

## Embracing future challenges



Andrew Sweeney

Welcome to the June issue of SWS Best News. You will see from the stories and updates that all the companies in SWS Group share successes and provide some insight into the personalities behind the day to day operations of our business in the UK and North America. We are becoming a more diverse organisation and with this brings opportunities for collaboration and promotion. I hope you enjoy this packed issue.

With a workforce approaching 800 people there is inevitably scope for career progression, promotion and movement in and across the business. This capability is supported by the continued emphasis and investment in training for all roles and responsibilities in the Group which is paying dividends in terms of personal development and performance and also attracting the very best candidates in our industry to come and join the journey of growth and expansion we share. Well done to all those featured and those not mentioned this time around. Our reputation as a professional, leading business in our sectors has been further enhanced by the new look and feel of our website and profile across Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn which I know many of you have embraced to the full to further your efforts in promoting your own business successes. Our digital strategy is strengthening our brand and reaching out to an ever-expanding audience. This is also a learning process for us that will gain more momentum and impact over time.

Our international foray with CPA and The Best Connection Inc has also been a great success. We have dipped our toe in the North American market and continue to explore what is a huge potential sector for SWS Group. I was delighted to visit CPA Canada in May and TBC Inc. As the North American economy continues to grow employment demands

will too. We are adapting our approach and processes to this market and look forward to an exciting future in this region.

A theme you will notice in this issue centres on the driving industry. This is a very important sector to all of us which is facing many challenges. Demand is outstripping supply with many people having left driving jobs during the biting economic downturn. We can no longer rest on our laurels and wait for the industry to rebalance so I have been pleased to read about the initiatives that have been created and the work that many have undertaken to address this inevitable challenge we are facing. Driver retention will be helped by treating people well and building loyalty. This is something we are already focused on and good at and needs to remain at the top of our list of priorities.

We are very much a sales driven organisation and good at what we do. This is due to the tenacity and motivation of our people to win in our respective competitive environments and the collective efforts of all the team members from front line consultants to back office support in making things happen. The amazing results we see in many cases are due to personal creativity and going beyond the expected in order to succeed. It is fitting that we have some of these examples in Best News, setting high standards, winning competitions devised by managers and working smarter in the way we attract business. I would like to thank all our staff on behalf of the directors for your efforts and outstanding performances. Keep up the good work!

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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# Managed Services – Wickes Timed Delivery Project

Wickes is part of the Travis Perkins Group which has been a customer of CTS Managed Services for many years. CTS provides replacement vehicles and driver services into the Group and last year Wickes approached CTS to support its peak business period starting at Easter and running through the tricky summer months.

The project was to provide joint HGV and driver support and was very specific both in terms of vehicle specification, driver qualifications, location and timing.

The detail was agreed with Helen Fox, CTS' National Account Manager and the project was planned and implemented. The project was very successful and Wickes acknowledged how well it worked for them and how the 20 branches experienced very few delivery issues.

It was no surprise then when Wickes' Luke Rouse and Stuart Ward invited Helen Fox to a meeting at their new Head Office in Watford. Stuart reiterated the success of 2014 and asked if the project could be delivered again along the same lines. Helen was very happy to go through the process of how this was to be set up and what modifications would be made to

accommodate slight changes needed by Wickes for the upcoming season.

In total, 28 branches are involved this year. The requirement is for C1 and Cat C plus remote crane certificated drivers coupled with 7.5 tonne box vans and 18 tonne brick-grab lorries. Securing the right vehicle and having the correct drivers committed to that vehicle for the summer period is hugely beneficial to Wickes for consistency, availability and most importantly, peace of mind. It is one less thing for the Wickes' managers to worry about and with the experience of last year they can relax knowing that the logistical headache of years gone by is a thing of the past!

"City Transport continue to be a critical part of our peak planning," said Luke Rouse, Divisional Delivery Support Manager (Northern), Wickes.



Let's do it right



## Katy Brooks joins CTS Logistics

City Transport Solutions is concentrating on developing new business across all operating divisions this year including cts Managed Services, cts DRIVE and cts Logistics.

In March, cts Logistics held an open day in Leighton Buzzard to promote its services, recruit new drivers and fill transport planning and new business roles within the growing CTS Logistics business. As a result, in April CTS appointed Katy Brooks to the sales team to develop new business. Welcome aboard Katy!

Katy is a mum returning to work following the birth of baby Albie! Prior to motherhood she

had a very successful sales career in the haulage business. Katy is well-connected locally which is already proving to be a great asset as the business makes a step forward having structured the transport planning and scheduling resource in readiness. We are told that Katy has settled in very well and her bubbly personality and enthusiasm add to what is already a lively office.

"I am really enjoying the flexibility CTS offers and this enables me to juggle my work, Albie and organising my upcoming wedding to Chris this summer," said Katy.

Busy times ahead for her on all fronts!

# Recruitment Team

## Matrix Training & Development



Marie Jones



Amanda Carpenter



Leanne Price

**Marie Jones, recruitment co-ordinator, gives SWS Best News an insight into the day-to-day tasks undertaken by the Recruitment Team at Matrix Training & Development.**

"I'm new to the world of recruitment having started with the team in February this year. My colleagues include Leanne Price, who started the recruitment team and Amanda Carpenter who has many years' experience in recruitment and makes the job look easy! Leanne has now moved onto the administration team where she continues to excel."

