

## Connect with us!

To support the launch of our new range of programmes, we've been busy investing in IT and a new and improved web based infrastructure. We want BEST customers to have access to the most up to date facilities on their journey into employment. We'd like the partners, employers and customers with whom we work to be able to better connect with us, so you can now keep in touch in the following ways:

 Join us on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/best-train](http://www.facebook.com/best-train)

 Why not connect with us on Linked in:  
[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

We look forward to connecting with you!



# best connected

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**BEST launch new range of programmes**


## Our offices

To find out more about BEST and our services please contact:

**Our Freephone Number:**  
 Call 0800 0482770

**Or our Head Office:**  
 Call 0113 2458360

 Email [info@best-train.com](mailto:info@best-train.com)

 Fax 0113 2439913

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## Who are we?

BEST is a leading provider of recruitment services for employers and jobseekers. We have a passionate team of experts who help hundreds of individuals and employers every day delivering the right package of support when it's needed most.

## Did you know?

We have been delivering our services across Yorkshire and the Humber for over 23 years and have supported thousands of jobseekers and employers during that time. We're proud to be delivering the Government's new flagship Work Programme as part of our package of employer support.

## How can we help?

Because we are funded by the Government, we can offer an innovative range of no cost solutions to both individuals and employers.





## A warm welcome to the new edition of Be Connected!

In this issue, we will be sharing lots of news from BEST, shining a spotlight on our successes and letting you know how our range of services can support you.

2011 has been an exciting year for BEST, bringing a number of contract wins, new premises and fresh ways of working to move more people into sustainable employment. In West & South Yorkshire, we're delighted to be delivering the Government's new Work Programme, and across Yorkshire & the Humber we will be offering various placement activities for customers through our Mandatory Work Activity programme.

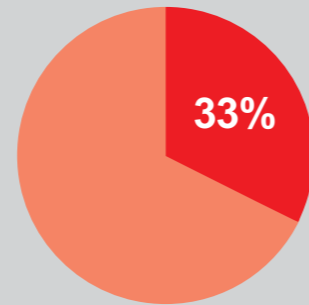
We know that working in partnership with employers and stakeholders is key to shaping the way we deliver our programmes and ensuring we remain responsive to the needs of the local economy. We look forward to working together in the coming months.

Michelle Manson, Managing Director, BEST

We're proud that:

We supported **29,000** customers towards their journey into sustained employment last year

We work with over **8,000** regional employers through our partners and supply chains



As we go to press **33%** of BEST's workforce come from priority groups of the long term unemployed, lone parents and people with disabilities. 12% of our employees have a disability.

Last year we provided **9,200** work placement opportunities for our customers with a range of employers, of which 2,352 offered benefit to the community.



This year we are **23** years old!

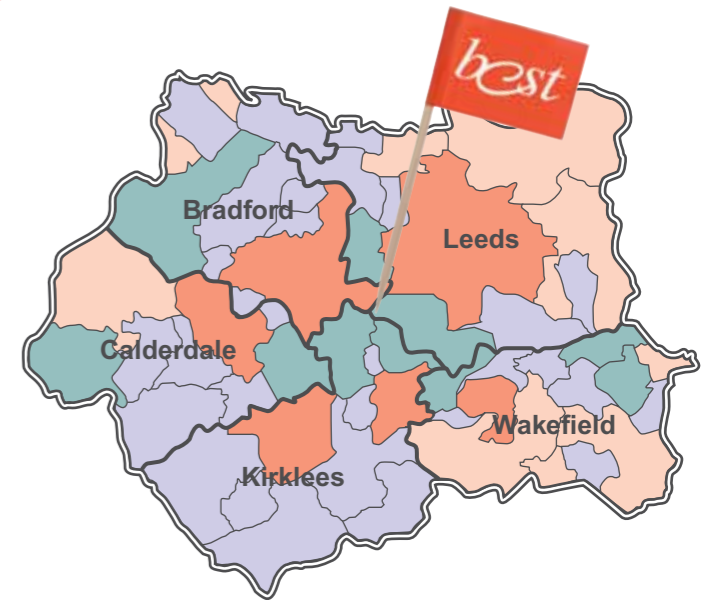
## BEST wins The Work Programme in West Yorkshire

We're thrilled to have won one of two contracts to deliver The Work Programme over the next 5 years, across all districts of West Yorkshire. As the centrepiece of the Government's welfare reforms, The Work Programme offers an exciting opportunity to help even more people into sustained local employment and support them once they are in a role. Working with a highly experienced supply chain we have the opportunity to deliver services in a more responsive and flexible way than ever before.

### Our Partners

Our delivery partners include A4e, Skills for Work, Remploy and Workwise. The programme will also see us working with a number of specialists and partners including the Citizens Advice Bureau, to provide additional support to customers.

