

# 30

The **Best**  
Connection  
EMPLOYMENT GROUP

1991 - 2021

## The Best Connection is 30!

Welcome to our 30th anniversary supplement which celebrates this incredible milestone.

With the help of Andy Redfern, Sam Hollis and Matt Burford, we take a trip down memory lane, sharing a few personal experiences and observations from TBC's first employees who joined the business on the day it was launched and continue to be much valued members of the TBC team.

Also included is a branch timeline charting the expansion of the business from the inaugural office in Tyseley, Birmingham, established in 1991, to more recent additions.

For those of you that have a long tenure with the company, we hope it fosters some nostalgia and happy memories. For more recent joiners, we hope you find it informative and inspiring!



Neil Yorke & Andrew Sweeney

It's been quite a journey to date and we look forward to continuing for many more years.

# Matt Burford looks back on 30 years with TBC



**Matt Burford**

“ 1991, I remember it well. It was a year that would shape my life for the next thirty years! There was a small team of us at the outset including Martin Recci, Dave Schilling, Sam Hollis (nee Truman) and Andy Redfern. Whilst Neil, Andy and Martin were working on a financial business plan the initial team met at Martin's house to discuss premises and plan the opening! Tyseley seemed a good place to start with lots of businesses and lots of potential candidates.

It was a time when you had to roll your sleeves up and get stuck in. I recall that we spent a week or so decorating the offices before we could start as they were in need of a lick of paint – to say the least!

In the early 1990's we were faced with a recession. Interest rates were rising, house prices were dropping - it wasn't a great time for the economy. We were faced with launching a new business from scratch with a lot of local recruitment businesses chasing the same pool of people. Eventually, however, after a lot of perseverance, I was able to successfully claim The Best Connection's first ever booking which was for a class 2 driver. It was a watershed moment.

With lots of hard work, long hours and lots of fun along the way, we began to build a solid business within the driving and industrial sector. Over the next few years, we grew the business organically, opening more offices with a mixture of existing staff, plus new additions which was to become the blueprint for the company's branch network.

I found the driving side of the business highly motivating and thoroughly enjoyable and ended up specialising in this sector. Back then, there was not the shortage of drivers we experience today so filling the bookings wasn't an issue. Winning business in those early years was the challenge, which made the job even more satisfying when new clients came onboard.

Over the ensuing years, with a preference for the driving sector, I managed the driving divisions for Birmingham, Coventry, Nuneaton and Swindon branches.

In 2010, I was asked to take on the challenge of managing and developing the CMS function which was a completely new concept for the business at that time. This ultimately resulted in a move away from Birmingham where I had spent most of my career. The work with CMS provided me with an opportunity to become involved with managing business nationally, whilst at the same time building a solid team of consultants that offer a single point of contact for the provision of labour across multiple locations. Now, based at Topaz, CMS has developed into a key department within the business supporting a number of key clients. None of this would have been possible without the vast network of branches that support CMS. It has certainly been a journey for me and I am proud to be celebrating our achievements of 30 years.

I could probably write a book, with many tales to tell over the last 30 years, though not sure all would be printable! Working for The Best Connection has been both very challenging and rewarding at the same time and I can honestly say I've had a great time with lots of fun meeting lots of very interesting people along the way. As we move into an exciting new period for the company, with new systems, new technology and processes to come, I very much look forward to the future and the next 30 years! ”



