

If you have any business news:  
 contact:  
 Phone:  
 email:

Anthony Barej  
 (01992) 526644  
 anthony.barej@hertsexnews.co.uk

# THE BUSINESS



Visit: [hertfordshiremercury.co.uk/business](http://hertfordshiremercury.co.uk/business)  
 Like us: Facebook/[hertfordshirenews](https://www.facebook.com/hertfordshirenews)  
 Follow us: twitter@HertsMercury

## IN BRIEF

### Car company clinches gong

**BROXBOURNE:** A car hire company won a gong at the Scottish Passenger Agents Association Annual Travel Awards.

Broxbourne-based Affordable Car Hire was voted best supplier by the Scottish travel trade community.

CEO Angela Day said: "We are absolutely delighted to have won the award for Best Car Hire Supplier at the SPAA awards."

"As a company, we strive to go the extra mile for our customers wherever possible and are always seeking new and innovative ways in which we can improve our service offering."  
 ■ For more information, visit [www.affordablecarhire.com](http://www.affordablecarhire.com)

### Awards launch

**HERTFORDSHIRE:** The county's Chamber of Commerce launched its annual awards.

The Inspiring Hertfordshire Awards are open to members and non-members of the chamber, and aim to recognise business achievement in the county.

A launch event took place yesterday evening at Hanbury Manor, Thundridge.

Categories include Achievement in International Business, Excellence in Customer Service, Excellence in People Development and Most Promising New Business.

■ For more information, visit [www.hertschamber.com](http://www.hertschamber.com)

### An event invite

**HERTFORD:** Entrepreneurs are invited to learn about crowdfunding at an event.

The event, hosted at Hertford Castle by the town council, features guest speaker Jonathan Littlewood, who will speak about funding projects using small donations from a range of people.

The event will start at 6pm on Thursday, January 7, with networking, nibbles and wine, followed by the crowdfunding presentation from 7pm.

■ To register for the event, visit [tinyurl.com/ocyuole](http://tinyurl.com/ocyuole)

### Online florist

**CHESHUNT:** Last week we mistakenly reported that Lynne's Florist had closed down.

It is now operating as an online-only business, and staff can be contacted by calling (01992) 624848, emailing [info@lynnestflorist.co.uk](mailto:info@lynnestflorist.co.uk) or visiting [www.lynnestflorist.co.uk](http://www.lynnestflorist.co.uk)

We are happy to set the record straight.

# Mind the gap: skills deficit in borough

## Initiative set up to address skills and qualifications gap

By Martin Ford

[martin.ford@hertsexnews.co.uk](mailto:martin.ford@hertsexnews.co.uk)

AN INITIATIVE has got under way, aiming to bridge a skills gap in Broxbourne borough.

The Skilling Broxbourne project is an offshoot of Ambition Broxbourne, the borough council's drive to improve the local economy.

It aims to create 6,300 new jobs, including some in "highly-skilled industries" at Park Plaza in Waltham Cross.

However, the council's scrutiny committee was told at a meeting last week that the borough's workforce lags behind in formal academic qualifications.

Max Jackson, economic development officer, told councillors that the number of residents with an NVQ level four (the equivalent of a university degree) and those achieving five or more A\* to C GCSE grades is lower than the national average.

### Skills

The borough's skills base needs improving to access the newly-created jobs.

More qualifications also leads to higher income levels and reduces the welfare bill, his report added.

Councillor Cody McCormick, himself a teacher, said: "We have an education system some would say is not fit for purpose and not producing the skills we need."

"It's a huge challenge."  
 However, Mr McCormick added: "The fact we are identifying this now will only serve us better in the future."

The flagship project in schools is the Dragon's Apprentice for second-



**HOT TOPIC:** Haileybury Turnford School students at the Dragon's Apprentice Challenge launch

ary school students and its junior incarnation for primary schools.

Led by Broxbourne and East Herts CVS, it partners groups of students with a business mentor and charity, with the object of turning in a profit on a £100 investment.

