

SWS... BEST NEWS



Preparing for Transformation



Andrew Sweeney

Welcome to December's edition of SWS Best News. Christmas is upon us once again as many of us prepare for a well-deserved break to spend time with family and friends. This year has been one of steady growth for the business as the economy adjusts to a post-Brexit world. This uncertainty is not the only disrupter that we encounter as our industry continues to evolve in the face of high employment and advances in online technology. Regardless of the bigger picture though, life continues as usual across the SWS Group as our people celebrate personal and collective triumphs, some of which are shared in this issue.

Many of the stories you will read reflect the diverse events we engage in from fundraising for charity to extra-curricular football competitions. We celebrate initiatives, industry awards, competition winners, new faces, personal insights and much more. Thank you again for your contributions.

Now we have an eye on 2018, I would like to share some thoughts on career opportunities that you may not have considered. As the business continues to expand its footprint, more skilled and motivated people are required to fill essential roles that will shape our future. We are very fortunate that we have one of the best trained and skilled workforces in the industry and this makes us stand out from the crowd. It is important that those of you wishing to develop your career have suitable opportunities to pursue. We currently have a range of

unfilled internal vacancies that may be just what you are looking for, so I would encourage you to take a look at page 15 or go online to see what is available.

You may be aware that the business has launched a transformation programme that is focused on The Best Connection and be wondering how this affects you. The aim of the initiative is to identify areas where improvements can be made to our systems, processes and communication methods that will benefit our people, our clients and temporary workers. It is the first step in shaping the business to make it fit for the next 25 years! It will help the senior management to make strategic decisions that will keep our business strong, efficient and ready to address and respond to changes that are happening in our industry. You are all central to our success and we aim to use this exercise to find ways that will allow you all to use your skills and abilities to the full by lifting those unnecessary daily burdens.

To run the transformation programme, the business has engaged the services of Protean, a consultancy specialising in business improvement. Further details are shared in this newsletter and in a dedicated website. This is a collaborative initiative. Your input, ideas, observations and above all experience, will all funnel into the process and be used to identify what we do well and where improvements can be made. You will be kept up-to-date throughout the entire process.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and successful and healthy New Year.

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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BCS Abingdon receives 'Good' Quality rating!

There has been a lot of great work going on at BCS Abingdon domiciliary desk over the past 10 months since the last Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Oxford County Council (OCC) inspections. The visits in 2016 highlighted three areas of the service that required some improvement - and that's just what they have achieved with a new assessment awarded as 'Good' across the board!

CQC audit on five areas which include; Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well-led'. The team worked tirelessly on some of the key areas to implement the changes and improve record keeping in medication management, risk assessment and the Mental Capacity Act to evidence this in future audits.

OCC revisited the office three times between January and July, resulting in a successful sign-off. To address the well-led category, Lisa Rothnie took on a dual post of Registered Manager and Responsible Individual for Bailey Care Services until a senior manager could be recruited.

Two subsequent visits by the CQC on the same day to undertake a 'fit persons interview' with Lisa and a full inspection, created a high-pressure day for the team who, despite the activity around them, managed to conduct business as usual. Well Done!

Although BCS provides services to over 40 clients on the division, CQC only audit those receiving a 'regulated service'. This includes all temporary workers and office staff involved in delivering the service. After the office audit, the inspectors

speak to clients and their families by telephone or through face to face meetings, to check they have received the services as documented. The feedback from these interviews shapes the assessment level given. The inspection team also contact temporary workers for their feedback on the service and ask how the office team manage and support them. They also pose questions to check their knowledge matches their training records. OCC also carried out a similar process. Again, only inspecting the clients that are relevant to their contract.

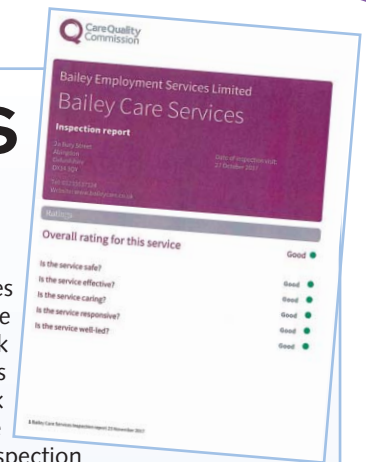
The inspection day and interview came and went but then followed a four-week wait to receive feedback. The results were Good and the staff celebrated the outcome.

On reading the feedback from clients and temporary workers, some of the team members remarked:

"When reading the comments given by clients and temporary workers, it makes you feel really chuffed!"

"Reading this report makes me sooooo happy!"

"With the new report under their belts, this provides some great marketing material and talking points for the newly developing second plan in the office for residential supply," says Lisa Rothnie, Operations Manager, BCS.



An insight into Induction Day at BCS Poole - a swinging success!

