

Gradually adjusting to a 'new normal'

Welcome to Best News September 2021. Since my last message to you all in June this year, we have seen a slow but gradual shift towards a more pre-pandemic world. People are going about their lives more freely and the roads are once again becoming busier. I am optimistic that this trend will continue as we head into Autumn, however, in the meantime we must all still follow the company guidance regarding our Covid-19 safety procedures. Although we have become dispersed as a workforce, we are more united as a business and I am very proud and grateful to you all for adapting in these challenging circumstances. Collaboration and communication have certainly become our lifeblood and in this issue, we celebrate your achievements reflected in their many guises. We have wonderful examples of personal successes and individuals and teams that have excelled in their attempts to make a real difference.

As a team, we can and have made changes to support our customers as they manoeuvre their evolving business landscape. From time to time, however, we also need to deal with curveballs that we have less control over. Currently, one of the main challenges we face is the shortage of drivers who are integral to the UK supply chain. The combination of EU citizens returning home, a pandemic and an ageing driving population are just some of the factors contributing to a perfect storm. Demand now outstrips supply. Whilst the industry readjusts, and this may take some time, we must remain focused on maintaining our position and reputation as a leader in this sector for temporary drivers. Our relationships and customer service have never been so important and we will be tested over the coming months. I know I can rely on everyone to work closely with our customers to support them as best we can.

Conversely, in the aviation sector, we are seeing a welcome change as restrictions to many global destinations are being relaxed and more travellers can fly. This will stimulate the need for more temporary staff to help with a smooth recovery. In support of this change, we welcome some new team members

to the business who will be helping to ensure that strict governance processes are adhered to.

In other news stories, we highlight a hive of activity from across the branch network and our sister companies who continue to share great news on contract wins, thriving partnerships, innovation and accolades. We are delighted to welcome new faces to the business and support those who pursue new roles in the company and others who have taken advantage of our nationwide operation by relocating to other branches.

In a welcome move, the sales function is also receiving an extra boost with the expansion of the sales support team who will take on the design and production of presentations, sales collateral and will assist with tender responses. This will free-up consultants to spend more time with customers. Training too is featured as this function has needed to adapt rapidly when classroom sessions finished. We look at the challenges they have faced and the lessons learnt in moving to a virtual environment.

I hope you enjoy reading the business insights and activities that bring our extended community to life. Please continue to share your stories and experiences so we can feature these in the next edition.

Andrew Sweeney
Chief Executive



Andrew Sweeney



NEXT ISSUE...



Could you please contact Jan Blann if you have any topics for inclusion in the next issue of SWS Best News or with subjects for future Press Releases.

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Backline Strikes HGV Training Partnership

Backline Logistics Support Services has partnered with Tewkesbury headquartered commercial driver training company, MT Training Services, to extend its offerings to include LGV, HGV and license upgrade training. The initiative will help to address Backline's existing customer training requirements and attract new business in the region.

"Being able to attract new talent into the haulage industry is

crucial for us as a business, but also for the industry in general. Becoming a driver or a trucker isn't everyone's career of choice, but there are some fantastic opportunities out there and we're glad that we can help the younger generation, as well as more female drivers enter the profession," said Sam Hay, Training Manager, Backline.

MT TRAINING SERVICES

Backline achieves NPORS accreditation

Backline Logistics Support Services has become an accredited trainer for the National Plant Operators Registration Scheme (NPORS). NPORS is one of the UK's leading accreditation and registration bodies, working across the construction, industrial, utilities, warehousing & distribution, agricultural, ports and marine sectors.



"Becoming a NPORS accredited Trainer allows Backline to expand the range of training categories we can offer. This includes a wider range of forklift trucks, excavators and telehandlers, as well as site safety," says Sam Hay, Training Manager, Backline.

Many of Backline's customers are required to have their employees NPORS accredited to meet insurance criteria. "Despite the challenges that we've faced over the past 18 months and the impact that Covid-19 has had on the industry as a whole, we're really pleased to have been able to expand the training side of the business and support our clients in their growth too," added Sam.

Topps Tiles selects Backline for Outbase contract

The team at Backline Outbase in Exeter have signed an initial six-month contract with national retail chain, Topps Tiles, to support its supply chain operation in the south-west of England. Congratulations to the team, what a sterling job!

Topps Tiles is the UK's leading tile specialist operating around 300 stores across the country and employing over 1,500 specialist staff. The company, which has its headquarters in Enderby, Leicestershire, opened its doors to the public in 1963 and became a PLC in 1997.

"We are very excited to be supporting Topps Tiles in the region. Tourists converge on Devon and Cornwall in the summer, which puts extra pressure on deliveries. With the increase in staycations the roads have also been busier than usual, making logistics a real challenge. At this time of the year, our Outbase solution really comes into its own as we can reduce the need for overnight stays and decrease the number of vehicles required to deliver in the region," said Kelly Huges, Manager, Backline Outbase, Exeter.

The opportunity came to the business as

a referral from an existing customer which makes the win even more special and emphasises the value of maintaining strong customer relationships and a good reputation! Topps Tiles will be using Backline's Outbase facility for their Moffett truck, which is a new venture for Kelly and the team.

"As a specialist piece of equipment, the Moffett truck requires specific driver training. To address this, we were able to call upon one of our experts to support the contract," added Kelly.

For further information about Backline Outbase Exeter, please contact Kelly Huges, Manager, on **01395 239305** or email outbase@backlinelogistics.co.uk

Topps Tiles

CTS vehicles keep belongings safe for London Marathon Events participants



On Sunday 22nd August, City Transport Solutions (CTS) supplied a fleet of 39 commercial vehicles to The Vitality Big Half 2021 race to store the possessions and personal belongings of those taking part.



CTS's secure storage vans

As the name suggests, the race is a half marathon with participants covering a gruelling 13 miles. It was originally scheduled for April but was postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The event is one of London's largest annual community races which follows a route from Tower Bridge to the Cutty Sark in Greenwich.

"It's a massive event that requires careful planning and intricate logistics," said Helen Davey, Business Development Manager, CTS. "The health and safety of the participants and spectators is paramount to the team at London Marathon Events, so it's important that suppliers are able to work carefully and efficiently," explains Helen.

