

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



MARCH 2026

NEWSLETTER



Gateway Qualifications Staff Donate Over 200 Books to Support Prisons

Gateway Qualifications staff have donated over 200 books to support prison libraries as part of the Yorkshire Learning Providers Network's "Books for the Inside" campaign. The initiative responds to a growing shortage of reading materials in prisons and aims to improve access to books for people in custody.

The donation highlights the organisation's ongoing commitment to prison education, recognising the important role reading plays in supporting literacy, wellbeing and rehabilitation. Many prison learners study Gateway Qualifications programmes as part of their personal and educational development, making access to books particularly valuable.

The campaign was supported by staff, demonstrating a strong sense of social responsibility and collective effort. CEO Fabienne Bailey praised colleagues for their contribution, noting the positive impact the books will have and expressing hope that they will be widely read and enjoyed.

Overall, the initiative reflects a broader commitment across the sector to support learning opportunities in prisons and help individuals build skills for the future.

Read the full news story [here](#).





NBC Staff and Apprentices take part in the Great British Spring Clean

On 17th March, staff and apprentices from NBC rolled up their sleeves to take part in a litter pick in partnership with Kirklees Council, at Greenhead Park, supporting the national Keep Britain Tidy campaign and contributing to their ongoing studies in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Blessed with bright spring weather, the team spent the morning outdoors helping to improve one of Huddersfield's most popular green spaces. Volunteers collected a wide range of discarded items—some ordinary, others more surprising. Among the unusual finds was a discarded toy unicorn, adding a touch of humour and magic to the day's efforts.

Participants said the event was both enjoyable and rewarding, offering a chance to make a visible difference in the local environment while learning more about the social and environmental responsibilities of modern organisations. NBC plans to continue supporting similar initiatives throughout the year as part of its commitment to community engagement and sustainability.





KLEEK
APPRENTICESHIPS

Kleek wins 2026 Sustainability in Training & Apprenticeships Award

Kleek Apprenticeships is delighted to announce that we have won the Sustainability in Training & Apprenticeships Award at the 2026 Apprenticeship & Training Awards.

The prestigious Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony, held on 3rd March 2026 at the Liverpool Exhibition Centre, brought together apprenticeship providers, employers, and training professionals from across the UK to celebrate excellence in skills, training, and innovation.

This award marks a huge milestone for Kleek Apprenticeships, recognising the hard work happening across our academies to help the hair and beauty industry train, grow, and operate more sustainably. The team had a fantastic night celebrating alongside other organisations doing brilliant work across the sector.

Sustainability and quality training have always been at the heart of Kleek's approach. By embedding eco-conscious salon practices, innovative learning programmes, and responsible resource management into our training, the team ensures apprentices gain the skills they need while supporting a greener, more sustainable industry.





DestinationsPro is now being used by Learning Curve Group to understand success rates and find areas for improvement

DestinationsPro is a platform designed to support providers in effectively tracking learner destinations, giving clear insight into progression outcomes and long-term impact.

By capturing data on where learners move on to—whether employment, further education or apprenticeships—it enables organisations to better understand success rates and identify areas for improvement.

Learning Curve Group has adopted DestinationsPro, marking an exciting development and further strengthening its reach across the sector. This reflects a growing recognition of the importance of destination tracking and data-driven decision making, as providers look to better evidence outcomes and support learners beyond completion. Together, this highlights a continued commitment to improving visibility of learner journeys and driving positive progression outcomes.



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YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY

York St John have a new director!

Welcome to Amanda Selvaratnam, Director of Business Development and Knowledge Exchange

We are delighted to welcome Amanda Selvaratnam to York St John University as our new Director of Business Development and Knowledge Exchange. Amanda brings over 25 years of senior leadership experience across Higher Education and the private sector, with a strong track record in developing strategic partnerships, driving commercial income growth and leading large-scale organisational change.

Her career spans roles in scientific research, business intelligence and, most recently, senior knowledge exchange leadership at the University of York. There, she oversaw a £5 million HEIF portfolio, led major institutional initiatives to strengthen industry engagement, and co-founded Enterprise Works to support regional economic growth. Amanda also serves as Chair of Knowledge Exchange UK, reflecting her national reputation for collaborative leadership.

Passionate about creating opportunities for organisations and communities, Amanda is committed to strengthening York St John's role as a partner of choice for business, public sector, and regional stakeholders.





Heart of Yorkshire Education Group

Give Construction a Try Events Sparks Industry Ambitions

The Heart of Yorkshire Education Group recently hosted its annual Give Construction A Try (GCAT) event at Castleford College, welcoming over 200 pupils from sixteen local secondary schools. The event aimed to introduce young people to the wide range of careers available within the construction industry through hands-on activities and employer-led workshops.