Starting a job can be daunting but once the ice is broken it can also be a lot of fun as well as educational. At the first ever induction day at BCS Poole, the first five new temporary workers were challenged with refreshing their knowledge levels of essential theory and demonstrating the use of some standard, people-moving and handling equipment. The inductee's knowledge was checked during face to face training using individual and group activities along with e-learning modules and written assessment. The workers also received training on a selection of equipment used daily in care settings to build on their existing knowledge, enabling them to demonstrate that they are safe to use the equipment with a live person and understand how it feels to be that person by each taking turns to be moved by their colleagues using the equipment. The training went without a hitch and the day was acclaimed a great success.

From the pictures below you may gather that temporary worker inductions are a lengthy process. This is necessary for ensuring quality compliance within a range of care-related settings before onsite inductions take place. These skills are refreshed/learnt, developed and regularly used to help and support clients in a range of health and care-related settings.



BCS inductees and trainer (Joanne Farmer)



Female Hoist from bed to chair



Male Hoist from bed to chair

Dave leaves TBC for BCS

The beauty of being part of a larger Group is that sometimes opportunities arise that change the direction of people's careers and for TBC's Dave Stanford, that has become a reality. Let's take a look at the road he has taken.

Dave served in the armed forces for 19 years. After leaving in 1994, he moved into a government training company supporting ex-offenders, special needs and disabled job seekers secure employment.

After five years working in the public sector, Dave moved to a recruitment company supporting its driving division for West Yorkshire. Following a move to

Poole in Dorset in 2001, he joined The Best Connection to open the Southampton branch. This quickly grew to include Portsmouth and Basingstoke. In 2006, Dave moved into National Sales and became the Account Manager for the DHL account in the southern region.

In 2008 Dave left TBC to become involved in the care industry and returned to TBC in 2010 as Senior Branch Manager for the Dorset & Hampshire Branches.

"I have always had an interest in care and when the opportunity to join BCS came my way I was happy to make the move. I have taken on the role of Joint Operations Manager for Bailey Care



Dave Stanford

Services which I started in September this year. This is a very exciting opportunity for me to support a growing and successful business and remain in SWS Group," said Dave.

Unfortunately since making this move, Dave has become unwell. We would like to take this opportunity to wish him a speedy recovery from all of us.

Open Day a great success for BCS Poole!

The newly opened Bailey Care Services' Poole office had its official Open Day on Friday 13th October. Despite the date, the event was a great success! In fact, so much so that Jo and Kamila returned to the office on the Saturday to continue interviewing. Now, that's dedication!

Inspired by the Open Day turnout, the team were out touting for more recruits at a jobs fair held on the 25th October in Bournemouth City Centre. Well Done guys!

L to R: Dave Stanford, Joanne Farmer & Kamila Lewandowska



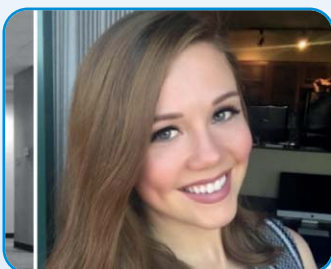
CPA Recruitment

We welcome aboard two new faces to the CPA Inc team. Here's a little insight.



John Aydin

John Aydin joined CPA Recruitment as an Executive Recruiter in October of 2017. Prior to joining the CPA team, John was an Account Sales Executive at Eighty-Eight Media Group which publishes the Australian Business News Source Magazine. With his experience in dealing with C-level executives over the past seven years, he brings experience spanning in a multitude of sectors including, publishing, sales & marketing and operations. This has made him highly proficient in handling the needs and wants of clients regardless of their size or industry. John attended Sheridan College, where he completed his post-secondary diploma in the field of Advertising Sales.



Jordyn McClelland

Jordyn McClelland came aboard CPA Recruitment this October as an Executive Recruiter. She had been working in recruitment for four years and before joining the CPA team, Jordyn worked and lived in Vancouver, British Columbia. Her last role was an Executive Recruiter for the medical device industry, hiring mostly procurement and quality engineering positions. Before this, Jordyn also had experience recruiting for accountants and retail professionals in both contract and permanent positions. Outside of recruiting, Jordyn also has experience in customer service, retention, sales, management and employee training. She is very excited to continue her career here at CPA and to work alongside a positive and motivated team!

Fleetmaster's British Gas initiative wins Brake Fleet Safety Partnership Award



At this year's annual Brake Awards held at the Hilton Metropole, Birmingham on 28th September, Fleetmaster picked up the prestigious Fleet Safety Partnership Award for its work with British Gas. Fleetmaster received the Award for achieving outstanding fleet safety results in partnership with British Gas. British Gas was also successful in winning the Company Driver Safety Award (Large Fleet) which is testament to Fleetmaster's collaborative work with the energy company in raising driver safety levels.

The Fleet Safety Awards acknowledge the achievements of those companies working to reduce accidents involving at-work drivers and attract entries from a range of major UK businesses.

Abi Smith, spokesperson for Brake - the road safety charity, says: "We are delighted that British Gas and Fleetmaster Group won the Fleet Safety Partnership Award earlier this year at the Brake Fleet Safety Awards. Their entry provided clear evidence of working together to provide expertise and duty of care to employees, especially with young and new drivers. Through this collaboration, British Gas was

able to secure its second award at the event; the Company Driver Safety Award. The two organisations together have achieved really positive results with their drivers and we commend their continued passion to improve their road safety culture."