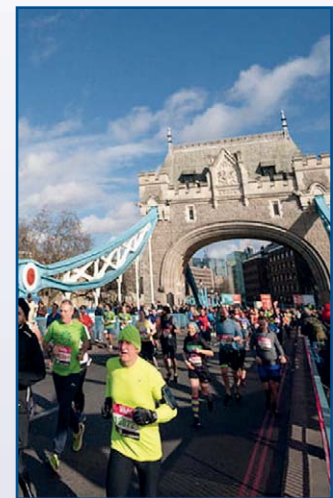
The impact of the pandemic over the past 18 months has placed an enormous strain on the logistics industry. Despite demand

outweighing supply,

CTS was able to call upon its extensive network to offer a solution to London Marathon Events that facilitated the smooth running of the event. As well as delivering the fleet of vehicles, Helen and the CTS team provided a meet and greet service during the event and were on-hand to ensure that everyone was off-site by the allotted time.

"Partnering with such a prestigious brand that has customer service at its heart is a huge accolade for CTS. Our motto of 'going above and beyond' has really come into its own during the pandemic. We are delighted to support major national brands with meeting their transport needs," added Helen.

CTS will continue to supply commercial vehicles to London Marathon Events for the rest of 2021, so expect to see them at a race meet near you!



Tower Bridge start

For more information on CTS and how they can meet your specific needs, please contact Helen Davey on 0800 279 0164 or email info@citytransportsolutions.co.uk

TBC Truro welcomes Harriet!



Harriet Denyer

It may have been relatively quiet for a while in the far reaches of Cornwall - but that has all started to change recently. Not only has the region been enjoying a very busy summer season, TBC Truro has also welcomed a talented new teammate to the branch.

Harriet Denyer joined the branch last October as a Recruitment Consultant and completed her probationary period with flying colours.

"Since Harriet joined the Truro branch, she has quickly familiarised herself with TBC processes and has immersed herself in the excellent training offered by The Best Connection.

"Harriet is currently working on the Industrial plan and is progressing very well and is on course for a successful year. I am very pleased with the achievements she has made in such a short time," said Paul Crocock, Area Manager.

Good Luck in your role at TBC Truro Harriet!

Vicki Ellis achieves promotion to Divisional Manager

We can never be bored with saluting those who have been recognised for their achievements and have received promotion as a result. On this occasion, we are thrilled to announce that we have a new Divisional Manager in Vicki Ellis. Huge congratulations Vicki and good luck in your new role!

Vicki began her career with TBC as a Branch Administrator in the Luton office in March 2010. A couple of years later, Vicki expressed an interest in developing her career and was successful in her application for a position as Resourcer. Her career then progressed quickly to Trainee Consultant and then to Consultant.

In February 2016, Paul Tavinor, Area Manager and Richard Fenton, Senior Manager, were given the opportunity to take on the Watford branch which was just finding its feet as a new branch and

Vicki was offered a transfer to develop her career. Having a solid background in IND recruitment, Vicki then chose to take responsibility for the HGV plan which proved a successful move for both the branch and Vicki.

Fast forward a number of years - following a lot of hard work, resilience and application - Vicki was rewarded with a promotion to Divisional Manager in August this year. The role encompasses all branch responsibilities across both plans.

'Vicki has an infectious personality, always full of energy, drive and determination which made it all the more pleasing for the management team in rewarding her with this promotion,' says Paul Tavinor, Area Manager.

Well done Vicki – good luck in your new role!



Vicki Ellis

Topaz welcomes Pete Whelan

Please put your virtual hands together to welcome Pete Whelan who joins TBC as Sales Support Administration Manager based at Topaz.

Pete joins Simon Phillips, James Morgan, Trevor Higgs and Melanie Gamblin to work on the design and creation of documents to support the sales function.

Pete has experience in graphic design and document publishing, including PowerPoint for presentations and proposals, as well as experience in managing high level tender processes. With six years' experience in the recruitment industry Pete brings a wealth of relevant, creative flair to the business.

"I'm very excited to be starting this new role with The Best Connection. Having worked for another recruitment company for over six years in a similar role, this will be a fresh and exciting challenge for me to continue my career. TBC has a great reputation within the recruitment industry for being people-focused and after being here for a short time, I can really see how great the culture is. I'm looking forward to providing our branches and sites with some fresh and engaging documents and adding value to how we present ourselves as a business," says Pete.

This is a newly created position in the sales team designed to help extend the sales support function to other departments and the branch network, with the production of modern, high-quality sales materials.

Welcome aboard Pete!



Pete Whelan

Sales Support Team at your service!

Winning good business is all about teamwork. We rely on our colleagues and often customers to provide the ammunition we need and guidance required to be successful. As a business we are good at supporting our front-line teams in their efforts to win new customers and retain existing – but there is always room for improvement. The good news is sales support has just become even better and we are thrilled and delighted to introduce our new Sales Support team who will be working tirelessly to assist the branch network, onsite teams and head office departments with their sales-related endeavours.

The team members are: Melanie Gamblin, James Morgan, Trevor Higgs, Peter Whelan and Simon Phillips.

Sales Support Function

The preparation of sales materials and responding to requests and formal tenders are time-consuming activities that require attention. Taking away these time pressures will allow the sales function to concentrate on building relationships and fostering customer engagement activities.

The new team will provide a comprehensive sales support service to the TBC network covering all areas of the sales cycle, particularly for 'value-added customers' - defined as having a headcount greater than 30 - which is a lot!

Members of the team will make themselves available to attend meetings, produce bespoke, high-quality sales documents and provide support in all areas of business development and customer retention.

Main duties will include:

Attending sales meetings – James, Trevor and Mel will welcome an invitation to sales meetings. They can support your

operational and local knowledge with their corporate sales experience along with creating relevant supplementary documents.

Responding to tenders and proposals – sales support will manage the process for you, end-to-end, including content writing and document formatting for tenders, RFI's, RFP's or more straightforward proposals.

Creating presentations – the team can produce high quality documents for use in isolation or as part of more formal procurement processes.

Building demographic reports and pay rate surveys – statistics and data covering your local market and the national labour challenges can be produced for your area or for a specific customer.

Writing case studies – do you have a good news story where you made a real difference to a customer's business? Send the information to the team and they can liaise with the customer and produce a case study for you to use as a sales and marketing tool, which can then be shared with the wider business.

Create materials for service reviews – share your Management Intelligence (MI) data with the team and they will format it and send it back as a high-quality, user-friendly document to present to the customer. If you are struggling with a format to complete your MI – the team can create formatted templates in Excel to make the data collection easier.

Find reports – the team can find and extract data from systems such as Staff Plus, Indeed and the Office for National Statistics as well as branch sheets and data reporting on campaigns and adverts.

salesupport@thebestconnection.co.uk



Mr & Mrs Potter on their wedding day

Laura and Adam tie the knot!

