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# south west salary & benefits report

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE FUTURE  
JOBS MARKET FOR CONTACT CENTRES.

in association with



south  
west  
contact  
centre  
forum

**red**  
contact centres

A division of red recruitment

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# foreword



Welcome to **red**'s 2018 South West contact centre salaries and benefits report, written in association with the South West Contact Centre Forum.

Whilst this year's report makes for a very cheery read amongst talented candidates looking for contact centre work, it is unlikely to make for such easy reading with employers! The report clearly details a significant increase in salaries which reflects the heightened pressure that contact centres are under to attract and retain great people from

an increasingly limited supply. This squeeze is the sum of the following elements of stress on recruitment;

- The vast majority of contact centres are planning to increase recruitment this year compared to last (84% of centres in the South West predict an increase in recruitment in 2018 on 2017), this is in a landscape where there is already a challenging shortage of talent.
- There is already a well-documented skills gap. This is worsening with increasing vacancy numbers combined with fewer candidates in the contact centre marketplace. As a result there is even greater competition for skilled contact centre staff, putting definite pressure on salaries.

In summary, the recruitment challenge is heightening the already challenging skills gap and **red** absolutely expects the shortage of candidates to be the top recruitment challenge for contact centres this year.

When considered from an employee and candidate perspective, this unfortunately provides further challenges for recruiting centres;

- Skills shortages are placing incumbent contact centre staff under even greater pressure at a time when customer contact channels and types are getting increasingly challenging. This is impacting morale and workplace stress and consequently **red** expects increased attrition levels this year on last.
- Talented candidates for contact centres expect career progression, training investment and are demanding more sociable hours, meaning that contact centres are braced for an even more challenging candidate market.

Once again we are left to consider whether the strategy of increasing salaries is helping a recruiter's cause? I suspect not and without a wider solution to attract, train and coach greater raw talent, the industry seems to be providing a temporary and costly sticky-plaster solution to a great and worsening problem.

I would like to thank all of those centres, **red** clients and SWCCF members that contributed to this report and gave their valuable feedback on their current attraction and recruitment experiences. I do hope that this report proves a valuable benchmarking tool when considering your own centre's strategies.

If you want to discuss any of **red**'s findings or opinions further I would be delighted to hear from you at [katy@red-recruitment.com](mailto:katy@red-recruitment.com).

**Katy Forsyth** - Owner and Director, **red** recruitment

an introduction to...

# red

contact centres

**red** is a leading national contact centre recruitment business and the #1 for contact centre recruitment in the South West.



Delivering contact centre recruitment solutions across the UK to many of the best known and leading UK consumer brands.



**red** works with 80% of contact centres in the South West.



Known for our in depth knowledge of the market and our great networks, **red**'s clients benefit from this intel.



**red** works through partner relationships; delivering bespoke solutions to meet your centre's needs and adding value through quality and retention.



**red**'s large and expert team is agile, ready to respond to the market and our client briefs. Closely monitoring and adapting to market trends, to always ensure great results.



We attract the best talent for contact centres. **red**'s expansive database and talented attraction teams give recruiting centres choice. **red** place people where they will enjoy their work, add value to both the customer and centre, and stay for longer.



**red** offers a leading, digitally enhanced candidate journey. It is recognised as exceptional, from engagement to placement. This journey strengthens **red**'s clients brand-of-choice status.



Delivering recruitment solutions nationally, whilst retaining the regional values we have built up over the last 17 years.



**red**'s commitment to social media marketing has awarded us the largest collective following of any independent agency in the South West.

# recruiting for the future

Contact centre recruitment is an ever changing landscape, sitting within the rapidly changing contact centre industry and the ever volatile candidate market.

Recruitment is affected by so many factors including working generation influences, technology, legislation and industry reputation. Within this fast paced world, many challenges remain constant; volume verses quality, inflating salaries, recruiting for retention and of course offering best practice recruitment and candidate journeys for centre success.

Over the last 20 years these themes have always challenged contact centre recruiters in some guise. There does however feel as though a sea change is coming.

