

GTA England news

Christmas 2014 / New Year Edition issue

What's in this issue?

Page 1
Christmas and New Year message (Continues on page 2)

Page 2
Apprentice of the Year Finalists off to Austria!

Page 3
Trailblazers almost a year on.....
Important dates for the diary

Page 4
PEO e-Learning Support from EAL
Stop Press

Page 5
New Futures Recruitment

Christmas and New Year message from the Lorna Unwin, Chair of GTA England

I'm sure I don't need to tell you that this has been another challenging year for GTAs given the very tough funding climate and with yet more reforms to apprenticeship on the way. Although there are signs of economic recovery, some areas of the country are clearly doing much better than others so the level of employer demand for training and broader business support will vary. Yet, as I come to the end of my first year as Chair of GTA England, I'm hearing many more voices of optimism than when I took office last January. We have the highest number of members since GTA England was formed in 2009 and more organisations are applying to join. I'm determined to ensure that GTA England maintains momentum on two fronts. First, as a membership organization, we have to get even better at consulting and listening to you, not only about the support and services you need, but also to make sure your ideas and expertise are being relayed to policymakers. Second, GTA England has to continue to impress on policymakers the vital and distinctive role that GTAs play

locally and nationally as employer-led organisations. I'm happy to say that this year we have achieved a number of successes on both fronts.

- **Trailblazers:** GTA England is now recognized as the representative of SMEs by the blue chip employers responsible for developing the new Standards for Aerospace, Automotive, Food and Drink, and Marine. This has meant SMEs have been participating in the process. BIS wants GTA England to be closely involved with the new generation of Standards in other technical and service sectors.
- **Funding:** We have played a key role in ensuring the allocation of the highest government contribution in band 5 of £17k (to be supplemented by employer contribution of £9k) and in advising BIS on potential funding models.
- **Policy Reviews:** We have been invited to join the Perkins Review of Engineering and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Apprenticeships.
- **External Grant:** We secured funding from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation to appoint a Network Development Manager.
- **Training Officer course:** This is a key means of differentiating GTAs. The first course has received excellent feedback and more are planned.

Continued on page 2.



Apprentice of the Year Finalists off to Austria!



Is it really two months ago when we all met at the Houses of Parliament for the GTA England annual conference?

We were delighted with your responses to the introduction of the Apprentice of the Year Awards. At the conference we announced a special treat for each of the eight finalists (four from Engineering / Construction sectors and four from Business Services).

Since the event GTA England premium sponsor, WNT (UK) have confirmed that the itinerary includes flights to Memmingen in Bavaria and 2 nights and 3 full days away in February 2015. A further article will feature the trips to state of the art manufacturing

plant in Austria and logistics operation in Germany.

Reflecting on the conference, Amy West, winner of the Engineering / Construction Apprentice of the year said, "Spending the day in the Houses of Parliament was a great experience and I feel extremely proud to have won my award. I would strongly encourage anyone who is aiming for a challenging and exciting career to undertake an apprenticeship"

Bobby Duff our Apprentice of the year for Business Services said, "The 14th October was an exceptionally special day, which will be cherished for many years.

The day as a whole was superb.

The venue was amazing, and I feel very honoured to have been a guest at the Houses of Parliament – but to also be invited to sit-in the GTA England Conference – this was very intriguing; as I got an understanding of the larger picture for apprenticeships: information discussed, further up the hierarchy."

Tony Pennington, MD at WNT(UK) has confirmed a commitment to reviewing next year's trip and, subject to budgetary considerations, offering the experience to the finalists of the 2015 GTA England Apprentice of the year – better get a bigger mail box for the applications from members!

Continued from page 1.

- Peer Review: We have created PR Leads and Co-ordinators from within the GTA network to enhance and expand this vital service for members.
- First 'Outstanding' GTA: South West Durham Training was declared 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.
- Apprentice of the Year Awards: We launched this very successful and inspiring event at the House of Commons in October.
- Membership Fees: Finally, and perhaps most importantly (!!), due to budget savings, there will be no fee increase in 2015, indeed a reduction from 2014.

When you're raising a glass this Christmas, please say 'Cheers' to GTA England's Chief Executive, Mark Maudsley, whose hard work and persistence has underpinned many of these achievements. Mark is getting greyer (!), but he, like me, is feeling even more enthusiastic about the potential of the GTA network. I'd also like to thank the members of the GTA England Board for the important part they've played in these achievements and their unflagging determination to promote GTAs. I'm looking forward to visiting many more GTAs in 2015 so that I can learn more about the work you are doing and the challenges you face. I hope you have a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Trailblazers almost a year on.....

I attended my first meeting of employers involved in Trailblazing the new Apprenticeship standards in January 2014. With a degree of trepidation and uncertainty I approached the first aerospace and automotive meetings involving the great and the good of major blue chip and market leading organisations (I daren't start listing all these companies for fear of missing any one out!). We currently have representation on Aerospace, Automotive, Food and Drink and an exciting, and much needed, cross-sector approach to Machining involving the High Value Manufacturing trailblazer.

However, my concerns evaporated as I very quickly realised that these colleagues were in the process to improve and stretch current arrangements to produce young people with broader and state of the art skills that their companies and the economy requires.

I remain impressed with the energy and commitment of the trailblazer groups and with the employers' tenacity to build on the best of current practice, as well as trying new approaches – the foundation gateway, the employer sign-off process, and synoptic assessment in Automotive immediately spring to mind.

Given our members concerns that the Trailblazer plans and enhanced standards should be cognisant of the needs of SMEs, GTA England has been

encouraged by employers to involve them closely in discussions. We have held consultation events with our members' employers including SMEs on numerous occasions and the outcomes have always been welcomed by the Trailblazer groups. Most importantly, our members' employer views have been embraced in the development of the detail of the standards and in underpinning Employer Units of Competence contained in the Employer Brief.