We are thrilled to share the news that TBC's Laura Nightingale and Adam Potter recently tied the knot at a wedding ceremony in Sutton Coldfield to become Mr & Mrs. Many congratulations to you both.

Laura, Senior Consultant, works in Central Managed Solutions (CMS) and has been with the company for seven and a half years and new hubby, Adam, who is based at TBC Birmingham (B2) where the couple met, has six and a half years under his belt and is also a Senior Consultant.

"We got married and had our celebrations at New Hall Hotel & Spa in Sutton Coldfield. It was the best day of our lives and we wish we could do it all over again! Thank you to everyone at work who kindly contributed to our collection," said Laura.

The happy couple had planned to honeymoon on the beautiful Greek island of Santorini but unfortunately the trip had to be cancelled due to covid restrictions. Instead, they opted to have a 'mini-moon' in the UK and will hopefully rearrange the Santorini trip for next year.

Relocation, Relocation, Relocation!

Harry and Ben head south whilst Mat heads north

For some people, one of the profound outcomes of the pandemic has been a re-evaluation of the work-life balance. This has led to many relocating from cities to the countryside or from one area of the country to another in search of a new lifestyle. With TBC now covering much of the UK, circumstances provide opportunities to do just that – move somewhere new - whether it be to a similar role or to take on a brand-new challenge. In this story we follow three colleagues who have made a move for very different reasons.



Harry Keates

While many are leaving the hustle and bustle of London town, others cannot resist its magnetism! For Harry Keates, Senior Consultant and Ben Wheelan, Consultant, the opportunity to sample the allure of London was far too tempting to miss. Following in the footsteps of their new Area Manager, Tom Meakin, who himself had made the decision to move from Burton to London 17 years ago, the pair have transferred to the Earls Court branch. Harry has moved the furthest from Cannock in the West Midlands. Ben was previously based at TBC Basingstoke.

Harry's journey with TBC began in 2008 as a temporary worker. "I was 16 years old when I first started working for TBC.

Over the following five years, during school and university holidays, I worked at our client, Manor Vinegar, as a factory operative and Lichfield Council as a refuse collector. Both are still TBC Cannock clients to this day.

"I had finished my studies in 2013 when Lee 'Wiggy' Bennett, the manager in Cannock, called me to ask if I would be interested in applying for the role as Trainee Consultant. I did, and, as they say, the rest is history. Over the next eight years I worked steadily, progressing from Trainee to Senior Consultant.

"In 2018 I was given the opportunity to spend six weeks on secondment at TBC's then new Onsite at Ferrero in Mansfield, which gave me an insight into how our onsite world works, which I enjoyed. As with so many other people in 2020, the pandemic caused me to re-evaluate my circumstances. My best friend had been living in London for a few years and was really enjoying life, so I decided to bite the bullet and joined him to explore what London has to offer! It is great to be part of the Earls Court team and I am looking forward to my new life in the city," shared Harry.

Harry now uses the local mode of transport (aka 'Boris Bike') to navigate his way around the city and has even

used it to deliver PPE to temporary workers.

The second 'newbie' to join the Earls Court team is Ben Whelan. This is his story.



Ben Whelan

"I joined The Best Connection Group when CPA was acquired. I was 18 years old when I joined CPA in Watford on a one-month trial. That was six years ago! When my family moved to an area near Guildford, I decided I wanted to move closer to them and fortunately was able to transfer to the TBC Guildford office



Boris Bike



Mat Cegielski

where I remained until 2019. I was then given the opportunity to work with Shaun Cole to open the Basingstoke office. This is an achievement I am very proud of.

"After the past 12 months, however, the timing was right for me to move back to

London and be closer to some of my old friends and the live music scene I love so much. Thankfully, an opportunity arose at the Earls Court branch and I was able to transfer to the team as an Industrial Consultant," explained Ben.

Meanwhile, as Harry and Ben were contemplating their new life in the smoke, TBC's Mat Cegielski, who was living in London was planning his escape to the north of England.

Mat joined TBC in 2017 after the business acquired an Onsite operation in Enfield. Since then, Mat has undertaken a variety of roles in the business including Onsite Consultant, Account Manager and has spent the past year as an extremely successful Driving Consultant.

Matt transferred from Onsite to the Enfield branch when the pandemic hit and has never looked back, realising skills he didn't even know he possessed! Like so many people who live and work in London, however, Mat could not afford to get on the property ladder and

lived in rented accommodation with no garden. As his son grew older this became an issue which made him re-evaluate his and his family's future.

Mat reached out to the Talent Acquisition team and looked on the internal applications page to find a suitable alternative role in a new location and decided upon Sunderland as a preferred destination – subject to securing a role. Through the Recruit system, Mat followed the same unbiased interview process that any other candidate would undertake. Mat's application was successful, resulting in him being awarded the position of Senior Driving Consultant in TBC Sunderland.

Congratulations to Harry, Ben and Mat for achieving the changes you were seeking in your lives and for staying with the team! We wish you all the best in your new roles.

Check out our current vacancies on page 19 of Best News!

A Fond Farewell to Martin and Simon

With such a large family at The Best Connection there will always be the ebb and flow of people moving on and new members joining the team. It is sad to see colleagues leave and on this occasion, we say a fond farewell to Martin Smith, Senior Contracts Manager and Simon Thompson, Senior Manager.

After 18 years with the business, Martin has taken the decision to retire and Simon has decided to explore other opportunities after 22 years' service.

Thank you both for your contributions over the years and we wish you and your families the very best of health and happiness for the future.



Martin Smith



Simon Thompson

TBC takes part in De Montfort University Brexit Research Study

The Best Connection was recently asked to participate in a research project which examines the challenges businesses face in the recruitment of labour, directly or indirectly, in the aftermath of Brexit. The feedback from the interview with Alex Dirman, our Brexit champion, was both informative and complimentary.

The highlights of the project outlined the following:

- The Best Connection has a significant EU contingent in its temporary workforce and has actively accumulated data on the impact of Brexit to help inform the business. This information is an asset that can be leveraged further to identify trends early on in order to mitigate challenges and to create a competitive advantage. Alex was complimented on TBC being well informed and having a sound, fact-based understanding of the potential impact of Brexit on the organisation.
- Due to an anticipated reduction in both supply and quality in the temporary worker pool, it is imperative to have close and open relationships with workers and clients. This assists with planning and setting expectations.
- Retention is the key to keeping ahead of the competition. When the balance of supply and demand shifts, keeping your workers and clients happy, so they remain loyal, is crucial.
- Three focus areas that will differentiate service and impact retention rates include the quality of employee engagement

and communication, the user experience and early, honest conversations with clients.