Not only are we delivering The Work Programme in West Yorkshire as a Prime Contractor, we will be working with a fantastic team at Ingeus Deloitte who are delivering the second Work Programme Contract in West Yorkshire. The Work Programme will be rolled out in partnership with Job Centre Plus in June 2011 and is part financed by the European Social Fund.



### Working with Employers

Working with employers and employer bodies is going to be crucial to ensure our package of training opportunities provide customers with the skills local and regional employers are looking for. Our delivery model has a strong sector focus and we want to ensure we are part of the solution to economic growth as we recover from a recession across the region.

## Everything you need to know about...

### MWA, Yorkshire & the Humber

Widening our reach, BEST was recently awarded the new Mandatory Work Activity Programme across Yorkshire & the Humber.



### What's it all about?

Over the course of four weeks, customers claiming Jobseeker's Allowance will be given the chance to experience the disciplines required by today's employers. Through placements that support the local community, customers will learn what an employer needs from their staff. The placement also prepares them to access the support on offer by Jobcentre Plus and their partners. BTCV; North Yorkshire Learning Consortium; Hull City Council and Sector Solutions will all play a big part in supporting us to deliver this service.

## BEST and Serco in South Yorkshire

We're pleased to announce that BEST will be delivering The Work Programme in South Yorkshire through a subcontract with Serco.

Serco is an international service company that improves the quality and efficiency of essential services that matter to millions of people around the world. BEST will work hand in hand with the team at Serco and the partners who will be supporting the model in South Yorkshire. The contract offers us the chance to build on our work with employers in the area to deliver a truly creative and responsive programme.



## BEST and JHP

Adding to our portfolio of services, from June 2011 BEST will be working with JHP to provide support to individuals through the delivery of Programmes for the Unemployed which will be funded by the Skills Funding Agency.

### What does that mean for local people?

Targeting those who are newly entering unemployment, these programmes will provide customers with training opportunities and qualifications to both update existing skills and develop new ones that are responsive to the changing needs of the UK economy. We are very much looking forward to working with our colleagues from JHP to deliver this programme over the next 15 months.

## Hot off the Press!

In May 2011, BEST hosted various free events across our offices to celebrate the 20th Adult Learners' Week (ALW). Taking place annually, ALW aims to inspire thousands of individuals to give learning a go by offering a range of innovative activities and sessions. One of our events gave customers the opportunity to pick up a number of new IT skills!

In 2010 an estimated 100,000 adults engaged in over 4,000 learning events across the UK. As a result, 57% of those who took part, enrolled on, or applied for, a course showing just how impactful these events can be! We were delighted to take part in the UK's largest festival of learning.



# Thackers: keeping their powder dry in the recession

With a client list that boasts Wembley Stadium, powder coating specialists Thackers Commercial are flying the flag for Yorkshire business. Employee Tony Oram and MD Andrew Wilkinson explain why recruitment headaches are old news



**Tony Oram**  
Employee



### Tony, it sounds like you're doing a great job! Can you tell us about it?

I'm involved in labouring. That includes cleaning and hanging the aluminium and keeping the shop floor pristine. I'm also a fork lift operator. I started on a work placement and got a permanent job after Christmas-it was a great start to the New Year! Like any job it has its ups and downs, but the best thing about Thackers is being part of such a close team.

### How has the support you received at BEST helped you?

It's made a big difference. I was unemployed for two years before I was referred to BEST by Jobcentre Plus. I was forty seven and thought I'd never get a job. BEST helped me identify and build my skills and supported me into the opportunity at Thackers.

### Finally Andrew, would you recommend BEST to other employers?

I already have! I'd like to thank BEST for what they've done for Thackers.

**Andrew Wilkinson**  
Director



### How do you work with BEST?

We recruit people who work hard and fit our ethos which prepares us for the tough times-it means we deliver well and helps retain our customers. We often use work placements to provide working interviews for BEST customers: they get to 'try us out' and vice versa. It avoids costly mistakes and ensures candidates find the right job. Tony came to us from BEST two years ago and is a valued colleague.

### Andrew, can you tell us about Powder Coating?

Powder coating is a process of electro-statically applying ground resin and pigment powder to most surfaces for a highly resistant finish. We coat everything from brackets to buildings in every possible colour!

### What's the best thing about your job?

I'm living the dream. I work with people I've grown up with and come to work every day with a smile on my face. I'm proud we're a premier supplier of powder coating in the North.

### What's the main benefit?

I get real satisfaction from seeing people through their career journey with us.

