



MOTORPOINT

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NEWS RELEASE

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MOTORPOINT STEPS IN TO SAVE SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP SCHEME IN DERBYSHIRE

- Motorpoint steps in to save a supported internship scheme in Derbyshire
- The initiative, run by Derbyshire Education Business Partnership in partnership with St Martins School - and referral partners Royal School for the Deaf Derby and Fountains High - faced the prospect of being made homeless due to COVID-19
- DFN Project SEARCH is an international transition to work programme for students with learning disabilities and autism spectrum conditions, aimed at those motivated to achieve competitive employment
- The UK's largest independent car retailer has provided space as its store on Pentagon Island for classroom-based learning for students with learning disabilities as well as work-based internships
- Motorpoint is encouraging more employers in the county to follow their lead and offer internships to more 18 – 24-year olds as a route into sustainable employment

Motorpoint has stepped in to help save a supported internship scheme in Derby avoid being made homeless due to COVID-19.

The UK's largest independent car retailer, which was founded in the city over 20 years ago, has teamed up with Derbyshire Education Business Partnership to provide their supported

internship scheme with accommodation after COVID-19 forced them to leave their previous base earlier in the year at the Royal Derby Hospital.

Derbyshire Education Business Partnership, which earlier this month was shortlisted in The Advice and Guidance Category in the Children & Young People Now Awards, were facing the prospect of having to cancel their supported internships. Motorpoint provided Clare Talati, Managing Director at Derbyshire Education Business Partnership and her team with suitable office space for class-based learning for eleven 18-24-year olds plus a Job Coach and a Mentor.

Explained Clare Talati: "Thank you to Debbie Gerring, Headteacher at St Martins School who secured the place at Motorpoint and we really can't thank Motorpoint enough for their generosity. Chris Goodison and his team in Derby have provided us with the means to deliver Project Search over 2020-21 and I am sure I speak on behalf of everyone involved when I say it simply wouldn't have been possible to run this programme, and all that it involves, without their support."

The learning, which started in September, is based at the company's former Training School at Chartwell Drive and will run until the end of the 2020-21 academic year. Discussions will take place in the New Year with regard to potential work-based placements at Motorpoint such as Customer Service, Sales and Vehicle Preparation.

The programme, known as Project SEARCH, helps young people from across Derbyshire with different forms of learning disabilities to gain new skills as well as practical, work-based experience through a structured personalised study programme as they look to make successful transitions from school to a productive adult life.

Disabled young adults are significantly underrepresented in the nations workforce and are far less likely to secure employment than the general population. Only 3.5 per cent of young adults with a learning disability known to their local authority in Derby are in paid work. There are 69 Project SEARCH schemes internationally and 60 per cent of the young adults involved have secured employment.

Clare Talati added: “We believe that everyone deserves an equal chance of success and we’d love to see more employers offering workplace opportunities. It enables organisations to diversify their workforce and transform their culture, and gives the individuals involved the opportunity to develop the employability skills to achieve meaningful paid jobs.”

To be eligible to take part in the course a student must have already completed their education and have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), a Learning Difficulty Assessment and an Education Health and Care Plan in place.

Chris Goodison, General Manager of Motorpoint Derby, added: “When we heard that this year’s Project SEARCH programme might have to be cancelled because of a lack of suitable space for the students to learn we immediately stepped in and offered our former Training School as a potential new home. We are delighted that Derbyshire Education Business Partnership took us up on our offer.

“The students have been an absolute delight since they have been onsite. Although things are extremely challenging at present with COVID-19 we would encourage more employers across the county to get involved with Project SEARCH and give more 18 – 24-year olds with learning difficulties the opportunity for work-based placements and with it a route into sustainable employment in the future.”

Sarah Cutler, Job Coach at the Derbyshire Education Business Partnership, said: “We look forward to 2021 and hopefully being able to offer placements with Motorpoint. We also can’t wait to be back at Derby Royal Hospital who have supported the programme since September 2019 (and who had to pause their involvement in the programme due to COVID-19).”

For further information about Derbyshire Education Business Partnership and Project SEARCH visit www.debp.org

CAPTION

Pictured from the left are Sarah Cutler, Harrison Losh, Jonathan Leach, Ryan Stevens, Callum Brown, Sean Jenkins, Imogen Colebourne, Jack Corbin, Amanda Cartwright, DEBP Careers Adviser, Kieran Burton, Matthew Sharp and Lee Wheadon, Sales Manager at Motorpoint Derby

ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Notes to Editors:

- Motorpoint is the UK's largest independent car retailer selling nearly new cars up to four years old and with less than 30,000 miles. Every vehicle comes with warranty and is available to drive away the same day
- Motorpoint are committed to making car buying easy which is why, backed by the Motorpoint Price Promise, Motorpoint will also refund the difference to any customer within seven days of their order if they find the same car from a competitor. As an added bonus, it will also give the customer £50 worth of Amazon vouchers to spend
- Motorpoint was established in 1998
- Motorpoint has made contactless collection standard procedure in light of COVID-19. This facility allows customers to adhere to the latest social distancing guidelines and choose, buy and drive away without any physical contact with a member of staff. This includes Motorpoint's Unaccompanied Test Drive offering where customers can test drive their chosen vehicle without someone from Motorpoint being present in the car
- Motorpoint also offers a home delivery service covering the whole of the UK mainland for those customers who would prefer not to visit the branch, backed by its 14-day hassle free, money back guarantee

- It operates from locations in Birmingham, Birtley, Burnley, Castleford, Chingford, Derby, Glasgow, Newport, Oldbury, Peterborough, Sheffield, Stockton-on-Tees, Swansea and Widnes
- Motorpoint also operates a UK based call centre based in Derby
- Motorpoint employs over 800 people nationwide
- Motorpoint has been named a Feefo Platinum Service Award winner for 2020
- Motorpoint was named one of the Sunday Times Top 100 Mid-Sized Companies to Work for in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020
- For more information on Motorpoint visit www.motorpoint.co.uk

Derby Education Business Partnership

- Derbyshire Education Business Partnership are a social enterprise. They specialise in supporting the aspirational decision making of young people to shape their future. They strive to help young people fulfil their potential and believe all young people deserve an equal chance of success
- For more information on the Derbyshire Education Business Partnership visit www.debp.org