- Keeping on top of the data will provide invaluable insight to inform the business.

One of the underlying messages from this research is the importance of customer retention. In a highly competitive market, where the labour pool is shrinking, every effort should be made to keep hold of your customers!

By being informed and delivering on our 4 strategic pillars - winning good business, improving efficiencies, delivering operational excellence and developing the best people, we will be in a strong position to address any potential threats to our business. This study suggests it is perhaps more important than ever to be proactive in our relationships and to go above and beyond expectations. If we don't, our competitors certainly will!



Modern Day Slavery - being vigilant pays off!

Looking for indications of modern-day slavery has become ingrained in The Best Connection's work practices. By scrutinising tell-tale signs and understanding the best processes to follow when suspicions are alerted, our staff have had a significant effect on the lives of some temporary workers entrapped by ruthless criminals. In this example, thanks to the ever-vigilant eyes of the TBC branch team, a gangmaster has been identified, prosecuted and given a custodial sentence for trafficking vulnerable women into the UK and using them for his own gain.

The first signs that 'something wasn't quite right' were spotted when the

branch team noticed several people were registering for work using the same mobile number, address and bank details. This was unusual and warranted further investigation. The first action was to raise awareness of the 'coincidence' with TBC's legal team who assessed the information and decided there were grounds to notify the authorities. This



led to a police investigation resulting in a man's arrest and subsequent trial and conviction. The trafficker was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

As Brexit takes full effect and the legitimate labour market reduces, we may see more and more of these attempts by gangmasters to infiltrate our business, therefore, it is vitally important that we remain vigilant and flag any suspicions we have to the legal team.

Well done to the team for spotting this situation and for supporting the police with their efforts in bringing this criminal to justice.

TBC Maidstone adds HGV desk

The past 18-months have had a profound impact on the driving sector. Despite the restrictions, goods still have to be transported and supermarket shelves stacked. Whilst the well-publicised driver shortage is continuing to create many challenges, opportunities are also being presented. At TBC



L to R: Matt Putland & Darren Naylor

Maidstone, the turmoil has resulted in the creation of an additional HGV desk – but not in the way you might expect.

After an initial reduction in business caused by the pandemic, demand for drivers in the Maidstone area began to increase in the latter part of 2020. To manage the upturn, Matt Putland returned to the branch from furlough. Due to social distancing restrictions, Matt was required to sit at a separate desk away from his desk partner, Darren Naylor.

To help make the new arrangement as productive as possible and enable both consultants to undertake their roles without restrictions, each was allocated clients to service and develop alongside new sales and driver recruitment.

Despite the changes in work practices, both have thrived under the new structure. Matt quickly demonstrated his self-sufficiency with Darren Naylor ably overseeing both desks. Far from being a hindrance, the new arrangement worked better than expected so it was decided that it should remain as a 2 desk HGV division that would facilitate progression for both Darren and Matt. After careful planning MAHGV2 opened on July 7th. Congratulations to you both on making this a success!

Peter Christie promoted to Senior Manager

We are delighted to announce the promotion of TBC's Peter Christie from Branch Manager to Senior Manager, covering Redditch and B2. Many congratulations on your new role Peter.

Peter started his TBC career as a Trainee Consultant in June 2008 based at the Redditch branch and quickly became one of the company's most successful consultants, winning many sales competitions. Peter progressed through the consultant roles in Redditch, spending time on both Industrial & HGV and always running and managing profitable and successful Desks. This led to his latest promotion to Branch Manager of TBC Redditch.

Danny Keyes, Area Manager, commented: "In December 2019, the opportunity arose for Peter to help relaunch B2 working closely with me. When he was offered the chance Peter grabbed it with both hands. Working with the team in place he quickly developed the branch and several key accounts which lead to no reduction in revenue throughout the COVID pandemic.

"As a result of his hard work and commitment, not only over the past 18 months but throughout his entire 13-year career, Peter has been promoted to Senior Manager of Redditch and B2. Very well done, Peter."



Peter Christie

A Day in the Life of ...

Linda Hartley

Neutral Vendor Manager, TBC Bromsgrove

How do you start your working day?

Normally, 'pre-pandemic' that is, I would drive to work, make a cup of coffee and start my day by reading emails. During the pandemic, getting to work has been the walk to the dining table, cup of coffee and then reading my emails. Then the phone calls start!

What does a typical day consist of?

Many of my emails are branches sending requests for rates, mainly from Neuen as they don't publish the rates in the system like GRI. Some branches call to ask where the rates are on GRI and how to find them, so I talk them through the process. I also assist with any missing hours, how to enter hours and query rates on the Web systems. Branches might ask what can be done if their site contact is on holiday or sick and no one knows how to enter hours. If this is the case, I liaise with the neutral vendors we use to query rates, request rates and obtain missing hours.

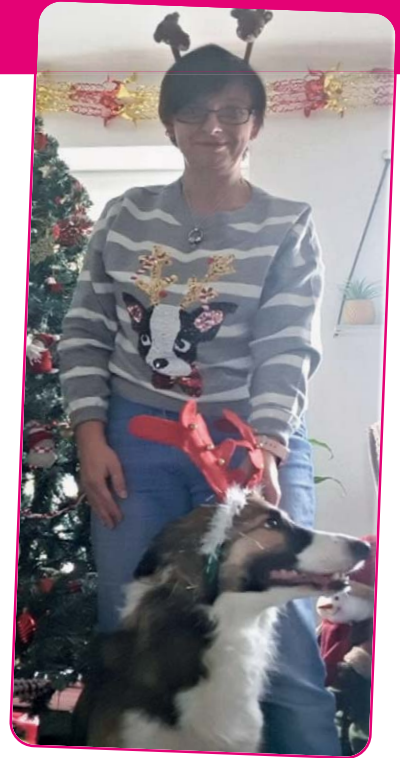
What keeps you going through the day?

Plenty of coffee! Only joking, the not knowing what sort of calls I'm going to receive and I also enjoy problem-solving. I like to put my Miss Marple hat on and investigate discrepancies the branches ask me to review. I also enjoy helping branches and clients with any issues they may have with the Web systems and training new administrators.

What is a good day for you?

A good day for me is knowing that I've helped people which could range from assisting with training to supporting

branches that haven't used the systems before. I've gone out to branches in the past and undertaken one-on-one training which I enjoy. I also like learning the systems and passing my knowledge on to the branches.



