

# BALFOUR BEATTY HEADS TO TYNE AND WEAR

**OVER 200 NEW JOBS ARE BEING CREATED IN TYNE AND WEAR BY ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION GIANT BALFOUR BEATTY WHICH HAS UNVEILED PLANS TO ESTABLISH A NEW SHARED SERVICE CENTRE IN THE REGION.**

Balfour Beatty is the latest big name investor to announce it is to move to Quorum Business Park in North Tyneside following support from Tyne and Wear Development Company.

The company, which employs 30,000 people across the UK, is creating a new customer support centre at Quorum and has taken lease on a new 41,000 sq ft office at the business park – making it one of the biggest property deals in the region in 2010.

It was supported throughout the project by Tyne and Wear Development Company which worked closely with North Tyneside Council to deliver relevant business support. This included advising on property sites across the region, connecting the company to other sources of support and providing detailed background information and research about the area.

The new customer service centre will bring together Balfour Beatty's nationwide accounting, payroll and

procurement functions in one office. Initially employing 200, the centre could accommodate up to 400 within three years.

Tyne and Wear Development Company and its partners – including One North East – are now working with Balfour Beatty to support its recruitment drive.

Ian Dawson, who is heading the new centre, explains: "The skills and adaptability of the local workforce and the facilities at Quorum provide the kind of top class location we were looking for.

"When the centre is up-and-running next year, we will have a dedicated and highly motivated team delivering an excellent service across our organisation and beyond.

"We have been extremely impressed by the level of support available within the region, in particular from Tyne and Wear Development Company. They provided support from very early on in the process using their knowledge of the area to offer the right advice, guidance and experience we needed to tap into a network of other local support."

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, explains: "Balfour Beatty's decision is good news for the region and is a 'win win' in terms of jobs and broader economic opportunities.

"They are a global firm with sales worth billions and this will have a knock on effect in creating opportunities through the regional supply chain.



Paul Buie with Ian Dawson from Balfour Beatty

"In the current climate, business support must be delivered quickly and effectively. Alongside our partners, we've been heavily involved in this project since the formative stages and are delighted to attract such a major inward investment to the region.

Balfour Beatty employs 50,000 people around the world and recorded sales of more than £3bn in the first half of 2010.

"We're very optimistic about the future. This fresh investment in the business will help us to go on meeting worldwide demand for our products and services and to remain one of the market leaders in our fields.

"We have a great relationship with the team at Tyne and Wear Development Company. They've listened closely to our needs and offered excellent advice and guidance to help us access the support required."

Ford received support from Tyne and Wear Development Company through the regional strategic account management programme – a bespoke scheme designed to help companies within the region grow. Ford has also been able to implement a training and development initiative for employees in partnership with Business Link.

Alma Harrison from Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Ford is a successful and well respected company worldwide that has been flying the flag for manufacturing in South Tyneside and the wider region for many years.

"It's a terrific achievement to celebrate 100 years in business and the company is now in a strong position to pick up growing market demand in both automotive and aerospace sectors. It's been a pleasure working with the team and a partnership we look forward to continuing."

Tyne and Wear Development Company Ltd is a controlled company within the meaning of Part V of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The relevant authorities are Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside MBC, South Tyneside MBC and Sunderland City Council.



# THE INVESTOR

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## EBIQUITY RELOCATES TO TYNESIDE

**ONE OF EUROPE'S LEADING MEDIA MONITORING COMPANIES IS RELOCATING TO THE REGION FROM LONDON AND WILL CREATE NEW JOBS WHEN IT OPENS A STATE-OF-THE-ART CENTRE IN TYNE AND WEAR.**

Ebiquity is to invest over £1m in the relocation to create a world class processing centre at Quorum Business Park, North Tyneside, after support from Tyne and Wear Development Company and One North East.

The AIM listed company's new 18,000 sq ft facility will see its current operational centre in London and an office in Newcastle merged into one single centre.

The new centre will initially employ 210 people – including 60 new posts – in a range of roles from media analysts to team leaders and quality control officers. All roles at the existing regional office will transfer to Quorum.