**BEST helped me to identify and build my skills and supported me into the opportunity at Thackers**  
Tony Oram

Laptop image ©iStockphoto.com/Dean Turner Workers ©iStockphoto.com/Johnny Greig

# A day in the life

Paul Almond first came to BEST to train in IT. Today he works at BEST as a Work Choice Job Coach and Broker. Here, Paul shares with us a typical day, why he's passionate about his job and why it could be next stop The Ashes!



**8.30am**

I start the day with a placement visit. Work Choice not only helps people with disabilities get back into work, we provide on-going support to the customer and their employer once they're in a job. I'm visiting a customer who has Autism. On my last visit we agreed a daily schedule to help him improve his multi-tasking skills: I'm pleased at today's feedback from both customer and employer on how well he's contributing to the team's performance.

**10.30am**

It's back to our offices where I speak to an employer who's considering recruiting a candidate. Occasionally employers have a negative perception that they might incur additional costs by employing people with a disability or long term illness. They also worry that people with such conditions may take more time off than others in their team. In our experience, the opposite is true: being so keen to re-enter the job market, our Work Choice customers usually become particularly loyal, competent employees. There's also a host of support available which BEST can help employer's access. I promise the employer to shortlist some candidates I know will suit his needs.

**11.15am**

I get a call from a 20 year old customer I've been working with. After battling serious illness, he wants to get back into work. It makes my day when I hear that through our employer partnership work he's got a job with Tesco Express!

**11.30am**

Next, it's a 1-1 with a customer: we work on her CV and talk through some job opportunities we've found for her.

**1.00pm**

After lunch I run a Job Club. We help customers find job opportunities online, share CV writing skills and job search ideas, as well as tackling barriers they might face in finding a role.

**4.00pm**

I meet with my team to talk through our cases - a real mix of people who are both pre and post-employment.

It's then off to my weekly cricket game. We're not the best team ever, but I love it!



## Delivering Work Choice

**BEST works with PLUSS to deliver the Government's Work Choice programme in West Yorkshire.**

**Kevin Nash of Pluss says: 'We're pleased to work with BEST and all our sub-contractors to ensure customers with a disability are given every opportunity to progress into employment.'**

**Chris Dye**  
Regional Manager  
**Netto**



**When he's not at a match, Netto Regional Manager and Liverpool fan Chris Dye is working hard in stores across Yorkshire.**

**Q What does your role involve Chris?**

**A** Compared to other supermarkets our customers can save 20% on their weekly shop. We do that by offering quality with no frills. My job's to manage profitability, improvement and recruitment.

**Q What's the working environment like?**

**A** We work like a family - if someone has an issue colleagues help them. A caring approach runs across Netto, from the donations of fruit and bread we make to school breakfast clubs, to our Healthy Eating Campaign. Everyone gets stuck in, so the key thing we look for when recruiting is a team player.

**Q How do you work with BEST?**

**A** We work with BEST to recruit in all 13 stores I look after. One of the challenges at Netto is consistently allocating resources to train staff who have different skill levels when they join us. BEST supports us in this by carrying out pre-employment training. I like the fact that we often find people who may not be the best interviewee in the world, but are more than capable of doing an outstanding job once they're given the chance to show their skills.

**Q What's the best part of your job?**

**A** The best bit is seeing a great team develop. Our recruitment & retention rates with BEST have been a real success and I hope that will continue as Netto becomes part of the ASDA group.

## Life's Sweet on the Sheffield Art Scene

**Opportunity Sheffield provides impartial advice to small, medium and large employers, helping them develop and retain their workforce. BEST is a key partner of Opportunity Sheffield.**

**Brief: to help The Old Sweet Shop, 'Purveyors of Independent Local Art', move to the next level.**

You could be forgiven for thinking of Humbugs and Candy Kisses, but The Old Sweet Shop is in fact an accessible gallery space and shop, showcasing local independent artists and giving them a commercial platform.

**Owner Emma Hudson says:**

'Artists appreciate that through us they can sell their work locally and customers know they're supporting local people by buying from us. We also work with arts related projects in Sheffield such as Art for Health at Sheffield Children's Hospital.'

**Strategy: to grow the workforce**

Employer Advisor Specialist, David Bradford saw opportunity to grow the business by recruiting a new employee. He helped Emma with a growth strategy and supported her in everything from recruitment to work trials.

**Result: 'The service was invaluable'**

'It was a relief to talk to someone who was so knowledgeable, friendly and had a real interest in helping my business.'

David gave me professional advice that can be hard to find out about on your own when you're busy running a business' says Emma.

The Opportunity Sheffield Programme is supported financially by Yorkshire Forward & the European Union. The project has attracted £7.2 million investment from Yorkshire Forward, including £1.8m from the European Regional Development Fund as part of Europe's support for the region's economic development through the Yorkshire & Humber ERDF Programme.