Linda Hartley & Cassie

A bit about myself

I worked at Sainsburys for 10 years when my children were growing up. When my youngest started full-time school in 2000, I started a job at Network Midlands as a Branch Administrator. I then secured the Senior Branch Administrator role looking after nine branches' administrators and covered their holidays, sick absence, etc. Network Midlands was taken over by SMS Agencies. As part of the reorganisation my role changed to Compliance Officer and the branch network increased to 34 offices. SMS Agencies was then taken over by The Best Connection and my role changed to looking after the Web systems. I enjoy helping other people and feel that I am approachable even if it's not Web-system related - which is really nice.

Outside of TBC, I love spending time with my three year-old grandson, Noah. He is fantastic and makes me laugh! He's such a lovely little boy and so precious. I also enjoy taking my mad dog, Cassie for walks.

The first office baby in CPA Canada!

Congratulations to Jacqueline Dime, Senior Recruitment Consultant, CPA Recruitment in Canada, on the birth of her beautiful daughter, Penelope Kay Rodaway. Penelope was born on July 26th at 10:30am and weighed in at a healthy 6lbs 6oz.

"Penelope is doing really well and is an absolute joy of a baby," said Jacqueline. We wish the Dime family all the best!

Jacqueline with baby Penelope



TBC Supplies Victorious Festival for 7th year

The rockstar team at TBC Portsmouth have, for the seventh year running, been busy supporting the Victorious Festival by providing 79 temporary staff to help with litter picking and cleaning.

The annual music event, which ran from Friday August 27th to Sunday 29th, hosted around 65,000 festival goers each day and featured a star-studded line-up of pop and rock royalty.

Festivals of this size require an immense amount of organisation and coordination



Beautiful Portsmouth in all its glory looking across to the Isle of Wight!



Jake Hughes with world-famous Mick's Monster Burgers.

and cleaning up forms an essential part of the operation. This was a big undertaking and important to the success of the event.

The entire Portsmouth team headed up by Cee-Jay Jones, Divisional Manager and Jake Hughes, Senior Consultant, worked tirelessly to onboard the staff required for shifts across the festival weekend, covering days and nights. Once the temporary workers were recruited, the team had several meetings with the organisers to ensure they were happy that their expectations would be met. These included completing Covid rapid testing for all staff, issuing passes

and being onsite at various points throughout the day and night to check-in the staff.

The final activity was processing the payroll, which generated the branch a healthy return.

As a 'Thank You', the team were treated to 'Micks Monster Burgers', which is located in a picturesque part of Portsmouth.

Local news coverage of the festival mentioned how good the clear up was.

Well done team Portsmouth. A sterling job and great endorsement from the local press!

TBC Inc. goes Tik Tok

Mirroring the UK, the employment market in Canada is buoyant. So too is the labour shortage! In these challenging times, when supply is struggling to meet demand, creativity takes centre stage to find a solution. At TBC Inc., the team have turned to the power of social media to make themselves and job opportunities known.

"We are experiencing one of the most difficult times in the industry in recent years here in Canada. We have lots of work available, however, there is a shortage of workers in Ontario. Faced with this challenge, we have been exploring new ways to attract new candidates," explained Elliot Mendoza, Operations Manager, TBC Inc.

As part of the team's review, they have focused on developing an effective social media strategy, which now includes the

social media platform, TikTok. This popular video sharing app, which is better known for its more amusing uses including dancing, comedy and education, will give the team access to a broader audience.

"After researching other campaigns, we set about making our first video. We knew it had to be catchy with appropriate content as there is a 15 to 30 second limit on video length. It is early days, but we have seen results already having filled several open positions. Our clients are also noticing we are on the Tik Tok platform," added Elliot.

With a growing number of global organisations beginning to use this platform, The Best Connection Inc. believes the timing is right to post.



Harloveleen Randhawa from Woodbridge branch

EU Settlement scheme may remain open – indefinitely – but rules apply!

With over 6M applications received (31st July 2021), the EU Settlement Scheme must be considered a resounding success – but not all eligible applicants have come forward.

Despite the Government's relentless focus on 30 June 2021 as the final day for applications, the Home Office has said that it will remain open for years to come to help those making late applications and those with pre-settled status looking to 'upgrade' to settled status.

People can still apply for settled or pre-settled status!

Late applications, however, are discretionary. This means that applicants must explain and prove why they were unable to apply before the deadline. The Home Office caseworker will then assess whether the applicant falls under one of the categories of reasonable grounds to make a late application and decide whether to accept this application.

How is an application made after the deadline?

Late applications can still be submitted using the EU Exit: ID Document Check app or online, in the Government website, if the applicant has a valid ID. If not, they must request a paper application form. There will be an additional question in the late application form asking about the reason for applying late.

What happens if they do not apply?

After 1st July, anyone who resides in the UK without a valid immigration status is here unlawfully. As there is no obligation for retrospective checks for existing employees, missing the deadline to apply for a status will not necessarily result in a dismissal. They will, however, face difficulties if they decide to

change their job, as at that point they will be asked to prove their right to work in the UK.

The 28-days rule

If a UK authority finds that they have missed the EU Settlement Scheme deadline, they will be given 28-days' notice to apply. This will be recorded by the Home Office and if they do not submit an application within that time, they might be removed from the UK. It is important to highlight that this will still be considered a late application and be bound by the same rules on late applications mentioned above.

What happens to late applicants waiting for a decision?

The Home Office announced temporary protection for those who submitted a late application to the EU Settlement Scheme. Those people will be able to prove their right to work by generating the Share Code using their digital Certificate of Application or via Employer Checking Service.

Free support in applying to the EU Settlement Scheme is still available. Please refer anyone with questions/queries to the local support organisation

www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-community-support-for-vulnerable-citizens/list-of-organisations



Fantasy Football -



It's time to blow those whistles and wave the scarves! The 2021/2022 SWS Premier League is up and running! This year the league will be contested by a wonderful 79 managers. After the first few games of the season the leader board has some familiar names, but they are not dominating proceedings as there are only 39 points between 1st and 10th place.

Most of the teams jostling for the top spot have very similar squads that include three or four of the following players: Benrahma (WHU), Sanchez (BHA), Salah (LFC), Shaw (MUFC), Alexander Arnold (LFC), Lukaku (CFC) and Antonio (WHU). This week, however, there was a rush on transferring a 'newbie' player called Ronaldo (MUFC)! Managers will certainly need to be on the ball when it comes to picking the cheaper, less well-known players for their squad and to select the right captain for those double points to keep hungry rivals at bay.

