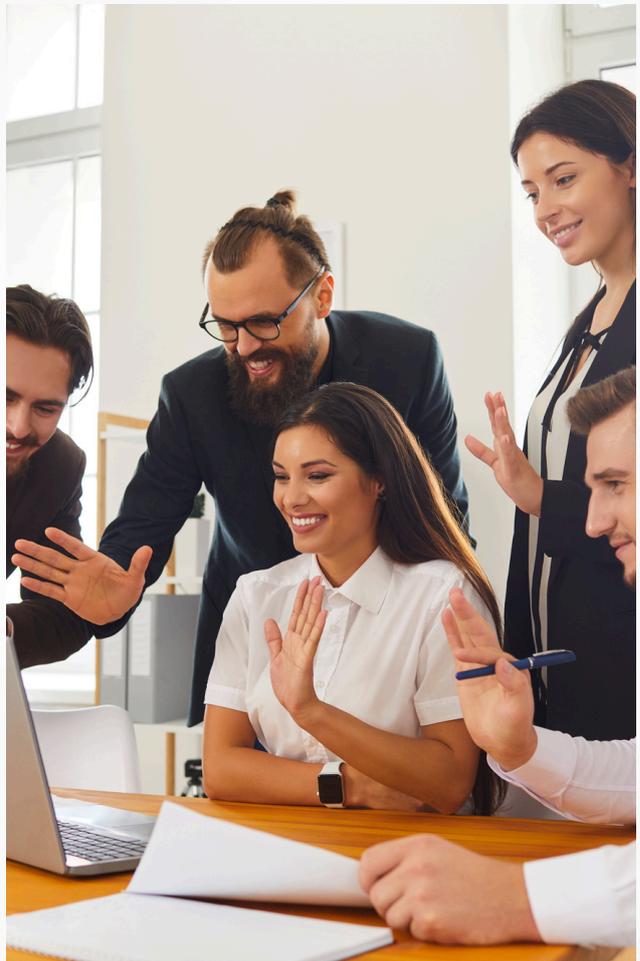


MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



FEBRUARY 2026

NEWSLETTER

HARROGATE COLLEGE

Mayor welcomes Harrogate College rebuild to boost skills and growth

David Skaith has visited the construction site of Harrogate College's £22 million redevelopment, marking a major milestone in the creation of a modern campus designed to support future skills and regional growth.

During his visit to the Hornbeam Park site, the Mayor viewed progress on the project, which will replace the main teaching building and introduce a new technology centre. The upgraded campus will feature industry-standard facilities, including a digital technology suite with VR capabilities, a mock hospital ward, electric vehicle workshop, advanced construction centre, and renewable energy training hub.

The redevelopment aims to strengthen training opportunities in key sectors such as digital, construction, health, and renewable energy—helping to equip learners with the skills needed by local employers and supporting economic growth across York and North Yorkshire.

David Skaith said the college plays a vital role in enabling young people to build careers locally, adding that the new facilities will ensure learners and businesses benefit from high-quality education and training for years to come.

Harrogate College Principal Danny Wild welcomed the Mayor to site and highlighted the importance of the investment in expanding provision, supporting emerging industries, and continuing close collaboration with employers to meet regional skills needs.

Supported by £20 million in funding from the Department for Education and £2 million from Luminate Education Group, the rebuild is being delivered by Caddick Construction and is expected to be completed for the 2026/27 academic year.





Pass has been shortlisted for best tech solution

We're proud to share that Pass has been shortlisted for a Team Award at the Sector Supplier Awards 2026.

Best Tech Solution

This category recognises teams whose technology is delivering real impact – improving outcomes, driving efficiency, and enhancing the experience for providers and learners across the sector.

Being shortlisted is a fantastic achievement and reflects the dedication of our team and the meaningful difference we strive to make every day.





KLEEK
APPRENTICESHIPS

The three-way partnership that shapes every apprentice

This month, Kleek Apprenticeships are highlighting the powerful three-way partnership at the heart of every successful apprenticeship – the employer, the apprentice, and the training provider.

