

## SKILLS TRAINING HELPS TAXI FIRM MOVE UP A GEAR

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A Derbyshire based company is moving up a gear after encouraging staff, aged from 24 to 78, to complete an NVQ Training Programme.

Family-run Dovelin Cars, of Doveridge in Ashbourne, took advantage of business support from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) that helps businesses identify skills gaps and source appropriate training solutions.

Dovelin Cars employs 10 people, most of whom have now completed the NVQ Level 2 in Road Passenger Transport. The training, which had a focus on special needs transport, was tailored by *GoSkills* - the Sector Skills Council for Passenger Transport - and provided by Leicester College.

One of the successful employees is 25-year-old Alison Waring. Alison, who has a learning disability, completed her NVQ Level 2 to gain her first-ever qualification. This achievement will help her in role as an escort for disabled children travelling with Dovelin Cars during the school run.

Proud Alison said:

"I'm pleased I did the course. It was quite a lot of work but I feel more confident now as I learned about safety issues and what to do in different situations."

Another employee, 78-year-old Norman Whittingham, was initially sceptical. Lifelong driver Norman, who has worked with Dovelin for more than five years, said:

“I surprised myself. I think the training is a good thing because it makes you aware of the responsibilities you’ve got and what you need to be able to do.”

Proprietor Karen McCartin, who runs Dovelin Cars with her mother, said:

“This programme has made a real difference. We have two disabled access vehicles, 60% of our business is contract work with special needs and there is more emphasis on best practice so we wanted to raise our skill levels. It has increased the confidence of staff and made them more aware of situations they may face at work. Awareness of customer care has improved greatly as a result of it. “

Paul Fleming, East Midlands Business Adviser for *GoSkills*, said:

“There has been a significant outcome from this training and it has also had a positive impact on the lives of the individuals. Learning has to complement the operational needs of the company and in this case it worked extremely well.”

Stewart Cook, Regional Skills Development Manager, of the Learning and Skills Council, said:

“This is an excellent example of how training can help an organisation. Developing your workforce, from the most basic to the most advanced skills training and from practical and language skills to business skills really does make an impact on business competitiveness.”

Employers can access support to develop and train their employees through the Train to Gain Service.

For more information on Train to Gain telephone 0845 057 1817, text TRAIN to 64446, register at [www.iwanttotrain.com](http://www.iwanttotrain.com) or visit [www.traintogain.gov.uk](http://www.traintogain.gov.uk)

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

1. Photographs of Norman Whittingham at work are available. Contact Helen Clarke at GNN or download from [www.gnn.gov.uk](http://www.gnn.gov.uk)
  2. The Learning and Skills Council exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.
  3. Train to Gain is a new service run by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Train to Gain aims to improve productivity and competitiveness by making sure employees have the right skills to do the right job through: an organisational needs analysis, by making recommendations on the most relevant training and providing best value for money.
  4. The brokerage service for Train to Gain in the East Midlands is provided under contract to the LSC, by East Midlands Business Ltd (EMB); a joint venture partnership formed by Derbyshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire Chambers of Commerce.
  5. The government commissioned report into skills published by Lord Leitch in December 2006 called for a radical overhaul in adult training and warned that the UK's skill base was lower than many international competitors.
5. *GoSkills* received its licence to operate as the Sector Skills Council for Passenger Transport from the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) in October 2004. Its mission is to be the leading authority on skills issues for the passenger transport sector. For its first year of licensed

operation it received a high grading from the SSDA in the annual assessment. *GoSkills* sector coverage encompasses aviation, bus, coach, taxi and private hire, community transport, rail, trams, driver training and transport planning.

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