Latest Standings

1	Seaton Saviours	Shaun Seaton	Scunthorpe	325
2	Arteklers	Joe Williams	Bradford	311
3	Ben10+1	Chris Durham	Derby	308
4	Long Dong Silver	Andy Nutall	Stockport	306
5	Buendia Like Beckham	Charlie Manger	Sheffield	301
6	Crowfish Athletic	Paul Crocock	Taunton	299
7	JMB XI	Jack Murray-Bedding	Oxford	295
8	M&M	Tom Meakin	Earls Court	292
=9	The Unbearables	Robert Southworth	Nuneaton	286
=9	Rotterdam 82	Andy Redfern	Topaz	286
=9	Crouch Potato	Oliver Darley	Topaz	286

Aviation Connection



Compliance team ready to fly

As we break free from the travel restrictions that have manacled the travel sector, TBC's Aviation Connection will be ready to support its clients as more and more planes take to the skies. As part of the preparations, TBC welcomes a new compliance team, based out of Gatwick Airport, who will be responsible for ensuring temporary workers are pre-vetted and 'aviation ready'.

The team offers a fully CAA and Dft compliant service that will undertake and oversee the vetting of aviation workers for The Best Connection, supporting the branch network and above all, making sure customers receive the best possible service.

In order to prepare all TBC temporary workers to be passed 'aviation ready' the compliance team will oversee essential training covering Aviation Security, Cargo Handling and bespoke client packages and undertake screening checks including job references covering five years, criminal records and counter terrorism checks.

Let us introduce you to the new all-star line-up Aviation Compliance team.

Charlotte Coughlan - Aviation Divisional Manager

Julie Rawlings - Compliance Administrator

Emily Smith - Compliance Administrator

Natalia Uzun - Compliance Administrator

Shivani Shukla - Compliance Administrator

If you have any questions about developing the Aviation business in your branch, please contact the team.

Aviation Connection 01293 515333

aviationconnection@thebestconnection.co.uk



L to R: Natalia Uzun, Emily Smith, Julie Rawlings & Charlotte Coughlan



Alice Cartwright

Alice is queen of canvassing

We are delighted to recognise Alice Cartwright from TBC Exeter for her Q2 canvassing competition win in the Consultant and Senior Consultant category. Alice, who was recently promoted to Senior Consultant, isn't afraid of rolling her proverbial sleeves up to find some great business opportunities.

Alice joined the Exeter team on 1st July 2019. She was tasked with building the recently formed IND2 plan. Since joining the company, Alice has consistently converted good volume clients with excellent profit

margins to create a healthy plan. In doing so, her focus has helped Alice win Darren Pollard's Q2 regional sales competition.

"Alice's consistently high level of performance over the past two years has led to her being promoted to Senior Consultant in July, a promotion that is thoroughly deserved. Congratulations Alice," said Paul Crocock, Area Manager.

Many congratulations Alice and good luck with your continued success.

Dartford comes bouncing back!

In 2020, the double whammy of Brexit and Covid19 presented the business sector with a unique set of challenges. This translated into market uncertainty and in some instances a significant downturn in demand for temporary staff. The Best Connection was not alone in having to navigate an unfamiliar landscape that was changing daily. Whilst some sectors involved in the delivery of essential services fared well, others were laid bare to market forces, leading to staff being furloughed or made redundant.

Across the UK, TBC's branches were forced to re-evaluate requirements and work practices. One such example was TBC Dartford. The opening of a second Industrial plan in the latter half of 2019 was met with a drop in demand caused by the pandemic. In response to this, in April 2020, the decision was made to merge DAIND2 with DAIND1.

"It wasn't something that we wanted to

do but with a reduction in branch staff because of furlough and a significant drop in demand, it was the option that made the most sense.

"DAIND2 followed a standard TBC template with a range of local clients with varying levels of demand across numerous industrial sectors. Our intention was always to re-open the desk as soon as clients' requirements increased and Covid restrictions allowed," explained Selena Holloway, Branch Manager.

Fast-forward to June 2021. Selena's reassessment of the market suggested that the time was right to re-launch DAIND2. Following a review of DAIND1 client base, companies were identified that would form the foundation of the second industrial desk. Since its re-opening, the desk has seen an increase in demand week-on-week which bodes well for the future.

Selena Holloway



Fleetmaster Wins Safety Awards

Fleetmaster triumphed in two categories at this year's Brake UK Fleet Champions Awards picking up both Fleet Safety Innovation Award and Fleet Safety Product Award for its Driver Risk Management System, My DRM. A huge congratulations to the team for all your hard work, success and recognition.



The UK Fleet Champions Awards recognise and celebrate the work and dedication of fleet organisations that strive to reduce road deaths and injuries and decrease pollution caused by work vehicles.

To add a little more icing to the cake, Fleetmaster also received a Highly Commended in the Fleet Safety Partnership category with its customer, British Gas.

"The team at Fleetmaster are delighted that My DRM has taken top spot in two categories at the Brake UK Fleet Champions Awards this year. We are dedicated to making the roads safer by helping our customers to mitigate risks through the consolidation and analysis of driver data and related records. The awards are even more special given the tough 18 months we have all endured," commented Jamie Boocock, Director.

Fleetmaster offers



Electric Vehicle driver training

The UK Government's decision to cease the sales of petrol and diesel engines after 2030 has a number of implications for fleet managers. When is it the right time to update to electric and what training is required to ensure safety? Despite the pandemic, electric vehicle (EV) sales in the UK rose significantly in 2020. Fleet Managers are clearly starting to add EVs to their stock. So, where does training help in the transition?

EVs are different to conventional internal combustion engine driven vehicles so it is important that drivers are made familiar with vehicle differences. Equally, targeted training can have a significant effect on safety and efficiency.

To address this soon to be burgeoning market, Fleetmaster has been working closely with manufacturers and industry experts to develop a range of industry-

leading training options. Courses have been designed to familiarise drivers with EVs and to reduce risk across the fleet. Training can be delivered in various ways including practical and online sessions. Bespoke courses can also be designed and delivered to meet specific requirements.

One of the early adopters of Electric Vehicles in the UK is British Gas. The company has partnered with Fleetmaster to deliver its EV training.

"As the UK's biggest power company operating one of the largest vehicle fleets in the country we are leading the drive to change to electric vehicles. We have committed to electrifying our fleet by 2030.

"We have worked with Fleetmaster for over 15 years as our driver training

provider, so it makes sense to partner with them in our drive to a greener future. They have fully embraced the EV culture and have written industry-leading courses around our needs to educate our drivers.

"They do a very efficient and professional job with all our driver training through a variety of accredited courses and I would have no hesitation in recommending them," said James Rooney, Fleet Engineering & Innovation Manger at British Gas.