This collaboration is making a real difference at The Phoenix Lounge in Harrogate, where salon owner Becky Rojan works closely with hairdressing apprentices Izzy Gentle and Ruby Sefton, supported by their educator Steve Clark from Kleek Apprenticeships.

From day one, Kleek supports both the salon and its apprentices – matching learners with the right employer, delivering hands-on training in the workplace, and guiding them through their qualification and End Point Assessment.

For Becky, apprentices are central to her salon's success:

"Apprentices are a key part of our team. They help maintain high standards and support the stylists every day. Steve is patient, encouraging, and adapts his teaching to each apprentice. It's incredibly rewarding watching them grow in confidence and develop their careers."

That ongoing support is led by educator Steve Clark, who works closely with both the salon and learners. He said:

"It's all about teamwork. Becky creates a supportive environment, and I guide the apprentices through their development. Watching them progress from nervous beginners to confident professionals is the most rewarding part of my job."

For apprentice Ruby, the personalised support has been invaluable:

"Steve has helped me grow in confidence and adapted his teaching to suit my needs. An apprenticeship gives you real experience, confidence, and skills you can't learn in a classroom alone."

Izzy agrees, highlighting the benefits of learning on the job:

"Training in the salon while earning and learning has helped me progress and develop my skills. It's a creative career that really builds your confidence."

This partnership between employer, apprentice, and provider shows how apprenticeships create real opportunities – helping learners build skills, confidence, and meaningful careers, while enabling businesses to grow their future workforce.





Gavin West: From apprentice to leader

In October 2025, Gavin West completed the Associate Project Manager Level 4 Apprenticeship with The Growth Company, achieving a Distinction and progressing into a leadership role at Co-op Group.

Initially unsure whether an apprenticeship was the right fit later in his career, Gavin soon found the experience transformative. The combination of on-the-job learning and practical application allowed him to build skills, reflect on his approach, and immediately apply new knowledge in a real work environment.

During his apprenticeship, Gavin was promoted from managing projects to leading a team of project managers. The programme strengthened his confidence, broadened his strategic thinking, and enabled him to challenge established processes and lead more effectively.

Balancing work and study required commitment, but Gavin adapted his learning into focused sessions that worked alongside his role. The result was not only personal progression but also clear benefits for his organisation, which gained a more capable and confident leader.

Now, Gavin actively supports apprentices across the business, sharing his experience and encouraging others to consider apprenticeships as a route to long-term career growth.

Reflecting on his journey, Gavin said:

"I'd absolutely recommend the Growth Company. The support was there whenever I needed it, and that made all the difference."





Groundwork UK transforms learner tracking with Cognisoft YETI

Groundwork UK, a national charity delivering training, employability support and community learning programmes, has improved the way it manages learner data and reporting by implementing YETI from CogniSoft.

Previously, Groundwork relied on spreadsheets to track learner progression, which became increasingly time-consuming and difficult to manage as delivery grew. Reporting across multiple programmes was complex, and maintaining oversight of learner outcomes and funding requirements required significant manual effort.

By introducing YETI, Groundwork moved to a centralised, cloud-based system that allows staff to manage enrolments, track learner progress, and generate reports from a single platform. Automated alerts, electronic forms and flexible modules have replaced manual processes, improving efficiency and visibility across programmes.

The transition was smooth, with the platform proving intuitive and easy for staff to use from the outset.

Groundwork said:

“YETI replaced spreadsheets and transformed our tracking. The system is easy to use and delivers exactly what we need to manage learners and reporting effectively.”

Groundwork selected CogniSoft after reviewing several providers, valuing the company’s personalised approach and responsive support. Being able to work closely with a UK-based team ensured the system could be tailored to their needs quickly and effectively.

Reflecting on their experience, Groundwork added:

“Our first impression was of a company that listened to our requirements and delivered a solution that worked for us straight away. The support has been reliable and responsive throughout.”