"Our day generally starts with the first of many cups of coffee! As a team of two we manage different geographical areas. Amanda covers Telford & East Midlands and I cover everywhere else. We have a caseload of around 90 vacancies at any one time. After the Business Development Team have gained agreement from a potential client it is then over to us to recruit for that apprentice vacancy. The client prepares a job vacancy template which we check, process and upload to the apprenticeship website. As soon as the vacancy is live we notify our client and begin to vet and interview applicants. We then email successful applications to the client and arrange interviews on their behalf. Following the interview we contact the client for feedback and notify interviewees. If the client decides that they would like to employ the applicant we inform them of the next steps and then pass all the information over to our administration team who then allocate an assessor."

"Sometimes our roles can be extremely challenging, especially when applicants decide not to turn up for an interview

without notifying us or when we have sieved through many applications and a client decides that the position is no longer available or when we run out of coffee! Many times we have banged our heads against the desk in frustration but it's because we are passionate about our jobs - we want to find that perfect candidate for every role - we love the rush we get when we find that perfect person and we just know from the moment they answer the phone they are the one. It's not just about filling a vacancy though, it's also about helping a young person into employment; into a role they can't wait to start. Also, knowing that 98% of our achievers go on to secure full-time employment is really rewarding. Is there anything better for a Training Provider's recruitment team to hear? Let me give you a good example."

"We placed Ceri Soloman at Fire Label Merchandising Ltd in Worcester on an Intermediate Customer Service Apprenticeship. From the moment we spoke to her she shone and we just knew that she would be snapped up by the employer and she was. From the day she started they were impressed with her mature approach to the role, desire to succeed and innovative ideas, so much so that they nominated her for the Intermediate Level Apprentice of the Year for the Worcestershire Apprenticeship Awards 2014 where she was runner up. Ceri was offered a full-time, permanent position at the end of her Intermediate Apprenticeship and moved on to her Advanced Customer Service Apprenticeship. She has since progressed in her job role and is working towards becoming the company's Sales Manager. Ceri is just one of Matrix Training's many success stories and we look forward to many more."

## SWS Group – Addressing the driver shortage

With an estimated 70,000 new drivers required before 2017, the task of finding and training suitable people is a major headache for the industry. To combat this problem Fleetmaster Group are currently working with many large employers within the logistics and supply chain industry with the sole purpose of helping to retain, recruit and home-grow new, talented drivers to support operations.



Nick Boocock

There are two core models that have been used to great success - Organic Promotion and Government funded Young Driver Academy which was featured in a previous SWS Best News article about British Gas. In this issue Nick Boocock of FleetMaster takes a look at the benefits of Organic Promotion.

“Organic promotion assumes you are looking at the people you already employ and how best to retrain them. By

identifying existing employees in ‘easier to cover’ roles such as the warehouse, traffic office or lower entitlement, training can be supplied to promote such employees into driving roles.

“There are a number of benefits of this method including reduced costs attached to the recruitment process and the fact that applicants will be known entities to the business, allowing the advantage of selecting the right type of individual to become a professional driver. In addition, change can be promoted, organised and completed in a relatively short time frame.

“Another consideration is that promotion to a driving role may also foster greater motivation, loyalty and salary increase for some. However, this may result in other positions being left open which will also need to be filled.

**“Picking the right people is a critical factor to future success. It is important that the right employees are put forward for training”**

“Picking the right people is a critical factor to future success. It is important that the right employees are put forward for training. FleetMaster have used this model with great success, however, if the right people are not selected and vetted correctly to identify suitability to passing both theory and practical elements and to understanding the role of the driver, it may not result in a positive outcome.

“Once retrained, that doesn’t mean they are ready to carry out the role independently. It is advisable to provide further time in developing operational skills with an in-house Assessor followed by a buddy or mentor system before allowing to drive solo.

“To assist customers with taking their staff through the organic upskilling route, FleetMaster has developed training programmes for those with or without an initial CPC qualification. Both routes include a starter pack that covers medical assessment, Provisional D2 and theory tests. These are followed by an intensive, practical five-day training session undertaken at our Wakefield centre. We have found that removing an individual from the distractions of home life allows for full commitment to passing the tests.

“Transport businesses will find the innovative method of upskilling both cost effective and a sound, longer-term investment. Keeping existing employees motivated and secure in their roles develops loyalty and will go some way towards trying to bridge the driver demand gap.”

**“With a projected shortfall of 150,000 drivers by 2020 and the current average age of a driver being 53 years old, it’s vital that our industry starts looking at solutions now”**

Jason Melia, Senior Manager of TBC’s Greater Manchester driving business commented: “The UK logistics sector has a huge challenge throughout the coming years. With a projected shortfall of 150,000 drivers by 2020 and the current average age of a driver being 53 years old, it’s vital that our industry starts looking at solutions now. We need to meet these challenges head-on and make a difference to safeguard our market place and keep delivering the kind of service that our clients have come to expect over the past 24 years.

“One of the most exciting solutions we have at our fingertips is to up-skill our workforce from warehouse and van driving positions to Class C & CE (HGV Class 1 & 2) positions through our sister company, Fleetmaster. With the large base of clients that we have we’re in one of the strongest positions to help the up-skilled workforce find the work they are looking for and also help the logistics industry at the same time.”



Jamie Boocock

## SWS Group – Addressing the driver shortage *Continued*

Matt Burford, Senior Manager, TBC Tyseley, said: "The driver shortage is a ticking time bomb. A fifth of the current LGV workforce will reach retirement age in the next 10 years which is approximately 75,000 drivers. This doesn't include those that will leave the profession for other job opportunities and the number gaining their licence is decreasing year on year, therefore, the industry has a real problem and gaining more LGV drivers on the road is essential.