Commenting on the award, Jamie Boocock, Director of Fleetmaster, said, "The development of the Young Driver Academy initiative and introduction of the Vehicle Check App have collectively had a positive impact on fleet safety that we are immensely proud of. We are delighted to have been recognised by the Brake Awards for this accomplishment in partnership with British Gas."

The Young Driver Academy is a training scheme delivered through mentored sessions and is focussed on developing advanced driving skills. Its introduction at British Gas has helped to reduce the under 25's at-fault collisions by 50%. The Vehicle Check App has been developed by Fleetmaster to ensure vehicle roadworthiness

by guiding drivers through a series of mandatory safety checks and has shown a decrease in illegal tyres by 48%.

"At Fleetmaster we are passionate about road safety. We address the challenges faced by young, inexperienced drivers in the workplace by developing training programmes and applications that have a positive impact on reducing accidents. Working in true partnership has allowed us to get under the skin of the problems we face and it is testament to this approach that we have been presented with this prestigious award," added Jamie Boocock.



L to R: John Boocock, Fleetmaster, Mike Cooper, SWS Group, & Fleetmaster's Jamie & Nicholas Boocock



Centrica Fleetmaster collaboration receives EST Award

At this year's Energy Saving Trust (EST) Fleet Hero's 2017 Awards, British Gas scooped the category for Efficient Driving. British Gas has integrated driver training, delivered in partnership with Fleetmaster, as part of staff development, especially for young apprentice drivers. The programme has



L to R: Richard Llewellyn - Actor; James Rooney - Fleet Manager, British Gas, Steve Winter - Head of Fleet, British Gas & Jamie Boocock, Fleetmaster

seen impressive improvements in insurance claims, cost savings and a 15% reduction in fuel consumption.

"Winning the EST Efficient Driving Award is an excellent achievement and shows that the work we are doing with our Fleet is really paying off. This is our 4th Award this year which is recognition for hard work of my Fleet Team and the great supporting relationship we have with our training provider, Fleetmaster, in delivering a service that drives results," says Steve Winter, Head of Fleet, Centrica.

"We are delighted that British Gas and their training partner won the Efficient Driving Award earlier this year at the EST Awards. Their innovative approach to road safety has provided excellent results across the commercial driving population of British Gas," commented Bob Saynor, EST.

The accolade follows a successful year of acknowledgements and awards for Fleetmaster who also featured in this year's Brake Awards. Congratulations to the Fleetmaster team for their exemplary work with British Gas.

Fleetmaster Driving Academy

After five years supporting national employers with licence acquisition, Fleetmaster has developed its own Driving Academy to support employers with upskilling their workforce to Category C1, C and CE licence entitlements.

With a dedicated fleet of modern vehicles located at strategic centres around the UK, Fleetmaster Driving Academy supports large projects for national employers, easing the burden of sourcing skilled drivers that are required to keep their businesses moving. The investment includes a purpose-built training centre on the outskirts of Leeds and the establishment of further training locations in Northampton, Park Royal, Exeter and Cardiff, giving Fleetmaster a national coverage for employers. All Fleetmaster trainers that operate from these centres are listed on The National Register of LGV Instructors which ensures that training is delivered to a high standard.

Warehouse to Wheels

The past five years has seen a year-on-year increase in demand



for professional licences due to an industry-wide driver shortage. This shortage has been fuelled by the average age profile of drivers and the introduction of the mandatory DCPC for drivers. As a result, Fleetmaster Driving Academy has supported employers with 'Warehouse to Wheels' projects to upskill existing employees into driver positions. Fleetmaster also designed employer based driving academies to attract applicants into employers with the intention of training them to become professional drivers.

Apprenticeship Levy

The introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy this year has resulted in a sharp rise in demand for licence acquisition. Employers that pay into the new Levy have the option to spend the Levy on professional driver training, including the Category C and CE, through a funded training provider holding a main route provider status.

Fleetmaster Training, the sister company of Fleetmaster Driving Academy, is a main route provider that specialises in Apprenticeship Levy training focused at the logistics and supply chain sector. In partnership, the two companies have the experience and capability to support employers in maximising their Levy investment in driver training.

People drive business in logistics, it's a fact! That is why it is critical to pick the right LGV training provider at the start of this journey. Fleetmaster provides a fully managed service from organising the medicals, theory tests including study materials, through to achieving the licence.



Charlie qualifies as Solicitor

We are delighted to announce that following a successful in-house training period with the legal team in Topaz, Charlotte Yorke, aka, Charlie, has qualified as a Solicitor. Well Done Charlie - a fantastic achievement!

"I can't believe my two-year training contract has finished already, it has flown by! I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to complete my training at SWS and I have learnt a lot. I have thoroughly enjoyed working here and would like to say a big thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcome. I would also like to say a special thank you to Virginia, Oliver and Isobel in the Legal team for all their support and guidance.