The unprecedented pace of technological change and the wide range of innovative channels that are open to customers, means that there has been a fundamental shift in the skill sets required by contact centres. The laser sharp focus on the customer in ultra-competitive markets, combined with more complex queries coming in to the agents, makes for a fierce concentration on customer excellence. Add to this the new iGen, entering the workforce with their new set of behaviours and demands (just as we've all got used to millennials!) as well as the worrying potential of Brexit on the labour market and contact centre recruitment of the future feels rather terrifying!

**red** relishes this challenge! **red** looks forward to steering its clients through future best practice recruitment.

**red** is running 'recruiting for the future' seminars across the UK over the first half of 2018. If you would like to book a place on one of these sessions, please email [solutions@red-recruitment.com](mailto:solutions@red-recruitment.com)

# business transformation through recruitment solutions

When making recruitment choices **red** recognise it's important that you don't just take our word that we can make a difference to your recruitment outcomes and strategy.



**red** is Europa's recruitment partner and has been for many years. Over this time, **red** has supported Europa on its journey of growth and success.

Europa's story has seen it grow into one of the South West's leading contact centres. It is now one of the region's contact centre employers of choice.

**red** has worked with Europa to deliver both permanent and temporary recruitment solutions whilst also adding great value with their contact centre consultancy expertise. This has included partnering Europa with a benchmarking exercise to determine 'what good looks like' for Europa agents, redesigning the recruitment process to reflect this and training out a 'how to recruit and assess' course to Europa's Team Leader population. **red** has also recently supported Europa with a very successful retention and engagement programme, consulting Europa on contact centre agent and generational drivers in our region.

Alyson Hanley - Head of Human Resources

## the solution



**red designed and implemented a recruitment solution with Europa's values at its heart**



**red Business Services ran benchmarking sessions determining the required skills and behaviours for Europa agents. This was the foundation of the new process**



**red built a recruitment solution that proactively engaged and retained great millennials**



**red's Business Services Team designed and delivered assessments against the benchmarked requirement**



**red's Marketing Team drove attraction via the best channels to ensure success**



**brand**  
Exceptional attraction and recruitment delivery helped Europa to build their employer-of-choice status



**red consulted Europa on the best candidate type, availability and sustainability of solution**



**red's Training Team trained Europa's Team Leaders in recruiting, assessing and engaging contact centre talent**

## contact centre customer service advisors — salary levels

Salaries are up a massive 20% on 2016 when they ranged from £15,500 - £21,000. This reflects the highly competitive candidate market where a talent shortage means that the candidate is 'king'.

The salary increases below are reflective of several influencing factors. The highly competitive candidate market results in centres competing for a limited talent supply, largely coming from other industries and attracted into the contact centre market by salary, opportunity and better hours. Complex customer queries which demand a wider skill set, along with multi-channel requirements are also putting pressure on salaries. Average salary levels differ greatly throughout the South West, reflecting the competition and candidate availability in those respective regions. Salaries are further dictated by sector; financial services, utility, retail and public sector are offering higher end salaries, whilst the vibrant South West outsource industry is reflected in the lower salary levels.