"The benefits of organic promotion for licence acquisition include boosting business opportunities

whereby drivers can enhance and harness new skills. This enables us to attract more drivers to work for The Best Connection and helps make us more competitive. It also helps to retain our existing driver workforce which is imperative. Up-skilled drivers can also result in increased margins and generally organic promotion for licence acquisition makes us more marketable within the industry and demonstrates that we are attempting to address an ever increasing issue."



*Matt Burford*

## Back to Basics Driver Retention and Attraction Training

**As a leading driving employment business, TBC relies heavily on existing clients as well as developing new business to keep the order books full. It is generally accepted that retaining existing business is much easier and cost-effective than gaining new clients.**

The success of our driving division is no different in this regard and is reliant on the relationships we have developed with our drivers. Without their loyalty we may be faced with compromising or losing business. This premise has led to a focus on training to establish best practice in TBC and ultimately to retain our valued workforce of skilled drivers.

In March this year, the first Driver Retention and Attraction Workshop was launched and due to its success, it will now be delivered regionally to all managers and consultants working with or on a driving plan. With a strong emphasis on customer service and driver relationships, the workshops look at the benefits of driver retention through increased business due to availability, loyalty and referrals.

"Following my day at the Driver Retention and Attraction course I found, on reflection, that I'd completed two pages in my learning log. These notes consist of what I can do for both my team and myself. It is refreshing to recap on how we used to run a driving plan and what's been forgotten over the years. During the course

it struck me that most of my team have only been in the recruitment game since the recession and only know one way of working. For these individuals the basic practices that work well are in fact, a real eye opener and I truly believe that for such individuals the training day is invaluable," said senior manager, Jason Meilia.



*Jason Meilia*

**Jackie Hamby, Senior HGV Consultant, Grimbsy,** commented: "My Driver Retention and Attraction course reminded me of our biggest commodity – our drivers. Going back to basics and building strong relationships enables us to reap the benefits. For instance, how many drivers will put themselves out for

you and will, at short notice, change their plans to help you out? These are the drivers where a good relationship has been formed. All drivers need respect from us and we need to know what motivates them and what their interests are. These are the things that will better our understanding of them and will help promote loyalty. This is also important when drivers talk to each other. The end result is that our clients gain the benefit of not just a bum on a seat, but a driver who will go that extra mile.

"I really believe that this course will help all working on an HGV desk to better interact with their drivers."

**Sam Bearman, Senior HGV consultant in Dartford,** said: "After being involved in the initial driver 'think-tank' which was the catalyst for the driver retention course, I was eager to learn further innovative concepts that other branches have developed especially as I was coming from one of the busiest desks in the south east region to the opening of a brand new venture in Dartford. Having solid working foundations and consciously looking to evolve what we already do well has been key to our success over the market competition. These additional ideas, practices or whatever we label them, should be more widely available. Therefore, the driver retention course is the perfect forum for everyone to bounce across best practices and experiences."

## CPA Canada



### Kelly Cline

Kelly is a member of the CPA team in Canada and of course the SWS community. She is educated to post-graduate level with specialisms in Education and Human Resources. Her strong background in client relationship management has enabled Kelly to develop a unique understanding of her clients' needs which she uses to full effect in her role as Senior Executive Recruiter.

With almost 10 years' experience in the recruitment business Kelly has placed candidates in a variety of roles and industries including financial services, administration, HR, sales and marketing and accounting and finance. For the past year she has been working in the food & beverage sector as part of CPA Recruitment's Canadian operation.

Outside of CPA and in her spare time, Kelly is a baseball parent and fan, spending most nights of the week involved in either running the kids' team or watching her beloved Blue Jays. Go Blue Jays!

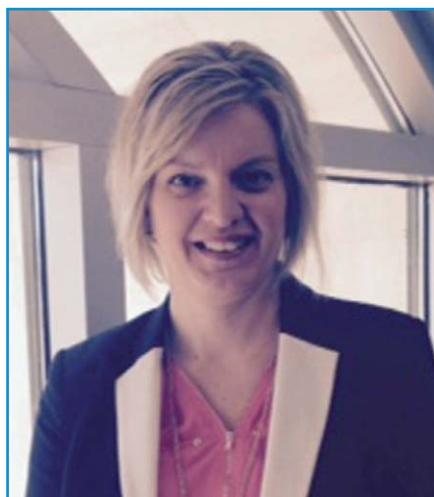
### Heather Gibb

Heather Gibb, Senior HR Consultant at CPA, is a home-grown girl, born and raised in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. We are envious Heather! She is an energetic and outgoing human resources professional with experience in staffing and generalist roles.

"My passion for human resources has developed from my interests in law, business and customer service. I have spent nine years working within industrial staffing, corporate fields and the past year working in the food & beverage sectors across the USA and Canada.

"Throughout my career I have developed a good understanding of how strong internal and external customer service is critical to any organisation's success. In my role at CPA I am able to build strong relationships and partner closely with various levels of management to understand strategic business objectives and identify corresponding staffing and human resource needs," said Heather.

Heather looks forward to a long-term and successful career with CPA Recruitment.