With YETI in place, Groundwork now benefits from improved data management, streamlined reporting, and greater confidence in meeting compliance and funding requirements.





NOCN developes Level 1 Award in Financial Literacy

This qualification was developed in response to identified need by Colleges to provide a bite-sized qualification which increases knowledge and awareness of money management for young people. This fits in with the clear government agenda, therefore the qualification has been developed in line with the UK Strategy for Financial Wellbeing, specifically the 'Financial Foundations' theme aiming for the target of 2 million more children and young people getting a meaningful financial education by 2030.

Development of the qualification was undertaken in collaboration with The Money Charity whose website can be found at <https://themoneycharity.org.uk/>

For over 25 years, The Money Charity has been the UK's Financial Capability charity whose vision is that everyone achieves Financial Wellbeing by managing their money well.

This is a fully resourced qualification; assessment workbooks and teaching resources are included. Discover more [here](#).





Apprentice and Apprentice Employer awards

Apprentices across the UK and Ireland are undertaking incredible work, and this is a chance to recognise it. With the aim of raising the professional status and profile of apprentices, the Apprentice Award will highlight the diverse role of apprentices working in physics-powered businesses.

The winner of the Apprentice Award will receive a prize of £1,000, a trophy and an invitation to a celebratory event. You can nominate yourself or someone else [here](#). Nominations close 27th March 2026.

Apprentice Employer Award:

The Apprentice Employer Award recognises and acknowledges physics-powered businesses who are demonstrating excellence in their approaches to ensuring apprentices receive an outstanding experience in the workplace.

The winner will receive a trophy, a certificate, and an invitation to a celebratory event. You can nominate yourself or someone else [here](#). Nominations close 27th March 2026.





Momentum is built in tough times, not easy ones

When demand falls and uncertainty rises, many organisations instinctively retreat – slowing investment, pausing development and focusing purely on short-term survival. But the organisations that emerge strongest are often those that do the opposite: they use difficult periods to build capability, strengthen their people and prepare for recovery.

Richard Pounder, Founder of Complete Lean Solutions, reflects on his experience at Toyota during a major downturn – a moment that shaped his leadership philosophy.

Rather than cutting capability, Toyota rebalanced work and invested in its workforce.

Employees were redeployed into improvement teams, training programmes and structured problem-solving activity. Operational roles were protected, standards were maintained, and hundreds of improvements were implemented while demand was low.

When demand returned, the workforce returned stronger – more skilled, more confident and more engaged.

Momentum is a leadership decision

In uncertain times, people look to leadership for clarity and reassurance. Silence and inactivity can erode confidence, while clear communication and visible leadership help maintain trust and direction.

Strong organisations focus on what they can control: developing skills, improving processes and strengthening operational discipline. Rather than viewing development as a luxury, they recognise it as an investment in resilience and long-term performance.

Training linked to real operational challenges builds both capability and confidence. It shows employees they are valued and reinforces a culture of continuous improvement.

Pressure reveals culture

Challenging periods expose organisational culture. In strong environments, leaders remain visible, collaboration increases and improvement continues. Small, consistent progress builds momentum – and momentum compounds over time.

When recovery comes, organisations that invested in their people are ready. They move forward with stronger teams, clearer processes and greater confidence.

Building resilience through capability

Complete Lean Solutions supports organisations to use challenging periods as an opportunity to strengthen performance and develop long-term capability. Through leadership development, Lean training and workplace improvement initiatives, businesses can maintain momentum and build resilience – even in uncertain conditions.

The lesson is clear: difficult times are not simply something to endure. They are an opportunity to invest in people, strengthen capability and build the foundations for future success.

Because when organisations continue to develop their workforce during tough periods, they don't just survive – they emerge stronger.



Textile Centre of Excellence Supports Skills England Visit to Bentley Motors

Last week, as part of National Apprenticeship Week, the Textile Centre of Excellence welcomed a strategic visit from Skills England to Bentley Motors. The visit highlighted apprenticeship delivery, future skills development, and long-term workforce capability planning within a world-class manufacturing environment.