Ebiquity delivers a range of media monitoring and analytical services for clients in the UK, Europe, US, Australia and the Far East. The new centre will supply services to clients in up to 30 different languages.

Tyne and Wear Development Company has been working closely with Ebiquity to attract the investment to Tyne and Wear. It has been advising the company since the beginning of the project on the opportunities in the area, property locations, finance and applications for funding.

Thanks to this support, Ebiquity has been successful in securing funding of £200,000 from One North East through the Grant for Business Investment Scheme (GBI) towards the project. The new centre will be fitted out to the highest specification and will operate an extensive training and development programme for employees.

Paul Adams from Ebiquity said: "This is an exciting investment for Ebiquity and we're delighted to be opening a truly world class centre at Quorum. We have a great opportunity to achieve growth around the world and this is a fantastic location from which to do it.

"Quorum has superb facilities, the transport infrastructure is excellent and we have a great skills base here including a vibrant community of international language speakers who are essential to support our worldwide products.



(l to r) Paul Adams (Ebiquity); Harry Cowan (Ebiquity), Paul Buie (Tyne and Wear Development Company) and Fergus Trim (Quorum)

The support available in this area is also excellent. We had a choice between Ireland and Tyneside and one of the key reasons we came here was the help we received.

"Tyne and Wear Development Company pulled out all the stops to help us relocate here and were a great confidante and advisor. Any issues that cropped up were tackled immediately. We're also very grateful to Quorum for its support and One North East for the funding."

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "This is a major coup for the area as we faced genuine competition from Ireland to attract the investment. Fortunately, Tyne and Wear Development Company and its partners have been able to provide the support needed and demonstrate the undoubted qualities of the region once again.

"Ebiquity is a global name and another great addition to the portfolio at Quorum. Initially the project will create around 60 new posts but the company has signed a long-term lease and there is good potential for growth in the years ahead."

Ebiquity will take the first floor of building Q5 at Quorum and has received a raft of support from the park's travel co-ordinator, Laura Kerry, including analysis, travel surgeries and help in setting up a corporate travel scheme to assist the move.

Fergus Trim, development director at Quorum said: "We are thrilled that Ebiquity have chosen Quorum as

the new home for this exciting part of their business. We were in competition with other locations both nationally and internationally so it is great news that these high quality digital media jobs are coming to the North East."

One North East Director of Business and Industry, Ian Williams, said: "Ebiquity is a high-quality company operating globally at the forefront of its field so I am pleased our investment has helped secure the company's future in the North East."

### AWARDS ANSWER THE CALL

The annual North East Contact Centre Awards have taken place at a glittering ceremony at Rainton Meadows Arena in Sunderland.

Over 350 guests from across the region's 145 contact centres were out in force at the Oscar style ceremony which was again organised by Tyne and Wear Development Company.

Nine awards were presented to the top performing companies and individuals over the course of the evening including the big awards for the North East Contact Centres of the Year.

For the full story and pictures, see inside...



(l to r) Mark Podmore of Ford with Alma Harrison and Geoff Ford

## FORD EYES THE FUTURE AS IT HITS 100

**ONE OF SOUTH TYNESIDE'S MOST HISTORIC ENGINEERING BUSINESSES IS INVESTING IN FUTURE SUCCESS AS IT CELEBRATES ITS 100TH BIRTHDAY.**

Ford is looking to build on its expanding order book by investing in new technology in both its components and

aerospace businesses following support from Tyne and Wear Development Company and One North East.

The South Shields-based company has bought a state-of-art CNC laser machine for component manufacturing and a CNC milling machine for its aerospace operations.

The project will help to safeguard existing jobs at Ford and create a number of new posts.

Tyne and Wear Development Company has been able to assist the company in drawing down a range of support for the project including financial backing from One North East through the Grant for Business Investment scheme worth £178,000.

Ford is now looking to grow as the market expands and has already seen both its order books for its components and aerospace business increase by 30%. In particular, it is looking to tap into potential Chinese interest in precision-made products such as its niche laminate shimstock (Easipeel).