## CPA UK - Laura Cox celebrates 15 years at CPA



Congratulations to Laura Cox for her long service! Laura joined CPA in April 2000 and has just celebrated her 15th anniversary. Laura is the Office Manager in CPA's London branch and takes care of all the administration duties which keep the business ticking. Laura is responsible for the general upkeep and management of the crucial customer database and makes changes where necessary to keep it accurate. In addition, Laura produces the company's weekly KPI statistics for both the UK and Canada and is responsible for making sure all CV's are registered on the database and coded correctly. On top of this, Laura is also responsible for creating invoices for London and Leicester and for those all-important payment chasing calls! What would they do without you?!

During her 15 years at CPA (a source says she joined very young!) the office has seen Laura get married (2005) and go on maternity leave three times (2009, 2011 and 2013). Outside of CPA she spends all of her time with her three children - Daisy aged 5, Harry aged 3 and Tilly aged 1.

## Bailey Employment Services - Goole

Michelle Oxborrow is the manager of the Goole branch of Bailey Employment Services. Michelle began her working career in advertising in the newspaper industry at the age of 16 and was lucky to build her skills bottom-up in telesales and features and from learning the world of sales targets and budgeting. She moved into management at the age of 19 and ran a newspaper in the Nottinghamshire-based group where she developed her team management skills and learned how to get the best from people in a very tough industry.

"I joined Bailey Employment Services 13 years ago and have seen the business in Goole grow from zero to an £8.6 million turnover. We work across the UK and Northern Ireland for many key contracts," says Michelle.

"Our strength at Bailey in Goole is customer service 24/7 and a very strong ethos around legal procedures (especially after 2011 and the launch of AWR), our integrity around health and safety, and the selection of quality personnel. Recruitment is a passion based on very hard work and I am only as good as my team at Goole which I am proud to say have worked with me for many years which is a rarity in our industry.

"One of our major clients is Howdens Joinery, based in Howden in East Yorkshire and the company has been with us for over 13 years. We provide an exceptional level of legal support and run around 170 derogated contracts with peak staff as and

when demand dictates. We ramp up to around 300 people onsite for three months of the year to meet the demands of the warehouse and manufacturing side of the business. We also support many other areas including the design road shows where our handpicked temporary workers stay all over the UK and work with Howden's in venues such as Gleneagles. They demand an exceptional level of service from Bailey as they grow their business which has passed the billion pound sales barrier.

"Marice Benton-Stanley and Sarah Appleyard work on the contract day to day and I visit two to three times a week to oversee meetings and conduct all disciplinary proceedings. Derogated staff at Howden's all have their own personnel file and we are expected to treat them the same as a permanent member of staff with responsibility for monitoring sickness, absence and discipline. Howden's business in 2015 will be the biggest ever. We have also just had our first permanent placement at its National Distribution Centre in Northampton. It is a sensational business that we love being partnered with.

"Our Reed contract, which supplies temporary staff to Lloyds Bank throughout the UK and Northern Ireland, has built an exceptional relationship with the managers at Lloyds Banking Group and is something that makes us so proud to be influencing the

recruitment process with such a big plc. The client requires stringent recruitment processes which include a pre-screen interview, telephone interview, face to face interview, competency tests and interviews with the client and Lisa Gresham and her team work very hard to fulfil these requirements. A further team at Bailey fulfil a stringent vetting process which can cover five years of work history and that may require obtaining 36 months' worth of referencing, criminal record checks and credit checks. This is why Bailey Employment Services are utilised since the work that goes into this contract is immense. We have up to 200+ temporary positions with Lloyds. This year has seen the biggest growth and most consistent recruitment.

"One of the biggest challenges and changes we have faced at Bailey's in Goole is the implementation and go-live of Staffplus. This has been exceptional in placing all our figures in one place; tracking margin and increasing and bringing payroll control in-house. Thank you to all my staff here in Goole for having the patience and understanding to absorb something new, and pulling off an amazing result which led to us going live in April on Easter Bank Holiday. Paigen Tabiner and Dee Chessman, you have carried us and pulled everything together, thank you so much.

"A big thank you also to Dave Payne and Joan Riley for giving up your normal working day to train us for many months and our new friend, Andy Redfern - thank you for helping and guiding us and thanks to Inga Grauzaitė."



Back row L to R: Thomas Booth, Paul Tait, Dan Jackson, Joe Hodgson, Lisa Gresham, Peter Bates, Kevin Driver  
Front row L to R: Kyla Chase, Dee Chessman, Michelle Oxborrow, Paigen Tabiner, Mike Ford

## TBC Gloucester has a new home

For those of you who have been with The Best Connection for a decade – and there are many – you might remember TBC opening in Clarence Street, Gloucester in 2005. Well, 10 years on, the office is finally moving to larger premises whilst the old site is being transformed into a hotel!

Leading the crew is Lee Broadway, Branch Manager: "I have been the Branch Manager for TBC Gloucester for nearly seven years now. Prior to that, I supported the Bristol and Oxford branches for a couple of years. The Gloucester branch has had a strong driving division for many years and continues to rally the flag for the region," says Lee.

This is an exciting time for the Gloucester branch and its new team which includes Lee Broadway, Victoria Gough, Mike Price, Joshua Taitt, Shinead Welsh and Dawn Marfell.



Clockwise from left: Lee Broadway, Branch Manager, Shinead Welsh, Administrator, Josh Taitt, Consultant, Dawn Marfell, Administrator, Mike Price, Consultant & Victoria Gough, Consultant

## Gelt Gladiator Challenge - No match for TBC athletes!

Hardy representatives from TBC's northern operations donned their Superman outfits to tackle the gruelling Gelt Gladiator Challenge in muddy Cumbria in May! The event was organised to help raise money for charitable causes and according to feedback was great fun as well.