**TYSELEY**  
Opened Apr-91



**WALSALL**  
Opened Mar-94



**MANCHESTER**  
Opened Nov-95



**NOTTINGHAM**  
Opened Apr-96



**WARRINGTON**  
Opened May-97



**COVENTRY**  
Opened Sep-97



**WOLVERHAMPTON**  
Opened Oct-97



**LEICESTER**  
Opened Sep-98



**DUDLEY**  
Opened Sep-98



**TAMWORTH**  
Opened Sep-98



**PRESTON**  
Opened Jan-99



**BURTON**  
Opened Dec-99



**HULL**  
Opened Dec-99



**STOKE ON TRENT**  
Opened Feb-00



**REDDITCH**  
Opened Feb-00



**WORCESTER**  
Opened Apr-00



**CRAWLEY**  
Opened Aug-00



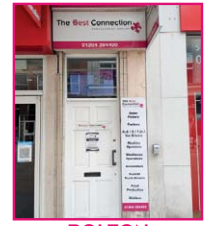
**BRADFORD**  
Opened Dec-00



**KIDDERMINSTER**  
Opened Dec-00



**WEST BROMWICH**  
Opened Dec-00



**BOLTON**  
Opened Mar-01



**SCUNTHORPE**  
Opened Mar-01



**ASHFORD**  
Opened Apr-91



**STAINES**  
Opened Jul-01



**CHESTERFIELD**  
Opened Aug-01



**SOUTHAMPTON**  
Opened Sep-01



**WORTHING**  
Opened Oct-01



**STOCKPORT**  
Opened Jan-02



**NEWCASTLE**  
Opened Feb-02



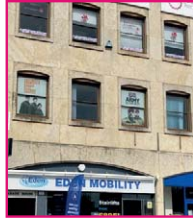
**LIVERPOOL**  
Opened Apr-02



**DERBY**  
Opened Aug-02



**PORTSMOUTH**  
Opened Aug-02



**NORTHAMPTON**  
Opened Sep-02



**NUNEATON**  
Opened Sep-02



**POOLE**  
Opened Feb-03



**OLDHAM**  
Opened Mar-03



**SUNDERLAND**  
Opened Mar-03



**BRISTOL**  
Opened Mar-03



**TEES VALLEY**  
Opened Mar-03



**HANGER LANE**  
Opened May-03



**EARLS COURT**  
Opened May-03



**SWINDON**  
Opened Jul-03



**CARLISLE**  
Opened Jan-04



**OXFORD**  
Opened Dec-04



**CREWE**  
Opened Jan-05



**ROMFORD**  
Opened Feb-05



**CANNOCK**  
Opened Mar-05



**GLOUCESTER**  
Opened May-05

# Thirty Years in Payroll and counting . . .

Rewind thirty-plus years.

"Martin, I've done it', I've handed my notice in!"

“I had phoned Martin Recci from a telephone box located beneath New Street Station in Birmingham City Centre. I was excited that I had just revealed to my former employer the new venture I was joining. They knew Martin had set up a rival agency so I was asked to leave immediately.

“Sorry”, replied Martin in a serious voice, “we have filled the vacancy and do not need you anymore.” If he could have seen my face at that time. My bottom lip was tripping me up! My face, as red as a beetroot. I was thinking to myself, what am I going to do now? Then he started laughing! I really thought for a split second he was being serious. This is pretty much how agency life started for me, plenty of banter but never personal.

The business started in a small office on Warwick Road in Tyseley, Birmingham. Initially I used to process the plans, entering all the plan information by hand, into a ledger. I worked on a Saturday morning preparing the write up for consultants to start checking the workers in on Mondays.

I remember the earlier days fondly. As a small business I used to create the plans, chase timesheets from clients, enter the hours and rates into the payroll software used at time and I was also responsible for the calculation of the payroll. Payroll was very different from how it is now. If I remember rightly, all our workers were paid by cheque and we had to write those by hand too!

When TBC first started, workers had no entitlement to benefits such as sick pay, holiday accruals and pensions, so it was a far easier process than it is today. After about seven years in Tyseley, it was decided to transfer the finance operation to Halesowen. We had run out of office space, so it made sense to split the sales and finance sides of the business. I was happy to move to Halesowen and a new chapter began.

One of the most unexpected problems we encountered at Halesowen was a flood in the office!