### Bristol Central

£21,125 - £25,500

### Bristol North

£18,575 - £24,000

### Bristol Outskirts

£17,500 - £19,500

### Cheltenham & Gloucester

£17,000 - £22,860

### Stroud

£17,000 - £18,750

### Swindon

£16,000 - £18,600

### Bath

£20,000 - £23,200

### Exeter

£18,000 - £19,500

### Bournemouth

£18,500 - £21,500

### Plymouth

£16,575 - £19,000

## contact centre customer sales advisors — salary levels

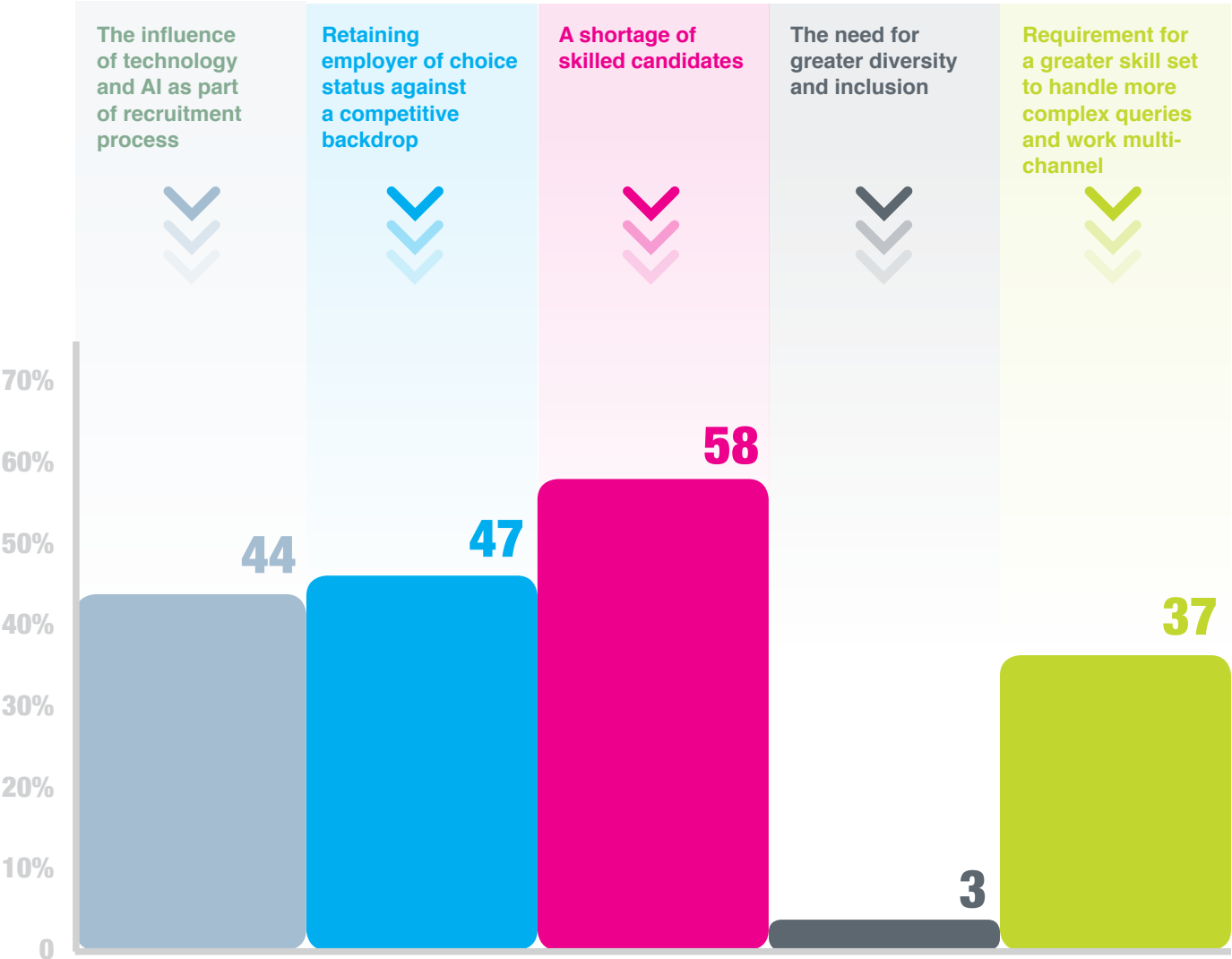
### 2018

£18,500 - £23,000

This salary range reflects an average across the region. There are fewer 'purist sales' contact centres engaged in outbound sales with Outsourcers taking much of the demand for such activity.

# what's going to have the biggest impact on your future recruitment in the next 5 years?

Access to candidates with the right skills and talent to fill roles is certainly one of the biggest challenges for contact centre employers in the years ahead. However, **red** has the latest data which shows that there will be other areas of consideration when planning future recruitment strategies.





# remodel your hiring — **red** client solutions

The candidate market is becoming ever sophisticated.

Employees of the future and the new generation that is entering our industry (iGen) want to engage with recruitment processes in their way.

Great recruiters must constantly embrace and adapt to this to secure the best talent.

A typical candidate in the South West will have, on average, five job opportunities to consider at any one time. With such choices, only the best recruitment strategies will consistently attract and retain talent.

## It's time to remodel your hiring strategies

**red** Client Solutions suggest employers radically ramp up their hiring practices to appeal to future generations. Review current practices and train hiring staff to ensure they are aware of the new ways of attracting tomorrow's workforce and skills in an increasingly tight labour market.