"We are delighted to continue our partnership with British Gas. They have embraced the change to Electric Vehicles and we are working alongside them to develop courses that will maximise performance and safety across the fleet," explained Jamie Boocock, Director, Fleetmaster.

Paul Midwood joins Fleetmaster

Please welcome Paul Midwood to the SWS Group. Paul has joined Fleetmaster as a Senior Licence Acquisition Trainer with responsibility for taking the driving academy to the next level!

"We currently have two rigids, one artic and two B+E vehicles and my aim is to double this fleet in the next 12 months," says Paul.

With over 15 years' experience in the driving industry, Paul made the leap to become a trainer six years ago and has never looked back. His ambition is to become the Licence Acquisition Manager and to run two DVLA Test Centres under the Driving Academy banner.

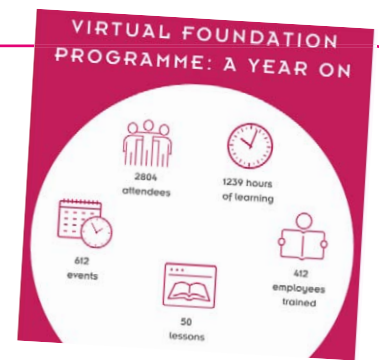
"I am delighted to have joined the team at Fleetmaster. The potential in some of the new contracts we have won recently is very exciting and I am looking to grow the licence acquisition element within them and to make a difference to the growth of the company," added Paul.

In his spare time, Paul enjoys spending time with his daughter and going to watch his favourite team, Huddersfield Town. Welcome aboard Paul!



Paul Midwood

Virtual Training is a Real-World Success!



As a business that believes passionately in training, the reality, borne out of the pandemic, was a cessation of traditional face-to-face sessions for the foreseeable future. This posed some serious challenges for the training team. What could be used instead? How would this alter the delivery of courses? What new skillsets were required? With many employees now working from remote locations, the team turned to video technology to solve the problem and so emerged the virtual classroom.

Twelve months ago, we reported on the Foundation Programme going virtual. Since then, the training team have been on a journey of discovery learning how best to design and deliver courses to a dispersed audience. They began by delivering 17 virtual events which replaced the familiar six face-to-face training days that had been undertaken in this way for over a decade. The transition has been a great success, but it hasn't been a walk in the park – lessons have been learnt on both sides of the camera!

Challenges faced

The first factor to note, face-to-face settings are totally different to a virtual environment.

When your audience is physically located in a room and present over a number of days, it is an ideal environment for building rapport, reinforcing key points and testing if delegates have understood key learnings. It also fosters camaraderie.

Delegates in remote settings can have a lot of distractions to contend with, making concentration more difficult so virtual training requires a little more creativity to keep everyone fully engaged. Despite the challenges, however, our stalwart delegates have adapted amazingly to the new way of training and have made it work.

Continuous Improvement in action!

"Even trainers learn! There is nothing more insightful than receiving feedback from delegates. This has been an important part of developing and building on the early sessions we delivered. Knowing what worked and what didn't has helped to shape content enormously. There have also been occasions when the team have found that an activity that worked well in a face-to-face training environment fell short in the virtual world," explains Jodi Johnson, Group Training and Development Manager, TBC.

Scheduling also became a learning curve for the team. Initially, the team offered dates for people to 'self-serve', but this planning approach quickly became problematic. As a result, the decision was made to schedule events for everyone. The timely launch of Recruit has helped to make this process much easier. The team now have a clearer view of people joining the company and their start dates. New starters also have access to Learn from day one and can see the training allocated to them and the events scheduled.

eLearning

It's not just the virtual events that have been reviewed, the team have learnt so much about the creation of eLearning and the importance of linking everything together to create a cohesive 'learning journey'.

For the first time the team now has dedicated eLearning design resource in Jo Davies and Bilal Uddin. They are instrumental in making sure that our future training offering is best in class.

The Future

What does the future of training provision look like?

"Virtual delivery is very much a part of what we do now and will be a consideration when designing new content, however, face-to-face delivery has not disappeared and the training team look forward to welcoming people back to Halesowen in the future," added Jodi.

Review & Reflect

Neil Yorke, Director, says: "As part of an ongoing review process, the training team are carrying out an assessment of existing training offered in the first 12-18 months with the aim of providing more targeted, ongoing support for both new starters and their managers. The starting point has been improving courses so that they are more relevant in a post-Covid world. In this context, the following elements are under review."

Sales methodology – the team will be looking at the sales training methods to ensure they are useful in helping people win good business.

Content creation - the team will work closely with stakeholders and 'subject matter experts' within the business to make sure that the needs of the business are met.

Apprenticeships – a focus on becoming an employer-provider of apprenticeship delivery, leveraging the strengths of the support teams.

Modular training - the team will work together to build future programmes, modular in nature, that give individuals and managers the power to shape some aspects of the learning programme to suit their needs.

Self-service - controlled reintroduction of self-service for event booking providing individuals with access to a wide range of virtual events.

Since the virtual training approach was adopted, 48 different events have been delivered including administration training to support the customer service and business administration qualifications, Driver Tech, competency-based interview training and most recently, Core Skills.

The team have delivered 100s of events clocking up nearly 3,000 attendees!

Alex returns after short redundancy

For TBC's Alex Rijo the summer of 2020 was not a great time from a work perspective. Due to the downturn in demand for temporary workers in the Ashford region owing to the pandemic he was unfortunately made redundant after joining the HGV desk a little under a year earlier. Life, however, is not always predictable and as luck would have it, a change in market demand meant the Ashford branch needed him back just a couple of months after saying farewell.

Thankfully, Alex was still available and keen to re-join the team and was re-hired in October 2020 as a Consultant on ASHGV1. The team were sad to see

Alex go and had said that as soon as an opportunity became available, they would be in touch. And they were true to their word!

Since getting back into the thick of it, Alex has played a major part in rebuilding the HGV desk by generating lucrative new business opportunities across multiple sectors from refuse and recycling to delivery of construction materials and logistics.

We are delighted the story has a happy ending for Alex. Welcome back to the team and congratulations on making the most of your new situation.

Alex Rijo



Dan Edginton first to the post in South-West sales contest!



A huge well done to Dan Edginton, Divisional Manager, Birmingham driving division B3, for winning the Q2 South-West sales competition in the Divisional Manager & above category. It was a tight run race by all accounts, but Dan managed to pip others to the post to scoop the prize – which he looks delighted to have received!