The picturesque Gelt Woods formed the event backdrop where the team faced a daunting series of physical challenges including taking on 20 Gladiators and 30 obstacles! These included a mud crawl and submerge, scaling haystacks, fire jumps, climbing walls and jumping gates, rope swimming and an ice plunge to name just a few! To top it off, a gruelling run through a wood tested the team's mettle and endurance to the end.

Congratulations to the tireless team who drew upon their super powers to finish the course in one piece with a large smile. Total raised so far is around £250 with hopefully more to come for the Sarah's Hope Foundation, which provides holidays for children with life threatening illnesses.

If you would like to contribute to their fundraising efforts you can at [www.everyclick.com/tbc\\_gelt\\_challenge](http://www.everyclick.com/tbc_gelt_challenge)



L to R: Craig Dawson (Newcastle), Paula Cherry (Newcastle), Graham Brown (Newcastle), Mark Dryden (Newcastle), Helen Bainbridge (Middlesbrough), Eric Robinson (Newcastle), Jeff Gray (Senior Manager, North East), Stephen Belton (Middlesbrough), Rachel Duncan (Stephen's fiancée)

A (less than average) day in the life of . . .

## Joan Riley & Staffplus!

Having spent several months working at Bailey Employment Services in Goole converting their administration system to our Staffplus booking and payroll system, I thought that I was more than prepared for the job of converting Bailey Care Services in Melksham to the same system. One thing I have now learnt is that you shouldn't assume anything!

As part of the implementation, Dave Payne and I spent weeks creating and running the two systems in tandem to test and eliminate any errors. Dave worked with the consultants and entered bookings, whilst my role was to ensure the administration and payroll worked and to train the administration team.

We started by generating all the new clients for Bailey Employment Services and Bailey Care Services. Thanks must go to our credit control team at this point! We went on to create over 350 COTB's which is still work

in progress, along with ensuring all the teams are using our registration and booking procedures correctly.

The Bailey payroll personnel had actually pre-booked a holiday on the live week and this along with the fact that it was a bank holiday created a huge challenge! My task was to process the payroll for seven plans in just over a day and half with a little help from a super part-time consultant and Dave, who also kept me supplied with suitable beverages!

The upshot? Well, everybody got paid – I think there were only a few minor queries. Phew!

I would like to thank all the Bailey staff for their support and our teams in Head Office (Including IT, Credit Control, Payroll and especially Dave my chauffeur, chaperone and dinner companion). This was certainly a day to remember! **!!**



Joan Riley

## New Branch Administrator Training Portal



Standing L-R: Jodi Johnson, Hayley Allen, Kirsty Bassford, Jane Lynch  
Sitting L-R Kanez Khan, Helen Woodhouse, Sam Trueman

The Best Connection has a long tradition of delivering first class training to all its staff with courses ranging from the Foundation Programme for new recruits to sales and management modules. The content and delivery of courses is under constant review and recently a new training programme for branch administrators has been developed.

The new programme will start with the launch of the Branch Administrator's Training Portal. The aim of the portal is to share best practice and to provide a central source of knowledge for processes, guidance notes and FAQs.

Trainers, Jodi Johnson and Kanez Khan, have assembled a group of experienced branch administrators to support with the design and delivery of the content. The group, which brings a wealth of experience, comprises: Joan Riley (Leeds), Hayley Allen (Worthing), Helen Woodhouse (Bristol), Kirsty Bassford (Nuneaton), Sam Trueman (Birmingham) and Jane Lynch (Wolverhampton).

"As a proud employee of TBC for 24 years and an original member of the first ever TBC branch, I was thrilled and excited to be asked to take part in this worthwhile project. I am very confident that this training project will bring much needed help and support to all our valued branch administrators far and wide," says Sam Trueman.

The training team welcomes any feedback and suggestions.

# Area Manager Promotions



## Steve Leather

Congratulations to Steve Leather who has taken a step up the ladder to become Area Manager for The Best Connection. Prior to joining the company Steve worked for many years on the track at Land Rover. He then sought a career change taking a gruelling telesales role with Kemps Publishing which honed his telesales technique. Steve had identified recruitment as his career of choice and joined TBC in June 1999 as a trainee

in Coventry. Sixteen years on, with a lot of experience under his belt and a steely determination to match, he has gained greater responsibility and now looks after Nuneaton, Peterborough, Ipswich and Norwich branches.

"From the first time I interviewed Steve, he has always remained loyal, with an inner desire to succeed and progress his career to highest possible level. I remember when Steve was an Senior Consultant, he wanted to become a Divisional Manager and asked me what he'd have to do. At this point, Steve had just lost a major contract, so his plan had dropped significantly. I quite simply told him that if you're worthy of becoming a DM then it won't be too difficult to rebuild your plan. Steve didn't comment other than to say OK, I'll do what it takes. And that's exactly what he did, he just went out there and delivered and the rest as they say is history," commented Dave Schilling, Regional Manager.

## Matt Leech

Congratulations go out to Matt Leech who has also gained promotion to Area Manager. Matt is a familiar face having joined The Best Connection 18 years ago in January 1997.

"As an Area Manager for TBC I am responsible for Birmingham 1, Bristol and Oxford branches and currently manage on-site operations in Banbury for DHL and Birmingham for Spicer's and DHL. I have responsibility for eight Industrial plans, two HGV plans and 26 members of staff. I report to Darren Pollard, Regional Manager, who I have worked with since day one," said Matt.