When working with our clients, **red** conduct regular recruitment process reviews and benchmarking to ensure they are current and pro-actively attract the best talent. Katy Forsyth, Director of **red**, states 'future-proofing hiring strategies is an essential part of a successful recruitment strategy in an increasingly challenging employment market. **red** Client Solutions aims to ensure that we work closely with our clients to deliver agile, multi-channel and well thought through solutions. These must work with the prevailing market and deliver talent to the business in the numbers required. This takes a good understanding of the required agent, along with the prevailing candidate market and of course the competition for this talent'.

In summary, great recruitment solutions consider external influences and challenge the status quo. Challenge your current hiring criteria, role profiles and selection procedures. Once they are fit for purpose, consider if these recruitment processes are timely, streamlined and responsive to the needs and preferences of the candidates and not internal issues and restraints.

In such a competitive recruitment market, be sure to showcase your brand with pride and actively sell the benefits of joining the company. Concentrate on those benefits that the target candidates really care about. So many recruiters list those benefits which the company is proud to give and not those that really matter to and attract the required candidates.

# a fast moving future will require hiring dynamic inspirational team leaders

Recruiting exceptional Team Leaders into the operation is essential for any business. Here is what the professionals have to say...



"A Team Leader has to manage a variety of people each with their own unique backgrounds and traits. A successful Team Leader understands each member of their team and the best way to motivate and encourage every individual. Strengths should be encouraged but equally weaknesses should be used as opportunities for development. A great leader is dedicated, organised, knowledgeable, respected and above all approachable.

The Team Leader who has the time to fully understand their staff is in a far better position to bring out the best in that person."

**Marcus Hanford** – Team Leader for DAS and SWCCF Team Leader of the Year 2017



"The Team Leader role is possibly the most challenging within any business due to the diverse nature of skills that it requires to do the job effectively and efficiently. Historically we have been performance managers, driving agents to achieve targets and managing those that don't. A talented Team Leader will now be engaging and motivating, identifying the individual needs of their agents and customising support and coaching in a fair and appropriate way.

There is much more focus on health and wellbeing and getting to know your team is more important than ever to achieve the desired consistent performance, balancing support with having difficult conversations with individuals in a fair way. It is essential that we continue to recruit new Team Leaders with passion and enthusiasm to drive performance and take care of the needs of their team in a world of ever-evolving technology."

**Debbie Jones** - Customer Service Team Manager (Small Business B2B) for EDF and Chair of the SWCCF Team Leader Group



"In my opinion, Team Leaders are the backbone of a successful contact centre operation but are unfortunately often under invested in or inadequately supported. With a clear vision, expectations and common values and behaviours, a high quality Team Leader population will drive engagement and ultimately ensure exceptional service results through operational success and efficiency.

I have been privileged to work with and manage some fantastic team leaders during my career all who have gone on to bigger and better things. These Team Leaders really make a difference by doing the basic fundamentals of their management role, brilliantly. I find great personal satisfaction from developing many great customer service professionals into successful Team Leaders and beyond, and over the years continued these mentorships to mutual benefit."

**Craig Watts** - Business Manager for RAC and SWCCF Contact Centre Manager of the Year 2017

# contact centre team leaders salary levels in the south west

Team Leader recruitment is an essential part of ensuring that the contact centre operation delivers outstanding service to its respective customers and leads on ensuring excellent agent engagement and wellbeing.

The range of salaries paid for Team Leaders, reflect the sectors represented in the South West. The higher salaries are evident in the financial services and regulated sectors particularly.

Team leaders in the region manage an average team size of 10 FTE, consistent on last year.

<b>Bristol Central</b>	<b>Bristol North</b>	<b>Bristol Outskirts</b>
£25,000 - £31,000	£22,000 - £32,000	£23,000 - £26,000
<b>Cheltenham &amp; Gloucester</b>	<b>Stroud</b>	<b>Swindon</b>
£23,000 - £30,000	£23,000 - £26,750	£21,000 - £26,000
<b>Bath</b>	<b>Exeter</b>	<b>Bournemouth</b>
£28,000 - £33,000	£23,000 - £28,000	£23,000 - £28,500
<b>Plymouth</b>		
£22,750 - £27,500		



## hiring senior talented managers boosts productivity & growth

Established in 2005, **red** Contact Centre Managers (**RCCM**) is an integral part of **red** recruitment's contact centre division.