“The result is particularly rewarding as it’s Dan’s first quarter in the manager’s league since being promoted to Divisional Manager in April this year,” said Sharon Latif, Senior Manager.

Dan is now leading the B3 team and has three new members of staff; Gemma Bowdler, Ben Dovey and Katia Alves and he’s looking forward to seeing what results his new team can achieve.

Good luck for Q3 Dan - we will no doubt be hearing a lot more from you in the future!

Dan joined TBC in 2007 based at the Walsall branch but was unfortunately made redundant when the recession hit in 2009. Dan then re-joined the business in 2010 before transferring to TBC Birmingham as a Senior Consultant in 2015. He was promoted to Divisional Manager in April 2021.

Jade Craig takes on Recruitment Administrator role

Please welcome Jade Craig to BCS Melksham who joins as Recruitment Administrator. Great to have you on the team Jade!

Prior to joining Bailey Care Services, Jade was an HR Apprentice and has completed a Level 3 Business Administration qualification.

“As a result of the pandemic I was unfortunately made redundant and spent some time looking for the right role. That was when I came across the advert for a perfect role at Bailey Care Services on Reed,” explains Jade.

“I applied and was delighted to receive a phone interview. I was then invited in for a face-to-face interview. The same

day, I was asked to undergo a trial to see what the role would involve and was thrilled to be offered the job! The entire process was smooth and stress free, which definitely helped with my confidence on my first day.

“I have been with BCS for several months now and can honestly say I have loved every second! The office has a calm and positive vibe, where I know I can ask questions and feel included. I very much look forward to progressing and growing BCS as a business,” added Jade.

Here are a few fun facts about Jade. She tells us that she is extremely family orientated and a major Harry Potter fan



Jade Craig

(proud Gryffindor!). Jade also has a golden retriever called Yogi who often features in Jade’s social media posts!

BES upgrades access control at Herman Miller

Access control technology, using biometric verification, has come on leaps and bounds over recent years. Applications, such as facial recognition, can now be used to identify an employee with amazing accuracy making it very efficient to monitor people's comings and goings and whereabouts.

When SpeedFace became available to the SWS Group, Bailey Employment Services (BES) Branch Manager, Shaun Chilton, had just the right candidate in mind - Herman Miller. Herman Miller Inc. is a well-known American design and manufacturing company that produces office furniture, equipment and home furnishings. The business has a heritage

stretching over 100 years and is a prestigious Onsite account for BES.

To determine the viability of the product's potential introduction at Herman Miller, Shaun consulted with TBC's Senior Project Manager, Scott Meredith and his team. It was clear that SpeedFace would introduce significant benefits so the project was agreed, pitched to the client who decided to move ahead and the hardware was ordered.

The project implementation was scheduled to take around eight weeks, however, due to the heroic efforts of Account Manager, Amber Lowman, over 100 workers' facial scans were uploaded



Amber Lowman with SmartFace terminal

in just 48 hours which enabled the system to go live in double-quick time!

Congratulations to Shaun, Amber and the support team for making it all happen!

Lidl Partnership Blossoms in Doncaster



L to R: Robert Semeniuk, Wayne Henshaw, David Findlay (Lidl Warehouse Manager) & Gabriel Sirghie

The team at TBC Doncaster have been tasked with providing retail giant, Lidl, with 75 additional warehouse operatives at its flagship site in Doncaster. The new recruits will be hired on a temporary to permanent basis.

Under the stewardship of Wayne Henshaw, TBC Divisional Manager, the Lidl relationship has blossomed and is now a successful onsite partnership supported by Gabriel Sirghie, Senior Project Manager and Robert Semeniuk, Contract Co-Ordinator.

Before the new starters step into their roles in November, the TBC team will be undertaking inductions and worker site tours to familiarise candidates with their new environment.

Frankie Minichiello receives promotion to DM

Congratulations to Frankie Minichiello from TBC Taunton on being promoted to Divisional Manager. Very well-done Frankie!

Since joining The Best Connection in 2017, Frankie has consistently produced new business, helping to grow both of the industrial plans in the Taunton branch as well as building a solid client base across a broad spectrum of customers.

Frankie's new business conversion rate has ensured he is leading the way in Darren Pollard's regional sales competition. And, from what we are told, he will take some catching after a flying start converting a key client at the

beginning of the year that had previously used a competitor for 13 years! That's the spirit Frankie!

As part of the client's transition to TBC, Frankie and the team worked with Onsite Connection to assist with the process. This included the installation of a new, state-of-the-art and Covid-friendly face scanner and a T&A system. These additional services not only enhanced TBC's standing with the client but also prompted some glowing reviews.

"I am delighted to receive this promotion, but realise we still have work to do developing the team, which in turn will ensure the Taunton branch

continues to be the market leader in the Somerset area," said Frankie.



Frankie Minichiello

SWS VACANCIES

SWS Featured Vacancies

In addition to the featured roles below, more jobs with full descriptions can be found at:

www.thebestconnection.co.uk/joinus/

The **Best**
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Contract Manager
Opportunities are available
in the following TBC client
locations:
Sheffield and Stoke

The **Best**
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EMPLOYMENT GROUP 

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

Banbury • Basildon
Hereford • Swansea

The **Best**
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**Training and Development
Consultant opportunity**
available in Halesowen
To support delivery of the
Apprenticeship & Foundation
programme

The **Best**
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EMPLOYMENT GROUP 

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

Bristol, Bedford, Cambridge,
Manchester, Nottingham,
Northampton, Peterborough,
Southampton and
West Bromwich



CPA
Permanent Senior/Recruitment
Consultants

The **Best**
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EMPLOYMENT GROUP 

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

Chelmsford, Croydon,
Gloucester, Luton, Liverpool,
Newport, Romford,
Stoke and Truro

The **Best**
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Management Opportunities
are available in our
TBC Blackburn and Stoke
branches

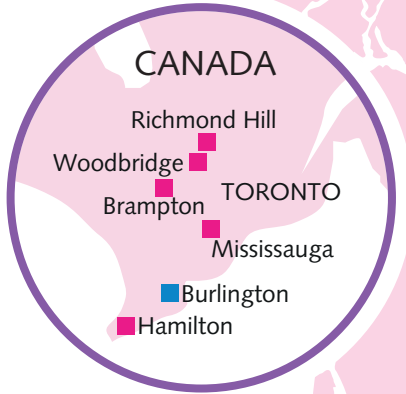
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We also have a
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covering multiple contracts
throughout
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Want more details?

Please contact Andy Guest on 0121 504 3065
or email andy.guest@thebestconnection.co.uk

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● Proposed



Paper from sustainable forestry