Pupils took part in practical sessions including brickwork, plastering, scaffolding, quantity surveying and digital technology. Activities ranged from trimble laser scanning and plant simulators to emergency planning and building low-carbon Lego houses, offering a broad insight into the sector. The event was opened by Sam Wright, Principal and CEO of the Group, alongside Andrew Drisdelle, Civil Construction Director at headline sponsor Milestone. In his address, Andrew highlighted the diverse opportunities within construction and the vital role education plays in helping young people achieve their ambitions.

More than thirty employers supported the day, delivering interactive sessions and sharing industry expertise. Debbie Lee, Employer Engagement Manager at the Group, said the event plays a key role in helping pupils explore their GCSE options while broadening their understanding of future career pathways. She also thanked employers, schools and staff for making the event a success.

A strong focus was placed on promoting diversity within the industry. Kier delivered a dedicated session for female students, with Graduate Quantity Surveyor Hannah Jackson sharing her journey into construction and encouraging more girls to consider careers in the sector.

The event coincides with the completion of Castleford College's new state-of-the-art Construction facility, further enhancing opportunities for students to develop industry-ready skills.





**BISHOP
BURTON**
COLLEGE

Bishop Burton College shortlisted in prestigious Renewables Awards

Bishop Burton College is delighted to have been named as a finalist in the Humber Renewables Awards 2026.

We have been shortlisted in the Education Programme of the Year category in the sought-after awards.

Our entry was titled Decarbonising our Campus and focused on how we have:

- Implemented measures to decarbonise our estate
- Embedded sustainability into everyday learning and working practices
- Demonstrated leadership by sharing best practice across the education and land-based sectors
- Applied sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices on our college farm.

This activity all forms part of our overarching Sustainability Strategy, which outlines our whole college approach to sustainability.

The Humber Renewables Awards recognise organisations large and small, along with inspiring individuals helping shape a sustainable future.

The awards ceremony takes place at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hull on Thursday, April 30.

It follows the two-day Offshore Wind Connections conference, which aims to foster collaboration among stakeholders and provide insights into the latest industry developments.





Introducing Our New AI Awareness eLearning Course

We're excited to launch a new eLearning course designed to give learners a practical understanding of artificial intelligence and its role in today's workplaces. This short course explains what AI is—and isn't—covering key concepts, terminology, and trends in a simple, accessible way. It also explores common workplace uses of AI, tools employees may encounter, and its impact on productivity and employability.

For just £15, learners will gain insight into data's role in AI systems, the differences between AI, automation, and data analytics, and the importance of using AI responsibly. The course includes interactive activities, short quizzes, and reflective tasks, helping learners understand AI tools, their limitations, and ethical considerations like bias. Assessment is automated, and an e-certificate is awarded upon completion.

Tracey Patmore, Head of Products, said: "AI skills are becoming essential across every sector. This course offers a practical, accessible introduction that helps people understand AI's opportunities while recognising its limitations and ethical use."

Delivered entirely online via the NOCN Hub, the 2-3 hour course is ideal for anyone seeking an introduction to AI—whether upskilling for work, exploring AI tools, or preparing for more advanced qualifications. With no age requirement and a low registration cost, it's a flexible starting point for building AI confidence. Start learning today via the NOCN Hub.





Green Careers Open Days 2026

Following on from the success of our events in 2024 at RHS Garden Wisley and in 2025 at RHS Garden Bridgewater we are hosting three Green Careers Open Days in 2026

The first event will be jointly hosted by Plumpton College and the RHS at One Garden (an RHS Partner Garden) on the outskirts of Brighton and Hove.

Exhibitors will be on hand to answer your career questions, as well as guest talks and a variety of activities, plus the opportunity to take part in tours around One Garden.

See all of these events [here](#).



Benson-Smith Limited
Chef Benson Smith

Culinary careers beckon with launch of Chef Academy

The Inn Collection Group has opened applications for its first Chef Academy to address the hospitality skills shortage. Partnering with Michelin-trained chef Matthew Benson-Smith, the fully-funded 12-month Level 2 Commis Chef apprenticeship offers ten places, with no prior experience required—just passion, creativity, and a willingness to learn.

The programme will run across six of the Group's properties in the north east and north west, teaching essential kitchen skills from stocks and sauces to knife work and meat, game, and vegetable preparation. Masterclasses and enrichment opportunities enhance the hands-on learning, with shortlisted applicants invited to a three-day taster session.

Ashleigh Fenwick, Learning and Development Manager, said: "Our Chef Academy will train the next generation of chefs and inspire new talent to join our growing business." Tom Adlam, Head of Food, added that the academy aims to attract fresh talent and support the hospitality industry during a challenging recruitment period.

Discover more [here](#).





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