**RCCM** combines an unrivalled mix of vast experience and industry knowledge, along with a leading network of contact centre professionals to deliver excellent management candidates to clients UK wide.

The guiding principle applied to the recruitment of any management role is that the candidate must be able to apply their proven experience and drive to the client role, offering immediate return on investment and delivering quality to the brief.

Through the vast network **RCCM** has in the region and UK, they pledge to deliver contact centre management professionals.

It is a pre-requisite for **RCCM** to work in partnership with both the candidate and client to ensure the very best fit and value for both parties. Typical **RCCM** roles include:

Team Leaders and Team Managers

Contact Centre Managers

Operations, Head of Site and General Managers

Learning and Development, Coaching and Training Managers

Management Information and Business Analysts

**RCCM** works closely with all parties to ensure complete discretion is applied throughout the process. The **RCCM** team work with all clients to ensure the business transformation and strategic vision is fully understood. In turn, this is applied to the candidate selection ensuring a complete and high quality partnership approach to all.

# contact centre managers salary levels in the south west

These average annual salary ranges are provided by **RCCM**, the Executive Recruitment arm of **red** as well as market intelligence from the SWCCF and its members. They indicate a vibrant market with employers prepared to pay inflated salaries to attract the right candidate for tough challenges. Increases in salary levels are apparent across all levels this year.

Trainer **£25,000 - £35,000**

Coach **£25,000 - £32,000**

Workforce Management  
/ Planning Manager **£28,000 - £40,000**

Dialler  
Manager **£30,000 - £38,000**

Operations  
Manager **£47,000 - £60,000**

Contact Centre  
Manager **£53,000 - £70,000**

Head of Site  
/ Director **£75,000 - £130,000**



## red national solutions — UK delivery with regional insight

**red** National Solutions delivers exceptional recruitment to clients throughout the UK.

**red** National Solutions has over 20 years combined experience in delivering client campaigns. They deliver outstanding service to client sites across the UK and this is achieved through:

1. Vast experience in working with major brands across the UK and understanding that 'not one solutions fits all'. **red** National Solutions work with each client to ensure clear objectives and deliverables are achieved.
2. Bespoke recruitment campaigns which can be geared to small, medium and large contact centres.
3. Designing solutions with multi-channel centres, where skill sets are agreed and matched to the demographic area, increasing positive attraction and results for its clients.
4. Access to all specialist searches and job boards to find the exact match of candidate, adding immediate value to all recruitment propositions.
5. The use of multi-channel attraction including targeted social media campaigns to mirror candidate footprints across Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.
6. A tailored candidate approach whereby specific touch points are set and agreed throughout their recruitment journey.

**red** National Solutions have demonstrated particular success in time critical, high-volume recruitment campaigns. To speak with a member of the team about your recruitment requirements email [solutions@red-recruitment.com](mailto:solutions@red-recruitment.com).

**red** National Solutions add value to all your UK recruitment requirements.

# contact centre benefits

Due to the huge variety of benefits on offer, it is not possible to provide individual case studies detailing typical contact centre packages.

**red** has instead provided a summary of the benefit packages offered across the region.

- Holiday (average 24 days rising with service)
- Contributory pension (1-10% increasing with service)
- Discounted company products and/or services
- Annual salary reviews
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Flexible benefits (i.e. buy/sell holidays, dental care, eye care)
- Refer a Friend incentives
- Company performance related bonus
- Individual performance related bonus
- Childcare vouchers
- Life Assurance (average 4 x salary)
- Subsidised canteen
- Employee Assistance Helpline
- Share scheme
- Gym onsite or free membership for local gym
- Sponsored studies
- Onsite/offsite parking
- Birthday off (paid)
- Paid week off if you get married
- Morale boosting events (i.e. massages, juggling lessons etc.)
- Sabbatical paying £750 and a further £750 if you return after 6 months
- Free fruit
- Free breakfast and healthy snacks
- Family BBQ summer party
- Christmas bonus - £500
- Staff discount on products
- Invitation to sporting box
- Football and rugby tickets
- No errors award
- Health and Wellbeing vouchers
- Funding for further education or technical qualifications
- Employee Assistance Programme

don't just take our word for it...