Geoff Ford chairman of Ford said: "There's no doubt that the last couple of years have been challenging but we've witnessed many changes over the past 100 years and have always had the resilience and skill to overcome anything thrown at us.

## FOR ASSISTANCE OR INFORMATION

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# CONTACT CENTRES SPARKLE AT AWARDS



Sage, winners of the 2010 North East Contact Centre of the Year over 250 seats with Sarah Bell from NRG

IT WAS A NIGHT TO REMEMBER FOR SAGE (UK) AND EAGA AT THE 2010 NORTH EAST CONTACT CENTRE AWARDS, ORGANISED BY TYNE AND WEAR DEVELOPMENT COMPANY IN ASSOCIATION WITH NRG.

The Tyne and Wear based companies picked up the top prizes at the annual industry Oscars on a night when the success of one of the region's most successful industries shone brightly.

Sage, based at Newcastle's Great Park, picked up the North East Contact Centre of the Year 2010 – winning the prize for centres with more than 250 seats.

Eaga, based in Gateshead, won the equivalent award for smaller centres – being named North East Contact Centre of the Year 2010 for centres with fewer than 250 seats.

Runners-up in the under 250 category were Barclays and Fusion (both Sunderland) while JML (South Shields) and Gentoo (Sunderland) were runners-up in under 250 seats award. JML also received a Special Commendation for Exceptional Customer Service from the judges.

The ceremony, which was held at Sunderland's Rainton Meadows Arena on Guy Fawkes Night, attracted guests from many of the region's 145 contact centres.

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, said: "Congratulations must go to all the winners, runners-up and those shortlisted on their success. The judges were extremely impressed by the standard of this year's applications and, in particular, the achievement of the winners in what has been a challenging but successful year for the industry in the North East.



Cllr Florence Anderson of Sunderland City Council with staff from Eaga, winners of the 2010 North East Contact Centre of the Year under 250 seats

"We're proud to continue our long association with the North East Contact Centre Awards. They have grown each year and that's really a general reflection of the resilience, strength and diversity of the contact centre industry in the region."

Seven other awards were presented to teams and individuals on the night. These included:

- Contact Centre Dream Team: Forecasting, Planning & Management Information Team - NHS Business Services Authority
- Outstanding People Development: Orange Talent & Development Training Team - Everything Everywhere, Orange
- North East Community Heroes: Department for Work and Pensions - Pension, Disability and Carers Service, London Pension Centre

- Contact Centre Adviser of the Year: Beverly Owens - Eaga
- Public Sector Contact Centre Adviser of the Year: Stephanie Crozier - NHS Business Services Authority
- North East Customer Champion: Victoria Scales - Lloyds Banking Group
- Inspirational Leader of the Year: Helen Shields - More Than

Therese Liddle, managing director of NRG Group, said: "The awards are a terrific reflection of the quality of staff working in the sector and the breadth of winning organisations demonstrates the diversity within the North East contact centre community. NRG is proud to be sponsoring such a great event."

Councillor Florence Anderson, Deputy Leader of Sunderland City Council, opened the event with a speech recognising the industry's regional importance.

She said: "The North East Contact Centre Awards celebrate all that's good about the region's contact centre industry.

"The sector makes a vital contribution to the local economy and this couldn't be achieved without a loyal and talented group of staff. It's been an honour to be here to meet the faces behind the voices and I congratulate the winners on their well earned success."

This year's North East Contact Centre Awards were sponsored by NRG, Sunderland City Council, Contact Centre Professional, BQ Magazine, Premium People Recruitment Group, Cobalt Business Park, Business Solutions – Contact Centre Academy and Working Links. Call Centre Helper was again the event's media partner.

For more information about the awards please visit [www.contactcentreawards.co.uk](http://www.contactcentreawards.co.uk)



## A GROWING INDUSTRY

OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES THE CONTACT CENTRE INDUSTRY HAS EMERGED AS ONE OF THE NORTH EAST'S KEY EMPLOYERS.

Today, there are more than 60,000 employees working in 145 centres across the region ranging from operations run by major multi-national companies like EDF Energy and Barclaycard to small help desks and outsourcers.

