

Cheshire and Warrington Employers are Top of the Skills Race

Employers from Cheshire and Warrington join together in a celebration of skills at an event held at Chester Racecourse.

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Leading Cheshire and Warrington employers came together last week at Chester Racecourse to mark the success of their commitment to developing workforce skills. Hosted by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in the North West and the Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance (CWEA), the celebratory 'Racing to the Top' event demonstrated the achievements made by local employers in boosting the skills and employment prospects of thousands of employees across the local area.

Among the delegates were well known Cheshire and Warrington based employers such as Bentley Motors, HBOS and Vauxhall along with established local companies such as The Dane Housing Group and Edmund Nuttall. The event marked the proactive growth and development of such companies through LSC funded programmes including Apprenticeships and Train to Gain, which provide subsidised training opportunities for employees to gain industry recognised qualifications while they work.

Liz Davis, LSC Director of Area for Cheshire and Warrington comments, "We are urging other organisations to follow the lead of local employers such as Bentley Motors and the Lynton Group who have made the LSC's Skills Pledge and publicly

committed to support their workforce in developing basic skills and working towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2, which is the equivalent of five GCSEs at grades A-C. Such a commitment is a proven step in the right direction for employers who wish to reap the benefits of a better qualified and more motivated workforce.”

Margaret Cheshire, Head of Learning and Organisational Development at Bentley attended the event and comments, “It is clear that the LSC’s aim of improving workforce literacy and numeracy and encouraging staff to gain qualifications fits perfectly with our organisation’s overall business plan and our goal to improve skills and capability. As a company we have been very successful and we want this to continue. Our view is that the only way we can achieve our goals is to develop our people, as ultimately they deliver our success.”

David Pickering, Vice Chairman of CWEA said: “We need employers in Cheshire and Warrington to be effectively developing the skills of their employees if the sub-region is going to further improve its productivity and economic performance. Through the establishment of a Cheshire and Warrington Employment and Skills Board, showcasing case studies of effective good practice in skills development and using these employers as “Skills Champions” to help us encourage other organisations to do more in terms of skills development, our aim is to significantly improve the skills base of Cheshire and Warrington and therefore increase the area’s economic prosperity”.

Liz Davis continues, “The Racing to the Top event was a great opportunity for us to highlight the excellent work going on within local companies and to champion a number of Cheshire and Warrington employers as leading the way in raising skill levels. Many of those who attended, provide a great example of the success that

can be gained by harnessing the potential of employee training programmes, such as Apprenticeships and Train to Gain, to other employers in Cheshire and Warrington and indeed across the North West.”

Ends

**Caption: David Pickering, Vice Chairman of CWEA and Liz Davis, LSC
Director of Area for Cheshire and Warrington**

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC 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.

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