

Horticulture course done ahead of time

Three horticultural trainees have completed a council-run course ahead of schedule.

Apprentices Tom Gladden from Kingswood, Neil Dare from Bath and Steve Angell from Peasedown St John have been awarded NVQ Level 2 certificates after 12 months of training, instead of the normal two-year period.

The three trainees have been learning on the job with Bath and North East Somerset Council's parks and green spaces team.

They have now moved on to a higher qualification, the advanced national certificate in horticulture, after their early NVQ success.

The trainees were presented with their NVQ certificates by B&NES Council chairman, Councillor Bryan Chalker, in a ceremony at the Guildhall in Bath.

More than 60 people applied for the chance to take up the traineeship course which was originally aimed at only two positions, but was later extended to three after an increased demand.

B&NES Council open spaces operations manager Robert Standen worked with Norton Radstock College to set up their course on a day-release basis.

He said: "The focus of the scheme is on 'grow your own', to produce skilled gardeners and potential managers for the future.

We put together a training programme which ensures that over two years the apprentices get experience across all the council's horticultural departments.

"Their training has been highlighted nationally as good practice by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment which is a real seal of approval."

Revolutionary treatment has left patients with grin from ear to ear

A food allergy therapist has taken a bite out of Bath's beauty market with a revolutionary teeth whitening treatment.

Laser teeth whitening has been growing in popularity in America and is now starting to take off on this side of the Atlantic.

Food allergy therapist Donna Brown has run the Feel Good Again clinic from her home in Bath for three years.

She has now moved the service to the city centre where she also runs teeth whitening treatments through her new business, Bright White Smiles.

Ms Brown was approached by IT entrepreneur Steve Healy and independent financial adviser David Mayne who had seen a similar successful clinic in Swindon and wanted to test the water in Bath.

The business on North Parade Buildings was launched earlier this month and has already established a referral partnership scheme with beauty salon Champneys, which celebrated its first year in Bath in September.

Ms Brown said: "The service we offer is not really a dental service, it is more of a cosmetic treatment."

Patients are typically image-conscious women in their 20s and 30s, although a 54-year-old man has also signed up for a treatment.

The procedure costs £249, takes around an hour to perform and lasts for anything from nine to 12 months.

It uses light infiltration to whiten the teeth rather than a heat lamp to speed up the oxidization or whitening process.

The treatment cannot be used on women who have just given birth, pregnant women or people under the age of 16.

Rupert Hall
Business Reporter
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Ms Brown said heat lamps could cause itching and gum irritation as opposed to her high-intensity blue light treatment which filters harmful ultraviolet rays and focuses a beam of cold light to penetrate into the teeth and allow oxidization without any harmful side-effects.

She said: "Teeth whitening is about self improvement.

"Your smile is the first thing people notice about you in an interview or when you get married.

"We see a lot of brides-to-be in this industry.

"We have spoken to quite a few dentists who are interested in referring their clients to us."

The treatment, which is known as Beyond WhiteSpa Select, has also featured on ITV's *This Morning* programme.

Ms Brown is aiming to bring forward lessons learnt over the last three years of running her food allergy therapy business.