Bringing together national skills leadership and industry expertise, the discussions showcased the impact of collaboration in creating sustainable, future-focused talent pathways. Conversations emphasised alignment between training provision, business strategy, and the evolving skills demands of modern industry.

A key theme of the visit was the central role of colleague development within Bentley's long-term vision. From early careers pathways to advanced technical training and compliance frameworks, skills development is embedded across the organisation. This structured approach ensures workforce capability is built strategically while maintaining exceptional operational standards.

The visit also highlighted the value of integrated training models connecting education, industry, and professional development. By linking apprenticeships, T-Levels, and workforce planning, organisations can create clear routes into highly skilled careers while boosting productivity and innovation.

For the Textile Centre of Excellence, seeing Advanced Upholstery Level 3 learners recognised within this wider skills ecosystem was a proud moment. Their progression reflects individual commitment and the effectiveness of high-quality technical training delivered in partnership with industry.

National Apprenticeship Week offered a moment to celebrate the impact of structured, employer-led development – recognising learners building careers and organisations investing in long-term skills growth.

We are proud of our partnership with Bentley and the achievements of our learners. Their success demonstrates what can be achieved when employers, training providers, and national skills organisations work together with shared purpose and long-term vision. Partnerships like these will continue to be essential in developing resilient talent pipelines and supporting the future of advanced manufacturing.





LSP's National Apprenticeship Week Celebrations!

As part of National Apprenticeship Week, we proudly celebrated the achievements of our learners by sharing a series of inspirational case studies as part of our learner competition. These stories highlighted the dedication, growth, and ambition of apprentices across our programmes, showcasing the real impact apprenticeships have on careers and organisations.

A big thank you to everyone who took part and helped us celebrate the incredible talent of our learners. These stories truly captured the spirit of National Apprenticeship Week, and we hope they inspire others to consider apprenticeships as a pathway to success!

All case studies can be found here: [Blog – Learning Skills Partnership](#)

	 “ Before joining, I had ambition, but not a clear pathway. Vistry gave me direction and a rewarding opportunity to develop within a major UK construction business. Apprenticeships are life-changing, especially for young people who want to break into competitive industries without the traditional routes.” Momchill Angelov Vistry Group Level 4 Construction Quantity Surveying Technician		 “ “This apprenticeship has given me the opportunity to earn while I learn, allowing me to gain hands-on experience as I work towards becoming a chartered surveyor.” “This apprenticeship has not just been a route into employment; it has been the foundation of a long-term, rewarding career in construction.” “For anyone considering an apprenticeship with LSP, I would encourage you to take the opportunity without hesitation.”
	 “ “One of the benefits of having an apprenticeship is that you get to network from a young age, building solid connections.” “Don't worry about what your friends are doing – just make your own choice that will give you the best outcome.” “This apprenticeship has massively helped my confidence as I am in the workplace day in, day out where I feel supported and encouraged by colleagues.”		 “ “My apprenticeship has given me a clear professional pathway, structured learning, and hands-on experience that I simply wouldn't get through classroom training alone.” “The apprenticeship has improved my problem-solving skills, communication, and professional judgement, opening new progression opportunities.” “If someone is thinking about joining LSP as an apprentice, my advice is simple: go for it.”



**ASKHAM BRYAN
COLLEGE**

From September 2026, we will be launching Higher Apprenticeships

From September 2026, we will be launching Higher Apprenticeships, offering Land-Based Higher Apprenticeships, will give us the opportunity to support the employers in the region to increase the level of expertise in their workforce as well as meeting local skills needs and employer demand.

We are specifically launching Level 4 Farm Manager, Level 4 Arboriculturist and Level 5 Golf Course Manager

All of our Apprenticeships can be found here - [Apprenticeships York - Browse Vacancies | Askham Bryan College](#)





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