"My training contract involved studying the different areas of law that the Legal Department get involved in including, Commercial Property, Employment Law, Civil Litigation and Debt and Contracts Law, and I am now looking forward to the new responsibilities and challenges that being qualified will bring," said Charlie.

To celebrate her accomplishment, Virginia decorated her desk and laid on a buffet lunch.



Charlie Yorke being congratulated by Andrew Sweeney



Charlie's decorated desk!

Backline develops Training Team

Backline Logistics Support Services has developed a new Logistics Training Team that will deliver driver training to the company's internal driving teams, Outbase facility and external clients.

The team, which includes Sam Hay, Richard Stentiford, Kevin Burt and Andy Callan, will offer a range of professional courses including CPC, ADR and Driver Upgrade Training, that covers mechanical handling skills for vehicle cranes and lorry-mounted fork-lift trucks. The team is led by Julian White, Backline's Chief Operating Officer.

Backline continues to work closely with all its clients to ensure that training links directly with their own internal training and operating standards. Through this initiative, Backline will gain a greater understanding of their clients' demands and form much closer working partnerships.

To endorse the quality of driver training

delivered, every driver that works in the Backline business will carry a 'PASSPORT TO DRIVE' card that confirms they have been trained to the highest standards. The 'PASSPORT TO DRIVE' initiative underpins the development of Backline's elite 'Platinum Driver Programme' across all branches. The Platinum Drivers are contracted directly to Backline to deliver unparalleled service levels to its clients across the region.

In another development, Backline is partnering with SWS sister company, Fleetmaster, to expand its direct training capability across the South West of England from January 2018.

"Backline provides quality temporary drivers across the length and breadth of

the South West region. Building quality teams of drivers forms the backbone of our business. Backline's Training Team will be working with each of the branches to further improve the quality and quantity of drivers that will support our recruitment campaign and growth plans for the business in 2018," says Mark Gooden, Director of Strategy for Backline.



L to R: Richard Stentiford, Kevin Burt, Sam Hay, Andy Callan & Mark Gooden

CTS partners with dpd group for Christmas deliveries

With Christmas fast approaching many of us are busy buying gifts for friends and family. To help ensure everyone's parcels arrive on time, CTS is working with DPDgroup, represented by DPD UK and DPD Local – the fastest growing parcel delivery companies in the UK - to provide spot hire vehicles to cover extra work during this peak period.

The DPD Field Transport Manager's brief was to find two extra suppliers for each depot to call when they required an extra vehicle. With eight regions and 56 depots this would involve negotiating rates, terms and credit facilities with over 100 suppliers and time was limited.

CTS offers a reactive service to source vehicles nationwide, utilising an array of both national and regional suppliers,

providing the added benefit of fixed rates and one central point of contact.

CTS' Helen Fox met with DPD's Transport Compliance & Risk Manager to agree rates, terms and an implementation plan in record time. The service went live on the 21st November. In the first week CTS achieved 100% fulfilment of all requests and hit an all-time record for the number of hires in November.

"This was accomplished by CTS doing what we do best and that's working as a team. With our New Business, IT, Administration and Operations teams pulling together we deliver an exceptional level of service," said Mark Gooden, Director, CTS.



CTS Team

TBC Transformation Programme kicks off

The digitisation of information and services has transformed the way companies do business and continues to challenge traditional ways of working in the employment sector. Candidates now have access to a range of online services to seek work opportunities and communicate with prospective agencies. New communication methods and digital processes are augmenting work practices. This important theme is one that is being embraced by The Best Connection across the business as it plans for the next chapter in the company's growth and continued success. Let's take a moment to look at what has been planned to shape the future and how you can help.

The Best Connection Transformation Programme has been created to identify areas where improvements can be made to our systems, processes and communication methods that will benefit our employees, clients and temporary workers. For this to be truly transformational, your input and ideas will

be crucial as the process of gathering information from across the organisation proceeds. To assist with the project, the Directors have engaged Protean Management Ltd - an impartial, professional business consultancy whose expertise lies in helping businesses to make positive changes to underlying business processes and systems.

Protean's founder, Phil Chater, is an expert in operational excellence, business process management and quality, driving change programmes as a business leader and as a consultant. Phil will be leading the programme and supported by his two colleagues, Louise Betts and Shimeem Patel who bring a wealth of operational experience and knowledge. The Protean team will be visiting branch offices and Topaz over the next 10 weeks to gain an understanding of how the business currently operates at all levels. Please make them very welcome and feel free to express your honest thoughts and ideas to them. The more accurate the data is the better.



Shimeem Patel



Louise Betts



Phil Chater

TBC shortlisted for IRP Awards

Following a detailed and extensive entry application process, The Best Connection Group was shortlisted in two categories in the REC's Institute of Recruitment Professionals (IRP) Awards. These were:

Best People Development Business Award and Best Back-Office Support Team

The Awards celebrate professional excellence, best practices and personal achievement in the recruitment industry. The IRP Awards are the only recruitment sector awards hosted by the REC.