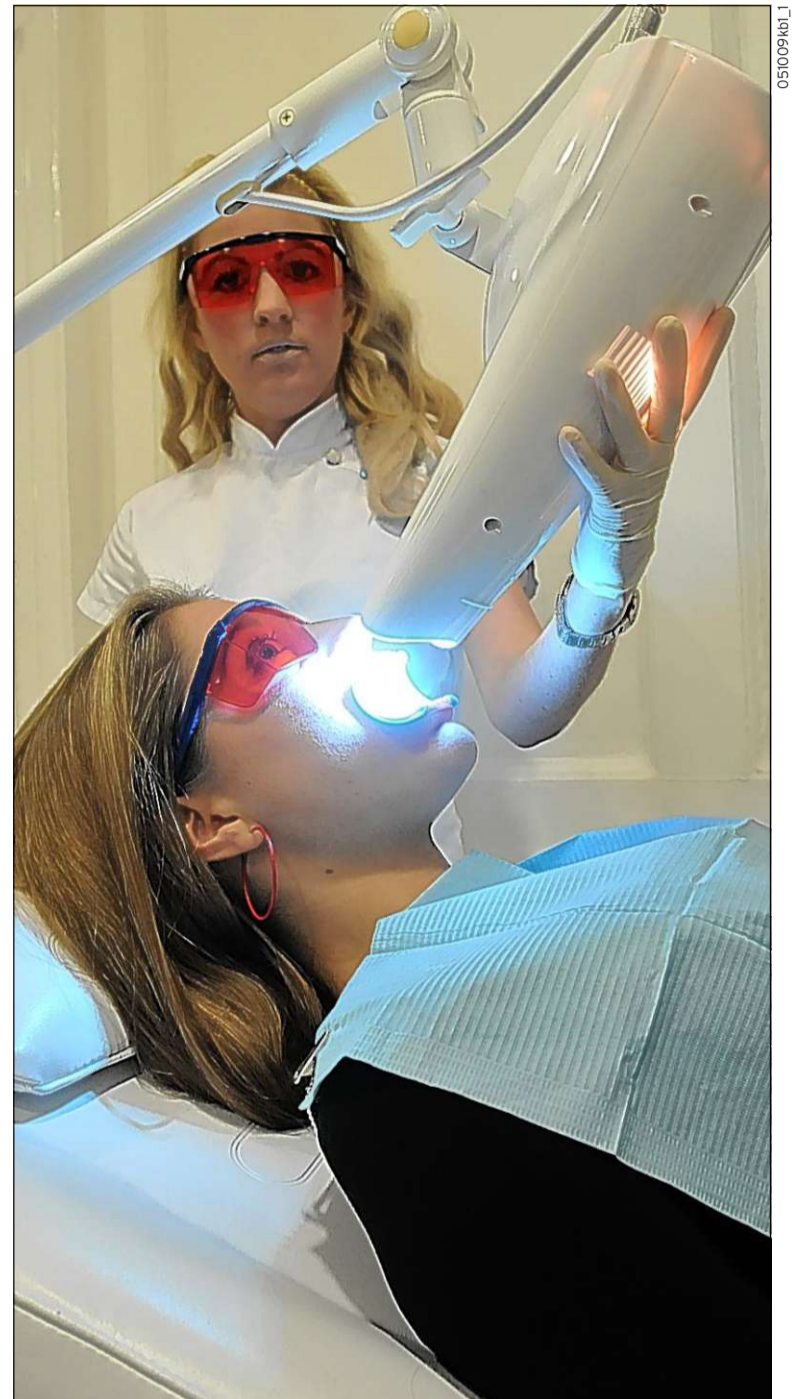
She said effective marketing and developing a reputation had been key to establishing herself within the town.

Ms Brown worked in a hydro healing spa in London's Notting Hill and said customers looking for cosmetic treatments needed to be in a relaxing environment.

She said: "Bath has got a lot of tourists and it is a very image-conscious city.

"There is a lot of wealth in Bath."

She is employed as clinic manager as well as being a shareholder in the business.



OPEN WIDE:
Clare Shuttleworth has her teeth whitened by Donna Brown
PICTURE:
Kevin Bates



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Banking veteran joins the team at Swedish group

A veteran banking expert with more than 40 years' experience is joining one of Bath's youngest banks.

Senior corporate banker Derek Logan is the latest to join the team at Swedish finance firm Handelsbanken, which opened its office in Bath in October 2007.

Mr Logan has worked in banks in London, Bristol and elsewhere in the South West, and joins the seven-strong Bath office from his role as corporate relationship director for a major high street clearing bank.

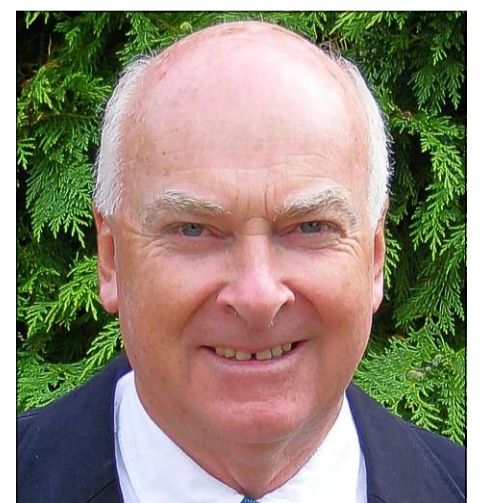
He will now cover business in the South West as a senior consultant from the Bath office.

He said: "In terms of the recession, the South West hasn't been as badly hit as other areas and should be able to recover more quickly, especially given the renewed confidence in the property market."

Handelsbanken now runs 64 branches across the UK and plans to have opened another eight outlets by the end of this year.

Mr Logan said: "Despite the downturn in the economy, Handelsbanken has continued to expand its branch network, as well as continuing to add to the range of banking services for businesses and individuals.

"The recent financial crisis has demonstrated Handelsbanken's solidity in the banking sector,



BANKING EXPERT: Derek Logan

which has prompted many new inquiries from individuals and corporate customers alike."

Handelsbanken defied the credit crunch and continued to expand throughout 2008 by opening 14 new branches in the UK. Its Bath branch now serves 160 customers, including companies and private clients such as solicitors, accountants, dentists and consultants.

Bristol branch manager Martin Fey said: "Long term, the UK is seen as Handelsbanken's number one growth market in the world.

"It remains committed to expanding its presence here in the future."