While there have been setbacks during this time – not least the current economic downturn and in the perceived benefits of cheaper labour abroad – the signs are good that the future promises more success. Figures from industry analysts Cushman & Wakefield show that Newcastle is the most favoured UK contact centre location – ahead of cities such as Leeds and Sheffield.

The recent arrival of Tesco Bank, which is creating 1,000 jobs at Quorum Business Park, and insurethebox, which has also moved there, underline the ongoing popularity of the region. Much of this success is built on the skills of the local workforce, the continuing popularity of the Geordie accent and the fantastic technology and communications infrastructure available throughout the region.

Paul Buie, manager of Tyne and Wear Development Company, explains: "Events like the Contact Centre Awards demonstrate the strength and diversity of contact centres in the region.

"It hasn't always been plain sailing for the industry, but there is no doubt that contact centres in the North East are among the best-performing and most skilled anywhere in the world.

"The industry has a bright future in this region and we're working to provide all the support we can to address the changing face and needs of contact centres moving forwards. Much of this will be aimed at ensuring the region's contact centres retain the skills and technology advantages they enjoy today so they can offer added value to customers."

Tyne and Wear Development Company has played a key role in the sector's development over the past decade, working alongside key partners such as the local authorities and One North East to address strategic issues.

As well as organising the North East Contact Centre Awards, it has also been the driving force behind the annual North East Contact Centre Conference. First held in 2008, the event was set-up to provide a platform for key decision-makers across the region's centres to discuss topical issues, share best-practice and tap into advice from a broad range of experts such as World Cup winning rugby coach, Sir Clive Woodward.

Through the Conference a networking group for managers of the region's contact centres has recently been created. Hosted by Tyne and Wear Development Company, the group meets bi-monthly with the aim of stimulating debate and driving forward the growth of the industry in the North East.

### 2010 ROLL OF HONOUR

#### CONTACT CENTRE ADVISER OF THE YEAR

##### Winner

Beverly Owens – Eaga plc

##### Runners-Up

Cherree Brodie – JML

Sylvia Hume – Everything Everywhere, Orange

#### PUBLIC SECTOR ADVISER OF THE YEAR

##### Winner

Stephanie Crozier - NHS Business Services Authority

##### Runners-Up

Kim Gallagher – Future Pension Centre

Hayley Smith – HM Revenue & Customs

Nick Myers – London Pension Centre

#### NORTH EAST CUSTOMER CHAMPION

##### Winner

Victoria Scales – Lloyds Banking Group

##### Runners-Up

Joan Reid – Everything Everywhere, Orange

Dean Taylor – Fusion Contact Centre Services

Denise Potter – More Than

#### INSPIRATIONAL LEADER OF THE YEAR

##### Winner

Helen Shields – More Than

##### Runners-Up

Jane Pentelow – JML

Debbie Hailstone – Lloyds Banking Group

#### CONTACT CENTRE DREAM TEAM

##### Winner

Forecasting, Planning & Management Information Team – NHS Business Services Authority

#### Runners-Up

Communications Team – Lloyds Banking Group  
The Incentive Panel - Sage (UK) Ltd

#### OUTSTANDING PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

##### Winner

Development Training Team – Everything Everywhere, Orange

##### Runners-Up

The Strategic Training Team – EDF Energy  
Talent Academy – More Than

#### NORTH EAST COMMUNITY HEROES

##### Winner

Department for Work and Pensions – Pension, Disability and Carers Service, London Pension Centre

##### Runners-Up

Fusion Contact Centre Services  
Great Place To Work – More Than

#### NORTH EAST CONTACT CENTRE OF THE YEAR (UNDER 250 SEATS)

##### Winner

Eaga plc

##### Runners-Up

Gentoo Customer Service Centre

JML – also awarded a Special Commendation for Exceptional Customer Service

#### NORTH EAST CONTACT CENTRE OF THE YEAR (OVER 250 SEATS)

##### Winner

Sage (UK) Ltd

##### Runners-Up

Barclays

Fusion Contact Centre Services