agile minds, The Best Connection's client, RS Components, asked TBC to join their scheme. Best News is delighted to report that our very own Harpreet Saini came up with a corker.

"I have been working with The Best Connection since 1st February 2014 on the RS Components contract in Corby. My suggestion which won the best idea in The Best Suggestion Scheme in December was to clean the SA Machines at the beginning of our shift rather than at the end.

"Before, we used to clean SA Machines at the end of the shift and we had a few problems such as operators not cleaning

their machines, causing issues and time delays. This is why I suggested cleaning them at the beginning of our shift and this now saves time and money for RS Components," said Harpreet.



L to R: Bart Krogulec onsite consultant, Harpreet Saini - winner - and Jeff Williams, senior manager



Harpreet Saini

With his winnings, Harpreet has purchased some new base-layer clothing to add to his cricket gear. "I play cricket for the Weldon Cricket Club where I'm a fast bowler so this will be very welcome. I am very proud of winning and look forward to doing it again with many of my other ideas!" added Harpreet.

Tiffany wins by a margin

Congratulations to Tiffany Mayfield from the Sutton in Ashfield branch who has won an Inter-branch sales competition set up by Branch Manager, Matt Wooding.

The competition was based on new revenue achieved throughout 2014 covering Chesterfield and Sutton in Ashfield (Mansfield) locations.

"The idea was to give all consultants in both branches the opportunity to become the 'leading sales achiever,'" said Matt.

This was no breeze - being closely contested on a month-by-month basis during 2014. With many of the leading contenders converting new business, the shape of the league table changed on a constant basis. However, there had to be a winner and as November 2014

approached it was a closely fought finale with Tiffany just managing to fend-off fierce competition from Kath Diamond from Chesterfield who finished a very close second.

Tiffany was awarded sales vouchers by Senior Manager, Paul Young and at the time of going press was debating whether to treat herself or be 'perfectly sensible' and purchase practical goods for her impending house move!



Tiffany Mayfield and Paul Young



L to R Peter Kirkbride with Dave Stanford

Dave Stanford and friend support Macmillan Cancer

It all started when Senior Manager, Dave Stanford, was having a conversation in the pub with his old ex-army buddy, Peter Kirkbride. "Let's do a walk for charity," they agreed. After further discussion and deliberation, not to mention a little more refreshment, the project turned from a simple walk to a three-day bike ride! As it turned out, on the day, the weather was so good that the dynamic duo were able to complete the journey in just one day. Some achievement for the fittest!

At the finish of a gruelling day having cycled 174 miles following Hadrian's Wall, they collectively raised £780 for Macmillan Cancer Support and are planning their next trip which will take them further afield from London to Paris. "The further we went the more we decided to finish that day. I think the thought of getting back in the saddle the following day was motivation enough!" said Dave.

The donation was handed in person to Macmillan Fundraising Manager, Chrissie Wathen-Neal.

CTS DRIVE

adds management control to Furniture Village

CTS and The Best Connection share a mutual client in the retail outlet, Furniture Village. The company, which opened its first store in Abingdon, Oxfordshire in 1989, now operates 40 stores across the UK and utilises temporary staff to support its operations.

In 2012, this function was controlled at a local level with each store having the autonomy to source local labour. Whilst this satisfied local needs it didn't address broader management requirements. Following engagement with The Best Connection, an operational proposition was put forward by Head of National Accounts, Sue Harwood, which would deliver significant benefits across the organisation. This included improved administration at branch level, increased management visibility with control over compliance and legal obligations – together with superior service levels - and at a lower cost. What's not to like?!

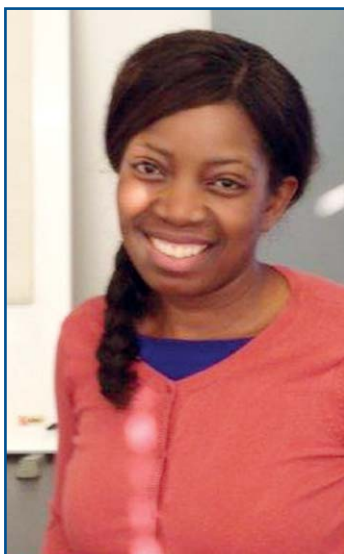
Following the introduction to CTS, Furniture Village saw the benefits of using CTS's online customer platform – CTS DRIVE – to manage its labour requirements. The DRIVE platform enables customers to directly manage agency labour relationships on-line in a 'neutral-vend' model and offers additional functionality to assist other business operations such as personnel, health & safety and accounts. CTS's Kirsty Merryfield was responsible for migrating the customer to the new platform and has since worked very closely with Furniture Village to deliver the broader benefits of the service.