From application through to job offer, Jodie supported me all the way. She was friendly, professional, thorough and kept me updated throughout. Thank you **red**!

Candidate testimonial

*Recruitment with **red**, and in particular Westley, has been an absolute joy and a surprisingly easy process! We look forward to working with you more in the future.*

Beth Thomas - OVO Energy

*It's been a pleasure working with Katie. Her personable approach and attention to detail has been spot on! The quality of the candidates we've seen has been fantastic.*

Poppy Hynam - Which? Trusted Traders

**red** thrive on challenging assumptions and overcoming obstacles. I would eagerly recommend Jill and the Gloucester Office to anyone seeking employment, at any level.

Age UK

It is an absolute pleasure working with **red**. Nothing is ever too much trouble and they're always keen to help. They are a great addition to our recruitment team. Thank you **red**!

Amy Callaway - Europa Group







‘We would like to thank all  
of the centres, **red** clients  
and SWCCF members that  
contributed to this report and  
gave their valuable feedback.’

# south west contact centre forum

This year's Salary and Benefits Report is a must read for any contact centre professional, offering insight to the ever-challenging South West recruitment market.

The South West contact centre industry continues to grow in terms of new contact centres coming into the region and incumbent businesses embracing growth in line with their customers' demand to provide new services and communication channels.

This report reflects this activity, where significant increases in salary levels and even greater competition for skilled contact centre staff, is particularly evident. The skills shortage that dominated the hiring landscape last year is still being felt industry wide, driving these results. These market drivers develop into three key trends all contact centre recruiters need to embrace when hiring future talent:

**The future workplace and digital transformation:** A combination of technological advancement in new customer communication channels - web-chat, SMS messaging and web box to name a few – as well as the pace of change, makes using a flexible recruitment model the fastest route to a more dynamic, adaptable hiring plan. Review, reflect, measure and adjust your recruitment strategy to ensure your process can attract the best candidates to your business, in line with your company vision.

**Addressing the skills shortage through training:** Investing in employees' skills and development has always been essential in retaining and helping current staff upskill, creating greater job satisfaction and thereby enhancing retention efforts. However, in the current climate this becomes an essential tool in keeping engagement levels high within the business and proactively addressing retention levels.

**Build happier workplaces:** With skilled candidates at a premium and the loss of existing talent running high, workplace wellbeing and employee engagement continues to be an important factor for contact centre employers. As such, the hiring process should focus on candidates that are a good fit for company culture; hiring to values and behaviours and training for skills. In addition, contact centre environments need to inspire an active commitment to a robust health and wellbeing strategy to ensure successful, happy employees.

Thank you to all South West Contact Centre members who took part in the workshops and helped in making this document so informative. Enjoy the read!

**Jane Thomas / Managing Director**



Invest Bristol & Bath (IBB) is delighted to support this Salary & Benefits Report 2018. It provides a wealth of information and intelligence that highlights the Contact Centre industry's diversity, market trends and the strength of the talent pool.

The West of England is an economic leader with an economy worth over £32.5 billion a year. As a net contributor to the national purse, with a population of over 1 million people and in excess of 43,000 businesses, our region competes on a global scale.

The region has strong economic foundations through the prominence of our varied key sectors; we have some of the biggest and best UK financial institutions located in Bristol and Bath, of which the Contact Centre sector is a core component.

Most recently Bristol was named as Huawei's leading core Smart City, overtaking London, allowing the region to draw on its strengths and inform the way we live and work in the future. Along with our technical capabilities, the region has a reputably high quality of life having been voted 'best place to live' by the Sunday Times for 2017 and Bristol is in the top 'Coolest Cities' list from National Geographic.

Through our work we know that to recruit high level graduates and senior managers, the benefits of a role need to cover more than just salary. This guide provides our professional team of account managers with a vital tool to support compelling inward investment propositions to our clients. At IBB we can work with you to grow your business by providing connections, research and talent information. The West of England is a fantastic place to live and work and we'd be delighted to welcome you to our growing sectors.

**Matt Cross / Head of Inward Investment**

‘We do hope that this report proves a valuable benchmarking tool when considering your own centre’s strategies.’

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