

PRESS RELEASE

BUSINESS GIFT FOR MORE THAN 560 LEICESTERSHIRE FIRMS

6 AUGUST 2007

Newly trained forklift truck operators rose to the occasion to celebrate today's first anniversary of Train to Gain, a service funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to help businesses succeed.

Leicestershire's Brett Landscaping, based near Loughborough, is one of 569 organisations from across the county to benefit from Train to Gain during the past year. The service aims to help companies identify and fill skills gaps within their workforce. It offers them the chance to use the skills of a specialist Skills Broker to improve their business performance by training their employees. Over 3,800 employees from across Leicestershire have accessed training worth over £5 million during the past 12 months.

Production manager, Duncan Robertson explained how the training came about. He said:

"We have a long serving workforce and we are always looking for ways to improve and update their skills, particularly when it comes to operating mobile plant machinery. Our external trainer, Keith Cook Training Services, had heard about Train to Gain, so we decided this would be a good way to kick-start our training plans. Twenty four employees are now doing NVQ Level 2 in Plant Operations, which includes operating a forklift truck, as our work involves moving block paving and heavy slabs.

“Thanks to the Train to Gain service and the help and advice from our Skills Broker James Lund, things have gone very smoothly – so we’re delighted to be involved in their first anniversary celebrations! James has also discussed a wider training plan, such as managerial training, which is something we would consider in the future. He can find all the relevant information and contacts, therefore doing all the hard work for us!”

Train to Gain Skills Broker James Lund said,

“The company were obviously serious about training their staff as they had already had an external trainer on board, so they are a great example to other companies.

“Through Train to Gain, Brett Landscaping were able to set up these specialists NVQs and I look forward to working with Duncan and the company in the future on wider training issues.”

All companies in Leicestershire can access the Train to Gain service either by taking the Skills Pledge - a campaign to inspire people to improve their skills - or by contacting the Train to Gain helpline direct. Developing skills across the county is vital if we are to increase productivity, support advances in enterprise and innovation and improve our economic well being.”

For more information on Train to Gain telephone 0845 057 1817, text TRAIN to 64446, register at www.iwanttotrain.com or visit www.traintogain.gov.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. Photographs of Brett Landscaping celebrating the Train to Gain birthday are available. Contact Jo Sheppard at GNN or download from www.gnn.gov.uk
2. Train to Gain is a 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.

3. 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.
4. The Leitch Review of Skills, published in December 2006, warned that the UK must 'raise its game' on skills at all levels if it is to sustain and improve its position in the global economy. The Skills Pledge fulfils a key recommendation made in the review, at the heart of a new 'deal' where employers will be able to shape the skills system to meet their needs, in return for prioritising skills training at all levels.
5. The Skills Pledge is a voluntary commitment by employers to increasing the skills of their workforce for the benefit of the business.

**ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL BY
GOVERNMENT NEWS NETWORK EAST MIDLANDS. FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION CONTACT JO SHEPPARD AT GNN ON 0115 971 2781**