Steve Morrison, Group Logistics Controller, Furniture Village, said: "CTS have given us an open-door to multiple suppliers

allowing us to get the best in class temporary labour. We now have a bespoke system that provides all the information required to manage the end-to-end process from supply to invoicing and planning. A single point contact at CTS is very supportive and delivers when needed."

The relationship with Furniture Village is still in its early stages with great expectations for the future. With the combined efforts of Sue Harwood and Nicky Jarvis of TBC and Kirsty Merryfield and Rebecca Stevens of CTS managing the collaborative efforts, they are in good hands.

Furniture Village represents yet another shining example of the benefits of the CTS DRIVE system.



Focus on - Audrey Phiri

At 6.30am it's quiet in CTS's offices but a good time to work without any distractions. Audrey Phiri manages the accounts and administration teams at City Transport Solutions and there's lots to do!

Audrey joined CTS in July 2010 having previously worked for City Group as an accountant for eight years. She is a cornerstone of the team, relentlessly cheerful and loves her job and the opportunities that

come her way. The move from working alone to managing the team has been a huge step but Audrey has risen to the challenge and is set to manage the financial and administrative activities of CTS over the coming years as the business continues to grow.

Outside of CTS, Audrey's two young children keep her work-life balance in check, and what spare time she has left is spent writing poetry, reading and supporting her church.

A Day in the Life of ... Sarah Pickerill - Divisional Manager, Manchester



Sarah Pickerill

How do you start your working day?

At the moment my daily life is somewhat out of kilter as I am eight months pregnant! Along with coping with the woes of morning sickness I also assign 30 minutes first thing to exercise which sets me up for the day. I start work at 7am. As I am currently working on a plan my first hour is spent completing check-ins and making sure temporary workers are on their way to work. At 8am, when the rest of the team arrives, we have a brief discussion regarding our objectives for the day, visits, outstanding bookings and plan sales time.

What does a typical day consist of?

My life is ruled by lists! I write them for everything so I normally plan my day the day before. Whilst I oversee both Industrial plans I am also working on a plan so my day can vary depending on requirements. Currently, most of our clients are approaching peak and we are receiving a lot more varied jobs to fill including engineering, administration and mechanical so I spend a fair amount of time searching for skilled workers. The consultants are targeted to visit all current clients to discuss peak requirements and to secure business for next year so I go on most of those visits too. I also attend all new business visits which at the moment is roughly one a day. Throughout the day I check to see how the consultants are progressing with their objectives to see if any help is needed.

What keeps you going through the day?

... Regular snacks! I love this time of year and I love a noisy, busy office so being busy keeps me going. I like that I can do all jobs in the office, I have had Staff Plus training so I can cover for Administration too if need be. I like dipping in and out of both plans, helping them when they are busy and making sure that the most important jobs are completed and that clients are happy. I'm motivated by recognition and TBC have been very good with my career progression so far. This

is my first year as a Divisional Manager and I want to be over budget as much as possible. I've become very conscientious about margin - turning into a bit of a penny pincher and will only use temporary workers from other branches as an absolute must. I really would like to put Manchester back on the map. There is a large development project happening in our area over the next couple of years which could potentially create a lot of business for our branch. I go on maternity leave in April and want to leave with the branch on a high.

What is a good day for you?

When I leave the office feeling exhausted and I have a big list of jobs to do the next day - this is a good day! I like seeing a full Running Sheet and our Visits Board full too. We also have a Sales Targets Board and a good day will be when everyone is over-achieving on their daily sales targets and objectives. It also sets me up for a good day when the consultants have lots of good news to talk about in our morning catch-ups and hearing positive feedback from our clients and temporary workers.

A bit about myself

I am 40 years old and have worked in recruitment for 22 years covering lots of different roles. I live with my boyfriend in Manchester and this will be our first child so we are both really excited and a bit nervous at becoming parents. I love the countryside and the seaside and like to spend as much time as possible outside - regardless of the weather. My ideal weekend would be spent walking in The Lake District with my boyfriend followed by a cosy country pub drinking Real Ale (obviously not now) - roll on April!