It is great news for TBC to be recognised for the quality of training and the support it provides to its employees.



Training Team



Talent Acquisition Team

Topaz Cake Bake raises cash for Macmillan Cancer Support



The culinary creations

It's not all work and no play at Topaz! Our amateur bakers can testify to that as they displayed their culinary creations during a charity bake-off event in support of Macmillan Cancer Support. The Cake Day was an enormous success and raised £200 along the way. And just for a bit of fun the 'contestants' faced a vote for Star Baker. Well, the results are in and verified and we can confirm that that Faye Harrison's Jaffa Cake cake was favourite on the day. Let's see who made the podium.

Results

In 3rd place we have Dave Payne. Dave produced a mouth-watering tongue-tingling Salmon tart. Not exactly a cake Dave (you have seen the show?) but a great dish nonetheless.

In 2nd place – Utsav Gajjar – with his Japanese Sponge and Brandy Sauce. Wow! What a sensation – with all that alcohol they had a fire crew on standby!

But there can only be one winner. In 1st place we have – Faye Harrison with her Jaffa Cake cake. That's right it's not a typo. Everyone likes a Jaffa Cake and Faye's bake was a knock-out with the judges.

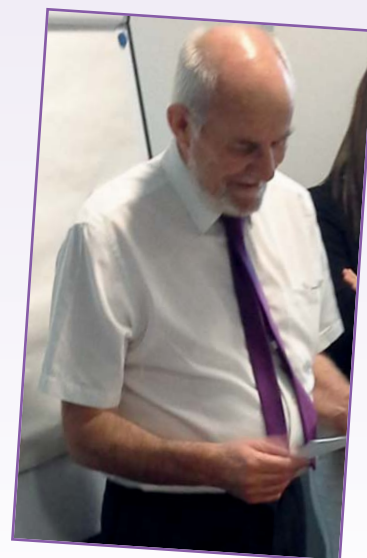
Congratulations Faye, Utsav and Dave for your achievement and all the other contestants for your hard work and of course for all the dough (sorry, couldn't resist) donated to Macmillan. Well Done!



A very happy Faye Harrison receiving her prize for 'star baker' from Mike Cooper



Utsav Gajjar (hiding his secret recipe!) with Mike Cooper



Dave Payne - pondering on his choice of fish dish!

Tina celebrates in Tyseley

Birthdays are always great fun and judging by the grin on Tina Logan's face this one is no exception. Whilst you should never discuss a lady's age, in this case, the picture provides a clue. Tina, who is a receptionist at TBC Tyseley, has been with company for 17 years and enjoys holidaying and camper vans. Great combination!

On behalf of the SWS Group, Happy Birthday Tina, we hope you enjoyed your day.



Tina Logan

Canvass Competition spurs on new client acquisitions



L to R: Louis Cunningham being presented with his trophy by Shaun Chilton, Branch Manager

There's nothing like a canvass sales competition to get the adrenaline flowing and the figures flourishing! And the results for Q3 in Danny Keyes' area certainly reflect this. With points gained for new clients converted and margin generated it was all up for grabs. But there can only be one winner . . . TBC Swindon's Louis Cunningham topped the leader board with 11 new clients gained and 140 points won.

"Louis has contributed to an increase in the Swindon HGV1 business by assisting with the successful redevelopment of a long-term existing plan," said Danny.

Hot on his heels were Amy Valentine in second place with seven new customers and 80 points and Mark Sadler in third on six new customers and 65 points.

A great effort and performance from the team and no doubt a lot of fun and banter along the way!

Redditch Branch Produces Top Performance

As the huge smiles in the picture reveal, The Best Connection's Redditch branch has had a great 2017! The team have worked incredibly hard and have received the results they deserved by converting an astonishing 60 new clients!

"More importantly these 60 clients have been exceptionally well serviced and retained in a difficult market, resulting in record new margin generation," said Danny Keyes, Area Manager. This has driven business revenues and set the branch up for an even better 2018!

Well Done Team Redditch for setting the bar so high and Good Luck in the New Year.



L to R: Neal Morris HGV, Gary Hitchman HGV, Agne Januleviciute IND, Imogen Wright IND, Steph Delahaye IND, Keeley Evans IND, Annette Thompson, Admin & Peter Christie, Branch Manager

Open Day for Drivers at TBC Wakefield

TBC Wakefield was delighted to host a Drivers' Open Day recently with DHL's Transport Manger, Jamie Richardson. Jamie, along with his driver trainer and transport planners, gave up a Saturday morning to discuss possible assignments at the new 1.4 million square foot warehouse which sits on a 74 acre site at Grovehall Lane, which is the Knottingley Distribution Centre for T.K. Maxx & Home Sense for TJX Europe.

Prior to the event, Keith Walton, Senior HGV Consultant and Adam Noble, HGV Consultant, were busy drumming up interest with new drivers. Their persistence, along with social media and website promotion, produced an excellent result attracting 15 new registrations and six existing drivers.