During his involvement with Land Rover's Distribution Centre

through TNT, Matt was one of the first people ever to be based on-site for TBC. He worked with and trained Paul Crocock who is now senior manager responsible for Taunton and Exeter branches.

In 2014 Matt and his team achieved an exceptional level of business and was part of the Birmingham team that produced an outstanding six figure margin in just one week.

Outside of his main duties Matt recently joined a TBC client, Aston Labs, on a charity bike ride.

In his private life, Matt is married with three children and in the rare spare time he has, enjoys following West Bromwich Albion FC, going to the gym and taking part in running and triathlon events.



## Richard Marsh

Richard began his journey with TBC in October 1998 – 17 years ago! Richard is responsible for three branches; B2, Bedford and Milton Keynes as well as six key onsites for major clients including John Lewis and Spectrum for Arcadia. He is also in the process of opening a new branch at St Albans. Life began as a

B2 consultant and after proving his ability moved up through the ranks to become Senior Consultant, Divisional Manager and then Branch Manager. He was then given the chance to take on Milton Keynes in 2008 and has significantly grown margins over this period. In 2013 TBC opened the Bedford branch and Richard was promoted to Senior Manager. His promotion to Area Manger is the result of hard work, dedication and loyalty. Richard has two young children Darcy (3) and Ryder (11 months) who take up a lot of his time. When not hard at work or being dad he is a keen cricketer and supports Wolverhampton Wanderers football team.



## Area Manager Promotions *Continued*



### Danny Keyes

Danny started his life with TBC in 2001, so compared to his peers he is a relative newbie! (That's if you call 14 years new!). His journey started in Tamworth as an enthusiastic consultant and after four years of hard work and a sprinkling of success along the way, he was transferred to Redditch gaining the Branch Manager title with the move. Since then, things have gone from strength to strength. After five years at the helm in Redditch Danny was given the opportunity to look after Tamworth as well. He gratefully took on the challenge and this was rewarded in April 2013 by extending his responsibility to include Enfield followed by Swindon a few months later. Both Enfield and Swindon were branches that historically only supplied very large clients, e.g., Honda and M&S and lacked traditional A-Z TBC business. Danny's task was to build new teams for both branches with a broader client base which he has successfully achieved, placing both branches in the best position they've been in since they were launched. Danny is also currently in the process of opening a branch in Watford.

## New Wakefield Branch



*Wakefield Team*

It's branch number 70! The Best Connection is now proudly flying the flag in the Yorkshire City of Wakefield which is nestled in the Calder Valley close to the Pennines. Centrally located on a busy high street in the centre of the city at 8 Bull Ring, the branch will serve the local population of nearly 400,000 people and its thriving business community. It is an exciting new launch for the company that will strengthen TBC's regional operations and heighten brand awareness.

"Our existing clients are of course delighted that we are now 'on the doorstep' and drivers have been visiting the new office to enjoy tea and biscuits on arrival! From a new business perspective, the foot-fall has

been amazing with quality candidates genuinely seeking work," said Sheila Eland, Senior Branch Manager.

Spearheading the new branch are our enthusiastic team members (left to right); Lynne Price, Administrator, Rebecca Sims-Walton, Industrial Consultant, Marek Tancos, On-site Co-ordinator, Wincanton/ M&S Bradford (on secondment to Wakefield Branch) Katie May, Senior Consultant, HGV and Sheila Eland, Senior Branch Manager.

The team also welcomes Joan Riley, PA to Phil Simmonds, who has taken the opportunity to be based in the Wakefield Branch.



*Joan Riley*

## Martin wins first-quarter sales competition

Martin Scrivens, Divisional Manager, Oldham, was the happy recipient of a voucher for winning Phil Simmonds' first quarter sales competition. We understand the voucher will be used to purchase a pair of bespoke running shoes.

**Well done Martin on your runaway success!**



*L to R: Martin Scrivens being congratulated by Derek Eelloo*



*L to R: Chris Mountford, pictured receiving his certificate and gift card from Lee Crimes, Area Manager.*

## Chris Mountford wins Sales Competition for March

Chris Mountford has set out his stall by winning the March regional sales incentive run by Darren Ainge covering Dudley, Wolverhampton, Telford, Stoke, Crewe, Warrington, Preston, Lancaster and Carlisle.

Darren said: "What's particularly pleasing where Chris is concerned, is that he only joined TBC in May 2014 and has been working by himself on a very busy plan. He has shown great perseverance and under the close guidance and mentoring of his manager, Jo Pedley, Chris has demonstrated his tenacity by converting a new client every week for the past five weeks, which is an outstanding effort."

**Well Done Chris!**

## Teesside Trainee Triumphs

After only six months in the job, Teesside's Sam Stanley has already made his mark on the sales performance figures by winning the regional sales competition. Well done Sam! Even before completing his 'core skills' training, Sam is showing his determination to succeed by making a positive contribution to the HGV plan to great effect.

"Sam joined the Middlesbrough Branch in November last year and has made a huge impact on the HGV Plan in a short time. Sam made it clear from day one that he wanted to do well in the regional sales competition and I am pleased to say that three months into the year he has come top for March. Good Luck for the quarter," said Helen Bainbridge, Branch Manager.