Driver 'think-tank' converges on Topaz

A recent innovative forum brought together an enthusiastic group of like-minded TBC driving experts from across the country with the purpose of developing ideas for a better driving future. Topics on the agenda included CPC, driver shortages, training and new initiatives.

The day was chaired by director, Mike Cooper, who was ably assisted by Andy Wilson, Matt Burford and Jason Melia. Additionally, Iain Brown and Fay Filsell were present to capture first-hand new ideas and initiatives for Driver Tech Training.

"It was encouraging to hear that the forecasts for drivers not completing their CPC qualifications were greatly exaggerated and despite some initial losses in the 7.5 ton

market, we appear to have retained most drivers. This was obviously down to the hard work everyone undertook prior to the September deadline to remind and encourage drivers to take the qualification seriously. Well done to all concerned," said Mike.

High on the agenda was how TBC plans to maintain the level of temporary quality drivers in order to meet growing customer demands. Other subjects included pay rates, DNA procedures and renewals, compliance with Working Time Regulations, Road Transport Directive and contract-specific criteria.

Andy Wilson, Jason Melia and Gary Watts also shared how they manage bookings

by using Google Docs which allows multiple users, including clients, to view and access bookings in real-time. During the session 34 new initiatives were proposed and are currently being evaluated.

The 'think-tank' attendees on this occasion included: Andy Woodvine, Claire Littler, Dipak Patel, Rob Mittell, Mark Godwin, Dan Phillips, Dan Hoey, Sam Bearman and Gary Watts.

We will bring you further updates in future issues of SWS Best News.

If you have any ideas for the think-tank to discuss, please contact Mike Cooper.

Bailey Care Worthing celebrates a good year

It doesn't seem like a year since the doors of Bailey Care opened at 155 Montague Street Worthing, but it is! Branch Manager, Ami Smithers, kicked off the operation in the first quarter of 2014 with fellow pioneers Penelope Garlick, Consultant-Trainer and Bethany Terry, Administrator. Since then the business has blossomed.

"We have had a very successful first year, having brought on 35 residential, nursing and learning disabilities homes and we are now a well-known name in the local area," said Ami.

To cater for growth in the region, the branch has taken on trainee, Jack Curtis, who will join the team in April this year.

"When we were planning the opening of

the branch we were able to apply best practice based on the years of experience available to us through Bailey Care and The Best Connection. This allowed us to set up the right processes

from day one. Opening the branch has been challenging but very rewarding and I am very grateful to have been given such an exciting opportunity within the SWS Group," added Ami.



L to R: Bethany, Ami and Penny, Bailey Care, Worthing

Spotlight on Bailey Care Services Swindon

Bailey Care Services Swindon opened in August 2013, after relocating from the Melksham Office. The operation provides care to people in their own homes, helping those with learning disabilities, the elderly and frail.

The team consists of Karen Legg (Co-ordinator), Jayne Knight (Senior Co-ordinator) and Hannah Bray (Branch Manager).

Karen joined the company in June 2013 as a Care Worker, progressing to Field Care Supervisor and then to her current role as Branch Co-ordinator. Her knowledge of health and social care and the local area is vital for ensuring a high quality service is maintained.