"I would like to thank Jamie and his team for taking the time to visit the Wakefield branch to support the T.K. Maxx

initiative. The session was interactive and well received and gave all of the drivers an opportunity to field their questions," said Sheila Eland, Area Manager, The Best Connection.



TBC Glasgow

– How's it going? Let's ask the staff!

As SWS Group expands, adding more people and branch offices, it is important that everyone feels an integral part of the organisation, wherever you are based and whatever you do. This goal can be challenging when people are geographically isolated from central operations. When TBC Glasgow was launched, the challenges of being a long distance from key locations such as Topaz HQ (293 miles) and central functions such as training, had to be kept in mind.

Typically, when TBC opens a new branch it consists of existing experienced TBC staff and new recruits. Often, the new location would be prospected and developed from an existing, local office before the doors of the new branch open. This has enabled a controlled and seamless migration and the staff have been able to hit the ground running. In the case of the Glasgow branch, this wasn't really an option. The closest branch to Glasgow is Carlisle which is 100 miles and a two-hour drive away, therefore a commute was not feasible for existing staff. As a result, new recruits were needed immediately. In addition, the branch was starting from scratch, therefore, building business momentum was going to take time. With this in mind, it was imperative that the Glasgow team were fully supported from day one.

So, how do the staff feel about the support they have received and what is their experience of the training they have undertaken? Let's find out!

"Since starting with TBC in May as Branch Administrator I have received great support and training from a number of people within the business. Jane Lynch has been especially helpful due to her many years of experience working with TBC. She has visited me regularly and always been available over the phone if I needed to contact her. So far, I have learned new skills, I now understand my learning style and also furthered my time management skills due to working to tight deadlines with payroll. I would highly recommend a job within TBC due to the high standards of training and professionalism I have received," said **Abbie Macgregor – Administrator**.

"I have worked on a driving desk for over 10 years and personally think TBC is way ahead of other agencies in terms of training. I have taken so much out of the foundation course

and learned many things on driver tech I never knew before and can put into practice in branch," said **Marion McLeod – Senior HGV Consultant**.

"I only started with TBC recently. My experience of the recruitment process has by far been the best. When I applied for the Branch Administrator position I never expected to get such a quick reply. I met with Michelle, Divisional Manager, in the branch the following day and instantly felt at ease with how welcoming and friendly she was. The interview was great as I didn't feel like I was being interrogated like in previous interviews. From applying for the job to be offered it took less than a week. I would highly recommend TBC due to the approachable and professional service I received," commented **Sheree McNab – Administrator**.

"Having worked in the recruitment industry for the past 13 years I was pleasantly surprised how much TBC invests in their people. No matter how much experience you have coming into TBC everyone is put through the Foundation Course, which I have just completed. This course takes you through the full recruitment process including sales. It also provides you with the tools to do your job the TBC way. I went into the training thinking I wouldn't take much from it because of the experience I have. How wrong I was! The training introduced me to new ideas and gave me the processes I needed to follow in branch. It's been a few years since I've been involved in the sales side of recruitment, so I found days five and six to be of massive benefit, recapping on the sales cycle, the flow of calls, objection handling and closing. Lee Crimes has been a great support to me and has been a major influence in the development of the Glasgow branch overall," says **Michelle Dowling – Divisional Manager**.

TBC Glasgow is now an integral part of TBC and the broader SWS Group. Through unparalleled support and development employees are empowered to undertake their roles to the optimum and made to feel part of the organisation. The first branch in any new region is always the most challenging, however, when established it becomes the hub to grow further branches.

Congratulations to TBC Glasgow for flying the flag and here's to future expansion in Scotland!



L to R Darren Clarke (IND Consultant), Michael Young (IND Consultant), Sheree McNab (Branch Administrator), Michelle Dowling (Divisional Manager), Abbie Macgregor (Branch Administrator) & Marion McLeod (HGV Senior Consultant)



L to R: Jai, Darren, Jag, Gurinder, Anna, Dawn, Sakina, Niki, & James

Finance team expands to support growth

Over the past year the finance team has expanded to continue to support the ongoing growth of the SWS Group. We all know that finance is an important function in the business, so let's take a look at the new team members along with our existing team.

Sakina Meghjee joined the business on 7th August as Assistant Finance Manager providing direct support and assistance to Gurinder. This includes the preparation of the monthly management accounts for the Group and ongoing support to the wider teams. She is currently part way through her ACCA accounting qualification, with the plan to be fully qualified in the New Year.

James Cox started on 3rd July as an Assistant Accountant. James assists Gurinder and Sakina with the monthly management accounts and provides general assistance to all roles within the finance team. He is studying towards his CIMA accounting qualification.

Jag Chahal joined on 1st December 2016, as a Finance trainee. He has now started studying for his AAT qualification. Jag is involved with a variety of processes within the finance function for the Group, including processing all the branch petty cash claims and processing all invoices for CPA Inc and TBC Inc.

Existing team

Gurinder Khatkar, Group Finance Controller/Manager. Gurinder manages the finance team as well as overseeing the

temporary payroll and credit control departments which, on a day to day basis, are managed by Andy Redfern and Baldish Chauhan.