*Sam Stanley & Helen Bainbridge*



Marcin Napieraj (left) Alex Hildebrandt (right)

## Shining Star Award

In October 2014, TBC's Stoke branch gained an opportunity to supply DHL at the prestigious Sainsbury's Distribution Centre in Stoke. All colleagues, agency and full-time employees are monitored for their punctuality, attendance and performance. Despite fierce competition from a number of long-term temporary workers from another supplier and full-time employees, the on-site team were delighted to learn that a TBC colleague, Marcin Napieraj, was awarded Top Picker within his department for the month of March. Marcin received a Sainsbury's voucher for his achievement and is pictured receiving his Shining Star certificate from Alex Hildebrandt, TBC's on-site co-ordinator.

**Well Done Marcin!**

## Lee Wins Canvas Competition

Lee Gilbert, Divisional Manager in Leicester, has bagged the top spot in Dave Schilling's regional canvassing competition 2014. No mean feat Lee – well done indeed!

With an astonishing 376 points, Lee fought off some serious competition to win the coveted title. Second and third spots went to Ipswich's Phil Hopkins, with 361 points and Jonathan Morey with 334 points. A special mention must go to Chris Osbourne (who joined Ipswich branch as a new recruit three years ago and with no prior recruitment experience) on coming fifth on 289 points.

"As a Divisional Manager Lee has set a great example, not just by winning the overall competition, but also by running an extremely busy Industrial plan and 3-plan division that generates good profitable business," said Dave Schilling, Regional Manager.



L to R: Paul Tavinor, senior manager, congratulating Lee Gilbert, divisional manager, on a more than well-deserved win for the 2014 year and being presented with a magnum of champagne by regional manager, Dave Schilling

## Maidstone adds value to Industrial clients



L to R: Denise Galvin (Admin), Selena Holloway (SC), Andy Clark (Senior Manager), Violla Velli (Recruitment Resourcer), Jade Colton (Consultant)

In 2011, Maidstone Industrial 2 was set up to manage the servicing of high demand industrial users in the region. This was initially developed for Delphi Diesel systems managing up to 130 temporary workers and included a high level of evolving value-added services. These comprised onsite consultations, temporary worker surgeries, performance management, productivity management, T & A system administration and a host of other services.

Word quickly spread as Delphi was soon joined by DHL Fred Perry, DHL ZARA, CREO Marketing and the latest lucky recipient of our fantastic service, Amethyst. At the heart of the service is the dedicated IND2 team based in the Maidstone branch who are aiming to peak at 450 temporary workers across their five customers this year.

Well done to the Maidstone team for spearheading The Best Connection's value-added services. It's made a huge difference!



Crawley branch building

# Crawley on the move

Around 15 years ago, TBC Crawley opened its doors at 57 Gatwick Road and the southern region was born. Fast forward to 2015 and the region now boasts 13 successful branches driven by over 80 consultants. From time to time an office move is required to accommodate change and growth and this time around it's Crawley that is on the move.

It may only be two hundred yards down the road from the previous location but the new, spacious and modern branch is perfectly situated on the Manor Royal Business District to supply the needs of our local customers. A bit like Trigger's Broom (Only Fools and Horses) with its 17 new heads and 14 new handles, Crawley may have some new faces and even some new furniture but the spirit, humour and determination that has made Crawley so successful all those years ago still remains.



Crawley team: Back row L to R: Lewis White, Apprentice Resourcer, Sean Marten, BM, Howard Wrate, HGV Consultant, Amar Khatri, HGV Consultant  
Front row L to R: Dan Corrigan, IND DM, Mariann Powell, Administrator, Lisa Moreira, Ind Consultant, Emma Thompson, Ind Consultant

## TBC gets friendly with the neighbours



L to R: Sean Marten & Lisa Moriera

TBC Crawley has been getting familiar with some local businesses at the annual 'Know Your Neighbour' exhibition held at the Manor Royal Business District in March this year. Manor Royal Business District is the largest business park of the Gatwick Diamond area and one of the south east's premier mixed activity employment hubs. Just two miles from London Gatwick Airport, it is situated on the Sussex and Surrey county borders and covers an area of 240 hectares and is home to approximately 500 businesses generating 30,000 jobs.

The event hosted 55 exhibitors spanning a huge range of sectors and provided a great opportunity to showcase TBC's services to neighbouring businesses.

Feedback from the team indicated the day was a real success with the team walking away with over ten new business leads and two new customers signed-up.

"As well as meeting over 300 representatives from other local businesses, it also turned out to be a really enjoyable day for all the team," said Rene Hawkes, area manager.



Amar Khatri

## Rob Mittell – always has an eye for an opportunity!

This short story shows how an inquisitive nature can translate into fresh business! Enjoy!

Rob Mittell (Branch Manager Ipswich and Norwich) and his partner Katie were on a night out in Clacton-on-Sea in the summer of 2012. On the way they travelled through a very remote location. For this reason it was one of the few areas that Rob had not undertaken any area mapping when he was still working on his own in Ipswich.

On the way home at about 9 o'clock Rob saw a signpost for Gorse Lane industrial estate and knowing how far out of the way they were, he decided to investigate while in the area. As it turned out, Gorse Lane was a large industrial estate with

many different companies. Luckily, Katie had a pen and paper in her handbag, so they started to record all of the company names and phone numbers as Rob would normally do when area mapping. It turned out that there were also two smaller industrial estates very close by which received the same attention.

Rob and Katie left the last industrial estate about one hour later having collected lots of new canvass material.

One company, Fresh Linen, showed particular interest from the following week's canvass calls. After four follow-up calls Rob was given his first booking for drivers. This went well and TBC has supplied drivers ever since.

In the past six weeks the branch has also



started to receive industrial bookings for general warehouse operatives. TBC's percentage share has increased due to the excellent service provided by the Ipswich industrial team; equally the HGV team now receive first call on all bookings.