Payroll was located on the ground floor. On one sunny Monday morning I arrived at the office and thought to myself, why are the windows steamed up? On entering the building, the ground floor was under water. I can only describe the scene as akin to a tropical house, without the butterflies! A shelf in our stationary office had collapsed, ripping a radiator off the wall. In those days, computers were all kept on the floor, so sadly they were all destroyed. Once the office had been made safe, we moved to an office on the second floor whilst the ground floor was being refurbished. As the training division gathered momentum, another move was in the offing leading to payroll relocating to Topaz, where we have been for the past six years.

I remember working on the plans to set up TBC with Andy, Neil and Martin, so it's been even longer than 30 years! I am glad I chose to work in the recruitment industry. There can be nothing like recruitment for the variety of people you meet and work with. There have been many memorable moments and experiences I have shared with my TBC colleagues and the good times far outweigh any bumps and scrapes along the way.”



**Andy Redfern**



**SHEFFIELD**  
Opened Jun-05



**NEWPORT**  
Opened Jun-05



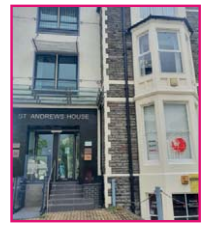
**MILTON KEYNES**  
Opened Jul-05



**PLYMOUTH**  
Opened Feb-06



**TAUNTON**  
Opened Feb-06



**CARDIFF**  
Opened Feb-06

## Sam celebrates 30 years with the business

It is rare in today's work culture for an employee to stay with one organisation for their entire working career. But it does happen! If the hat fits, so to say, why move on and that is exactly what Sam Hollis decided after joining TBC as a trainee in 1991. Sam joined at the inception of the business and has experienced, first-hand, its evolution and success. Sam is an Administration Manager at TBC Yardley, Birmingham.

"I would like to think I am only 30 years old! I started as a trainee back in April 1991 when I was 18 years old, fresh out of college. TBC only had one branch located in Tyseley then. The good old days! I have seen many changes over the years. I love my job and love my work colleagues," explained Sam.

In true fashion, Sam celebrated the occasion with her colleagues and received a bouquet and bottle of bubbly.

"Congratulations to Sam for her 30 years' service with TBC. We are very proud to have one of the 'originals' working at the Birmingham branch. Sam is always there to help with whatever is needed in the branch and supports other offices including

Oxford and Banbury. Sam has been an excellent role model and mentor to our new administrators. Well done, Sam, here's to many more years with TBC!" said Sharon Latif, Senior Manager. "It's always nice to be able to honour and reward people for their length of service. It shows them how much they are valued and the importance of their contribution to the company. Awesome service Sam, well done," added Julia Marshall, Divisional Manager.



**Samantha Hollis**



**CROYDON**  
Opened Feb-06



**MAIDSTONE**  
Opened Feb-06



**LUTON**  
Opened Jun-06



**PETERBOROUGH**  
Opened Jun-07



**DONCASTER**  
Opened May-08



**TELFORD**  
Opened Feb-09



**EASTBOURNE**  
Opened Jul-10



**IPSWICH**  
Opened May-12



**EXETER**  
Opened Nov-12



**BEDFORD**  
Opened Dec-12



**DARTFORD**  
Opened Jun-13



**GRIMSBY**  
Opened Feb-14



**GUILDFORD**  
Opened Jul-14



**NORWICH**  
Opened Aug-14



**BLACKBURN**  
Opened Mar-15



**MANSFIELD**  
Opened Apr-15



**WAKEFIELD**  
Opened May-15



**TRURO**  
Opened Jun-15



**WATFORD**  
Opened Apr-16



**ASHFORD**  
Opened Sep-16



**BARNSELY**  
Opened Sep-16



**CHELMSFORD**  
Opened Oct-16



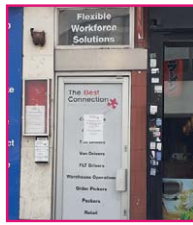
**CAMBRIDGE**  
Opened Nov-16



**DARLINGTON**  
Opened Dec-16



**GLASGOW**  
Opened Apr-17



**SLOUGH**  
Opened Aug-18



**RUGBY**  
Opened Mar-19



**BASINGSTOKE**  
Opened Aug-19