Jai Deep Chauhan, Finance trainee. Jai has successfully passed several stages of his professional qualifications (AAT). His duties include permanent sales ledger, reconciling 2nd tier temporary supplier invoices and the dreaded driver Penalty Charge Notice.

Anna Marklew manages and processes the payrolls for the permanent staff within TBC and the rest of the SWS Group.

Darren Cole Darren's duties have grown during his 16 years with TBC. These now include accounts assistant, car fleet manager and mobile phone manager.

Niki Archer The increasing number of branches within TBC has led to larger volumes of bills and invoices from suppliers which Niki processes in her primary role as Purchase Ledger Clerk.

Dawn Swoffer is Finance Administrator and manages internal stationery, hotels, trains, shredding and she supports Anna with the payroll, in particular processing expenses and attendance.

So, now you know! Without this team of dedicated finance professionals, the business would soon come to an abrupt halt! A big Thank You guys for being perhaps unsung heroes of the business.

A Day in the Life of ...

Andy Nuttall

Branch Manager, Stockport & Huddersfield

How do you start your working day?

After a long journey from Rochdale, I usually arrive at the office around 6:40am to make sure I beat the traffic and get organised for the day ahead.

From 7am, I will generally assist the consultants with check in's and competitor ring rounds and just supporting the team when any problems arise. At 8am we will set out our stall for the day and create objectives with regards to sales, servicing and general recruitment.

What does a typical day consist of?

With the current challenges in recruiting a temporary workforce a large part of the day will consist of supporting the desk search for staff, whether it be HGV drivers or warehouse temporary workers, this can be by placing regular adverts or reading through CV's.

Following this, I will review job sites and gather leads for the consultants to attack!

I like my team to be very pro-active with sales and servicing, so I will often jump on the desk and support the consultants with customer contact to make sure we aren't missing out on anything.

With the opening of Huddersfield, a large part of my role recently has been assisting Nikki and Steve establish leads, map out the area and sales support.

I will also often try and support the administration team with payroll and plan updates whenever needed.

What keeps you going through the day?

A good team spirit and positive atmosphere has always been a factor for me loving my time at The Best Connection and the light-hearted banter keeps the day ticking over.

I've always loved the variety in the job and how fast-paced things can be; we've really managed to develop a family feel



in the branch which in turn, I believe, is a big factor in how successful Stockport has been - hopefully Huddersfield will be the same!

My own personal career progression has always been my main motivation and I have found over the years that seeing consultants progress through the ranks gives me great satisfaction and is probably the most rewarding aspect of my role.

I've always been very competitive on the sales side and seeing our branch margins rise each week is always very pleasing.

What is a good day for you?

Lots of bookings, new clients and good feedback from the current client base!

It's always good to see the consultants work together as a team and really support each other as and when required.

A bit about myself

I'm 37 years old and have been with The Best Connection since 2003 (apart from an 8-week gap in 2014). I've worked my way up from a trainee consultant to helping open the successful Oldham branch. I have recently bought a lovely new-build house in Rochdale with my partner, Lucy, so the past few months have been filled with domestic jobs as we've designed things from scratch. Lucy is a dentist and has often supported the Stockport team with dental treatments!

I spend most of my time outside of work with my daughter, Mia, who is five and our two kittens, Moses and Dexter, who are new additions to the family.

I'm a season ticket holder at Oldham Athletic and go to all the home games with my dad. Other than football, I love keeping fit and attend a running track session on Monday evenings as well as going to my local gym.

First TBC Annual 5-a-side Tournament



Well, it was all kicking off on September 16th as The Best Connection's first annual 5-a-side tournament held at Powerleague Coventry, started with a whistle. The inaugural event was organised by Maniel Bains from the Onsite Connection Team.

After a hard-fought competition featuring many epic battles and sore shins, Athletico Tyseley were crowned champions taking



Real Onsite Connection:

From left to right back row – Mateusz Filipiak (Senior Project Manager), Curtis Colbey (OSC Support), Ian Russell (Operations Manager), Alex Dirman (Project Manager), James Morgan (Senior Sales Manager)
From left to right front – Maniel Bains (Project Coordinator), Gabriel Sirghie (Project Coordinator)



Athletico Tyseley:

From left to right – Adam Potter (Consultant), Liam Gadsby (Consultant), Dave Rowlands (Consultant), Steve Shenton (Account Manager), Chad Sheppard (Branch Manager), Simon Thompson (Senior Manager)

home the prestigious The Best Connection Cup. Led by their inspirational branch manager, Chad Sheppard, Athletico stormed to an impressive 10-1 final victory over Stoke and Crewe's Forza Azzuri.

With £155.26 raised for Fisher House Charity, it's fair to say the day was a great success all-round and everyone was left with an appetite for more next year. Well Done to all teams who took the time to partake and we hope to report on next year's event as Athletico defend their title.

"Next year's tournament will be even bigger as we hope to attract teams from the entire SWS Group. Details will follow nearer the time but if you are interested please contact me," said Maniel.