And the moral of this story? There's always opportunity if you look hard enough – and don't ask Rob out on a night out!

## Truckfest drives new business

According to the organisers, Truckfest Peterborough saw a record turnout at this year's May-day weekend event. The occasion witnessed over 2,500 trucks representing all

elements of the Road Haulage Industry, facing fierce competition for the top places and prizes. TBC was there in force to attract interest from new drivers and we are delighted to hear that it wasn't time wasted!



The Truckfest TBC team

"Despite the heavy rain on Sunday morning we managed to attract 715 drivers to complete their details on the prize slips - we even roped my kids into helping out on the Monday. We will be holding the prize draw and contacting the winners over the next couple of weeks," said Dipak Patel, Branch Manager, Peterborough.

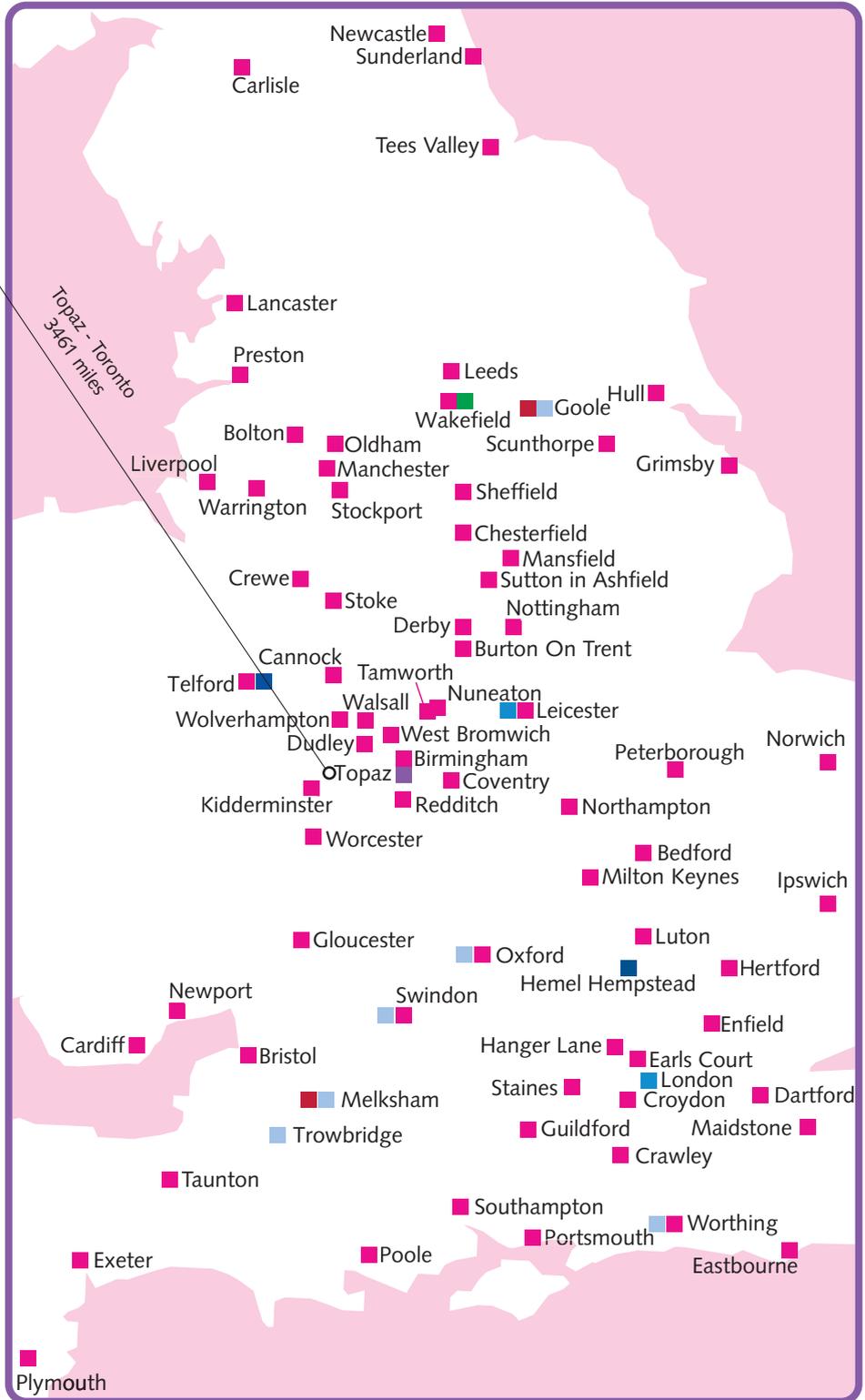
As many of the drivers attending the event came from across the country, other regions will undoubtedly benefit from the new contacts generated from the attendees. We are told that Dipak also undertook some undercover research (umbrella & snorkel?!) on the competitive landscape and has forwarded some great ideas for next year's attendance! Well done to Dipak and his team for a sterling effort in dealing with so many people and the little challenge of a flood and of course, working on May Bank holiday!

## Stop Press!

James Wilkins and Iain Brown have recently returned from conducting Training Workshops in Canada – more about this in the next issue.

Also, interesting news from TBC Canada – see September issue!

# How to find us



**TBC**  
[www.thebestconnection.co.uk](http://www.thebestconnection.co.uk)  
[www.thebestconnection.ca](http://www.thebestconnection.ca)

**MATRIX**  
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