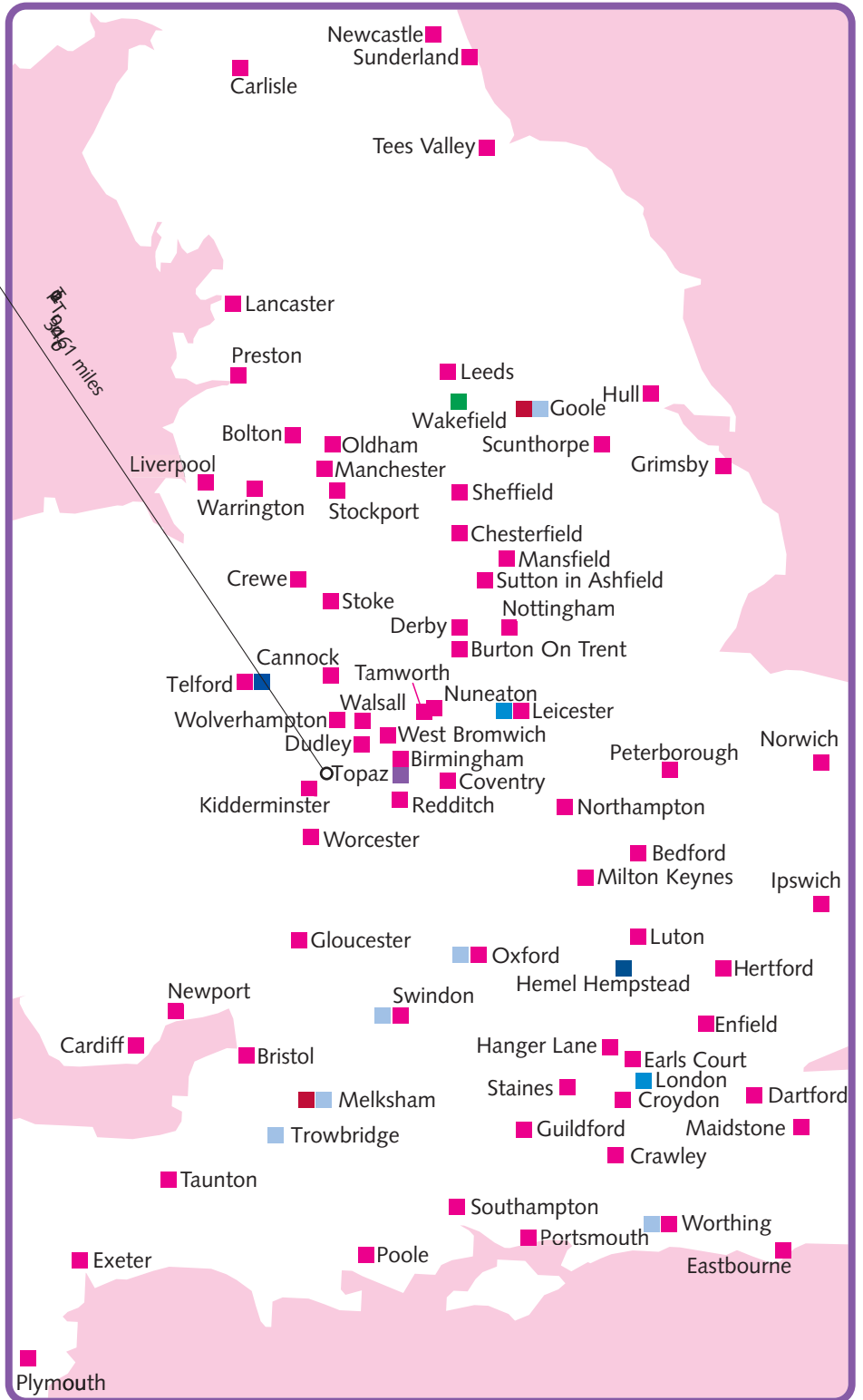
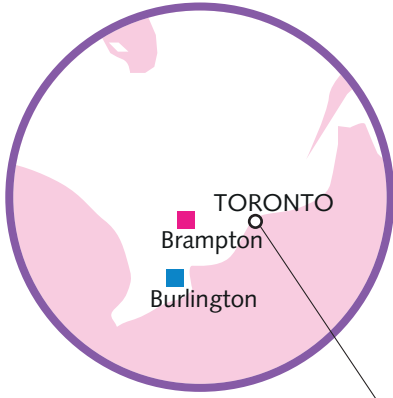
Jayne started as a Senior Co-ordinator in January 2015. She brings with her a background in health and social care and has worked in residential and nursing care, extra care housing and in training roles. Since joining the company, Jayne has implemented many

changes and has already developed good working relationships with clients and staff.

Hannah has been at the helm since November 2014. Her role is to grow domiciliary care and to develop staff recruitment for residential and care homes. Since starting she has worked on compliance with CQC regulations, organised branch recruitment and is helping to develop relationships with the local authority, staff and clients. Before joining Bailey, Hannah was a Branch Manager with a private domiciliary care provider in Witney, where she spent four years opening new branches and developing service provision to a high standard.

"The team are working very hard to build the Swindon Branch into a successful business. We have great people committed to providing the best possible care in the area and to becoming a major competitor in Swindon," said Hannah.

How to find us



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