

Apprenticeships will help us fill the skills gap

by Gordon Birtwistle, Burnley MP

After the House of Commons rose for summer recess, I had a chance to reflect on everything that has gone on in Westminster in the past few weeks



There have been many important debates and discussions which have been focussed on providing support for individuals and creating jobs and making Britain's economy strong again. I continue to push for apprenticeships as we must not underestimate the fantastic opportunities they provide for young people. I strongly welcome the recent announcement of the biggest ever rise in the Pupil Premium for primary schools to help ensure more pupils are able to achieve higher standards and this will make a real difference in our own town.

In my first full week back in Burnley I was looking forward to having more time to be out and about in town. I was delighted to have a business visit to Radal Technology Ltd in Billington Road. As the world's largest manufacturer of anti-smoking alarm systems, it was great to discuss their business with them. I was able to talk about apprenticeships and the way in which the Government can help businesses as we look towards economic recovery. They are a fantastic company who are at the forefront of their market and are another great example of Burnley producing world-class products we can be proud of!

I was then able to speak alongside my colleague, Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, and two apprentices at the Liberal Democrat Party Meeting for Lords and Baronesses. It was intended to spread the message about apprenticeships through stories from individuals. It was a great discussion and I am delighted with the outcome. A lot of the peers have signed up to swapping days with apprentices and are carrying out great work to publicise the positive message about apprenticeships. It is great to see both houses endorsing this important issue.

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