The Broxbourne Enterprise Centre, due for completion at the end of 2016, is also planned to support 120 new businesses in its first year.

Mr Jackson said it fostered

entrepreneurial skills and helped engage young people sometimes alienated by traditional classroom activities.

Mr Jackson also described a recent scheme designed to get offenders back into work.

Funded through sponsorship, 25 people took on a work placement with a delivery firm, resulting in eight being offered full-time positions with the company.

A platform to promote apprenticeships, traineeships and work

placements led by Hertford Regional College is to be produced and rolled out from next year.

The council will also create a skills charter in 2016 for organisations in the borough, recognising and encouraging skills development.

Councillor Jeremy Pearce said: "We still have three jobs for every applicant."

"There's no difficulty getting a job, it's getting the right skills."

## CCG's chief executive is appointed



**NEW ROLE:** Beverley Flowers

A NEW chief executive of East and North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group has been appointed.

Beverley Flowers first joined the CCG in April 2014 as director of strategic partnerships and has been interim chief executive since September this year.

Before joining the CCG, she held a range of commissioning, partnership and contracting roles across health and social care

organisations in London and the East of England.

Dr Hari Pathmanathan, chairman of the CCG and a Hertfordshire GP, said: "I am delighted that Beverley has been appointed to lead our organisation."

"She has a real passion for commissioning excellent care for those 580,000 people who rely on us."

"We are a well-regarded CCG,

and Beverley clearly demonstrated that she has the skills, commitment and partnership working credentials, which we need to make further improvements."

Ms Flowers said: "There are many challenges facing health and social care in Herts."

"We need to do more to focus on ensuring we get the best possible outcomes for the widest range of people in our community."

## Restaurant shows it is reel deal

A RESTAURANT is angling for first place ahead of the 2016 National Fish & Chip Awards, organised by Seafish.

Lussmanns Fish & Grill Restaurants, which has a Hertford branch, will now fry off against Morrisons supermarket cafes in the race to have its fish and chips crowned the best in the country.

Over the coming weeks, the shortlisted businesses will be subjected to unannounced judging visits.

This final stage of competition judging will determine the overall winner that will be announced at an awards ceremony in London in January.

Widely considered as the 'Oscars' of the fish-frying industry, they celebrate the great British tradition of fish and chips, recognising the best talent, quality and choice offered by fish and chip businesses.

Criteria for entrants includes responsible sourcing policies and procedures, the development and maintenance of seafood supplier relationships, preparation and cooking techniques, menu development and customer service.

Lussmanns owner Andrei Lussmann said: "Once again, it's lovely to be noticed for our efforts in making high street dining both a premium and sustainable experience."

The corporate relations director of sponsors Seafish, Mel Groundsell, said: "The National Fish & Chip Awards showcase a diverse range of award categories, recognising everything from traditional takeaways to mobile operators, to excellence in training."

"With more and more pubs, canteens, restaurants and cafes serving fish and chips, it's important for us to recognise their contribution to the industry."

"This award aims to celebrate businesses that don't solely focus on producing fish and chips, but nevertheless go the extra mile to create the highest-quality fish and chips and provide customers with a great dining experience."

"The finalists have shown great commitment and passion for our industry. Their effort is commendable, and I'd like to wish them all the best for the final."



**BREAKING NEWS ON OUR WEBSITE**  
 ■ For breaking news  
 VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[hertfordshiremercury.co.uk](http://hertfordshiremercury.co.uk)

**AN: Event Services**  
 Part of the Local World group

NOW TAKING BOOKINGS  
 FOR 2016 - 2017

Staging your event doesn't have to cost a fortune...

AN Event Services provide audio visual equipment and support for all your event needs. We offer a professional and experienced approach with pre-show, on-site and post-show technical support

Whatever the event,  
 we've got it covered

Call us on: 01684 575832 • Email us at: [enquiries@aneventservices.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aneventservices.co.uk) • Visit us at: [www.aneventservices.co.uk](http://www.aneventservices.co.uk)