Throughout the year, I have been fortunate enough to call upon members' expertise on many occasions, including MGTS, NWTC, Training 2000, and here is what Alliance Learning say about the experience:

"Alliance Learning has worked with GTA England to support both the Aerospace and Automotive Trailblazers throughout the year. We have valued the opportunity to contribute to recommendations for the content of the employer-led standards. It has been particularly beneficial to have offered a number of our employers including SMEs, the opportunity to influence these important developments."

As we roll forward into the New Year and with the need to develop an increasing number of new apprenticeship Standards, there will be continued opportunities for participation. We have just secured the involvement of NITAL for Tool making, as well as the Mersey Maritime Group and PETA for Marine. This is in addition to circulating the Machining standards to all GTAs for consultation with their SMEs. I look forward to working with you in 2015 to ensure that our collective GTA expertise and distinctive perspective continues to play a central role in the Standards' programme.

Important dates for the diary:

January 2015

- GTA Board Meeting – attended by Olly Newton BIS
- Board meeting with Peter Lauener, CEO SFA and EFA
- Training Officer course 1 (day 2 13th January)
- Siemens PLM software workshop (Alliance 16th January)
- Launch of Higher Apprenticeships and "Women into Engineering" thematic groups

February 2015

- SWDT journey to grade 1 (5th February JTL Training Centre, Mill Wharf, Mill St, Aston Birmingham B6 4BS)
- Apprentice of Year Finalists trip to Austria
- Derwent Training Peer Review (nominations to form team now open)

March 2015

- Peer Review training course – free for members (17 & 18th)
- Training Officer course 2 (Day 1 12th March; day 2 28th April) - Free for members

PEO e-Learning Support from EAL

- EXCLUSIVE GTA England member's only trial

EAL (Excellence, Achievement & Learning) is delighted to make available, exclusively to GTA members, a complimentary two-week preview of an e-learning package designed to support the knowledge aspect of three mandatory units from PEO L2.

As the specialist, employer-recognised awarding organisation for engineering and manufacturing qualifications, EAL greatly values its close working partnership with GTAs and GTA England. Our relationship enables us to continually develop our understanding of your needs, ensuring our products, services and support, bridge skills gaps and provide opportunities for your learners to reach their highest potential. We value your opinion and feedback and hope you share your experiences of the preview as you views help shape our future development.

Learners are able to complete on-line modules and challenge their knowledge with a series of end tests. With reduced delivery time and new interactive 2D and 3D environments, learners are able to develop and shape their knowledge, mapped to the following units:

- Working Safely in an Engineering Environment (QPEO2/001)
- Carrying out engineering activities efficiently and effectively (QPEO2/002)



- Using and Communicating Technical Information (QPEO2/003)

And:

- Complying with Statutory Regulations and Organisational Safety Requirements
- Using and Interpreting Engineering Data and Documentation
- Working Efficiently and Effectively in Engineering

GTA centres may also take advantage of a 15% discounted rate on the £1,000 package (exc. VAT) providing one year's access and unlimited licences, to the interactive world of PEO.

Please contact James Wootton, jwootton@eal.org.uk, to arrange your complimentary two-week trial or get in touch with our Customer Services Team on **customer care@eal.org.uk** or **01923 652 400** to discuss the yearly licence option.

STOP PRESS

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Trevor Alley, CEO South West Durham Training as the GTA England Quality Improvement coordinator. More next month but please book 5th February in your diary. Trevor, will be delivering an event detailing SWDTs journey that has led to a grade 1 award by OFSTED. Trevor will be supported by Rebecca Campbell, ATG-Training, in delivering sessions on the themes identified as best practice in the report

Vocational Education & Training providers have the Apprenticeships but where are the young people?

New Futures Recruitment has been offering specialist recruitment services to the Vocational Education & Training Sector since 2008. Charlene Hoskins, the Operations Manager, explains how they developed their unique Apprenticeship Advertising model to attract the best Apprenticeship candidates for clients.

"In our role as a specialist a recruitment consultancy for Vocational Education & Training providers, we work closely with National, Regional and Local Training Providers as well as Further Education Colleges.

"We became aware that a problem common to the majority of Apprenticeship Providers that we work with is attracting candidates in sufficient numbers and of sufficient quality to meet the demands of employers that might have Apprenticeship vacancies.

"Obviously all Apprenticeship Vacancies are posted on the AV website but if that does not generate the appropriate response what next? Then it came to us, why don't we apply our expertise and resources to help our clients find the perfect apprentice candidates.

"We developed a fixed price advertising product that allows providers to advertise their vacancy across

all of the major generic, sector and geographically specific internet job boards, as well as social media outlets. Because of the economies of scale that we enjoy in purchasing such advertising, we can offer this at a fraction of the price that it would cost if done directly.

"Adverts run for four weeks and all applicants are passed directly to our clients, subject to any initial screening requirements requested. Once they have filled their vacancy, other suitable candidates can be used to fill other Apprenticeship Vacancies or in other programmes at no extra charge."

Exclusive to GTA England members, the service is available for a fixed charge from £150 + VAT with a full refund guaranteed in the unlikely event that no candidates apply.

If you would like more information about New Futures Recruitment and their Apprenticeship Advertising Service please contact Charlene Hoskins on **02392 696568** or e-mail **choskins@newfuturesrecruitment.co.uk**. For more information please visit the members area on the website to view the flyer. If you refer to this article you will be entitled to a 25% discount on your first advertised vacancy.

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Contacts

Mark Maudsley,
GTA England CEO
mark.maudsley@gtaengland.co.uk
Tel: 07837 832 996

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