For the full list of results and further information please contact Maniel Bains on maniel.bains@thebestconnection.co.uk



Tyseley Branch:

Simon Thompson with The Best Connection Cup & Chad Sheppard with Powerleague Tournament Trophy

Topaz Dress Down Fridays - fundraising for multiple charities

Since the announcement that employees based at Topaz could wear informal clothes as part of the 'Dress Down Friday' charity fundraising initiative, we can report that it has been very popular and, as a result, money has been pouring in for the chosen charities.

In the first quarter, donations totalled £420 which was split between Dogs Trust and Alzheimer's UK. The second quarter saw an amazing increase in donations to a whopping £540 which will go to The British Heart Foundation and Diabetes UK. Well Done to those of you that have administered the fundraising and a huge thank you for all the charitable contributions that have been made – they will make a difference to people's lives (and dogs!). You will be pleased to hear that it doesn't end here! Dress Down Friday is set continue and has named Tiny Babies Big Appeal and Macmillan Nurses as the next recipients. **At the time of going to press a total of £ 1,240 has been raised – thank you to everyone involved.**



Manchester recruitment Open Day attracts new talent!

Finding and attracting talented recruitment consultants isn't easy and therefore requires a flexible approach. This was the case recently when new consultants were sought for TBC's Manchester branch. To support the recruitment drive, the Talent Acquisition team worked closely with Jason Melia, senior manager, TBC Manchester, to design, coordinate and execute a series of Open Day events held at the Manchester office.

The aim was to move away from the traditional CV-based selection in order to identify a broader pool of candidates with the desired attributes to be a successful consultant. All applicants were invited to attend regardless of experience or education.

The initial sourcing of candidates included the use of multiple job boards, social media, posters, mailshots in temporary workers' pay slips and contacts on the Talent Acquisition database. A newly designed presentation was used to inform the candidates about what they could expect from a role in

recruitment with The Best Connection which provides in-depth information on training, personal development and career progression.

"We had 24 applicants attend the three sessions and without looking at CV's we had a good idea of who would make good candidates. We interviewed five applicants in a first interview process and four applicants in a final interview stage. Was the whole process a success? Yes 100%! We now have three new colleagues who are undertaking their Foundation programme. Their initial understanding of the company and industry is one step ahead because of the presentation delivered by both Iain Brown and Charlotte Jarvis. It is an exercise I would definitely carry out again!" commented Jason.

As a result of the efforts that went into the design and development of materials for the day, a blueprint has been developed that can now be used to support other locations with high volume recruitment needs in 2018.

Toni Smith clocks up 20 years' service



Toni pictured with Paul Young, Area Manager (l) and Indy Sanghera, Branch Manager

Doesn't time fly when you're having fun?! We are fortunate to have so many long-serving employees in the SWS Group and the number keeps rocketing! On this occasion we are delighted to celebrate Toni Smith from TBC West Bromwich who has clocked up 20 years' service.

Toni started work at The Best Connection in Walsall in October 1997. During her time with TBC, she has held administrative roles in Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich.

"Throughout Toni's time with The Best Connection, she has played a key part in the success of all three branches. Toni has a wealth of experience and is the perfect example to all new administration recruits. It's been a pleasure for both Indy and I to have Toni as part of our team for most of the past 20 years. Congratulations Toni on your fantastic achievement!" said Paul Young, Area Manager.

Congratulations on your work anniversary, Toni, from all your friends and colleagues at TBC. Can't think of a better reason to crack open the Bolly!

Congratulations Gurinder!

Many congratulations to Gurinder Khatkar, our Group Finance Controller/Manager and his wife, Jazz, on the birth of their son, Yuvraj. Weighing 7lb 7oz, Yuvraj was born on 9th October and is Gurinder and Jazz's first child.



SWS Vacancies!

SWS Featured Vacancies

Relocating can be stressful enough so why not use our Internal Application Process to secure a great new position and have one less thing to worry about?! A full list of our current internal vacancies can be found at www.thebestconnection.co.uk/careers

National Sales Manager – Bromsgrove

Management Opportunities are available in our current TBC branches:

Birmingham, Chelmsford, Earls Court, Oxford, Preston and Truro

CPA Leicester and Watford – Permanent Senior/Recruitment Consultants

QCF Assessor – Halesowen

Bailey Care Services – Trainee/Recruitment Consultants in Abingdon, Melksham, Newport and Poole

Senior HGV Consultant opportunities are available in the following TBC branches:

Abingdon, Blackburn, Bradford, Cambridge, Cardiff, Coventry, Exeter, Gloucester, Newport, Northampton, Sheffield, Telford and Wakefield

Senior Industrial Consultant opportunities are available in the following TBC branches:

Birmingham, Bristol, Abingdon, Enfield, Gloucester, Poole and Taunton

The Best Connection has identified the following locations for future branches and

has opportunities for current or aspiring Senior Consultants and Managers in:

Banbury • Basingstoke • Harlow • Hereford • Slough • Swansea • Tunbridge Wells

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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