

Business backing skills show

With only a month to go until the Suffolk Skills Show at Trinity Park on October 21, the

preparations for the event, which is set to bring thousands of school children and employers together are entering their final stages.

The Suffolk Skills Show is anticipated to be the largest employer-led skills and careers event in the area. The show provides the opportunity to speak to employers from all over Suffolk and consider



■ Ian Twinley chairman of John Grose.
Picture: CONTRIBUTED

the range of industries the county excels in. There will be hands-on activities and experiences to inspire young people to explore careers and motivate them to find more about the world of work.

Over 16s not booked with a school/college are welcome to come along on the day between 9am and 6pm, and register at reception in the event centre.

Ian Twinley, chairman of the Suffolk Skills Show Committee and chairman of John Grose motoring dealership, which is one of the event's sponsors, said throughout the business community there was a "huge desire" to help young people in the county.

Mr Twinley said: "As one of the large employers in Suffolk we have a responsibility to support initiatives that benefit the community like education and charitable projects. The Skills Show is an initiative that was well overdue and we are fortunate that we managed to get a group of like-minded people together to make it happen.

"The first year was tough as we had no money to organise the show, having made a commitment that John Grose would underwrite the event I was relieved and indeed eternally grateful that we had so

many businesses step up as sponsor partners."

Last year almost 4,000 young people attended the inaugural skills show.

John Grose runs a work experience programme for 15-16-year-olds, works with 13 local schools and is involved in helping sporting and education Ipswich-based charity Inspire Suffolk.

Adam Chafer joined John Grose as a trainee technician at their Peugeot site after leaving sixth form college.

He has now completed a three-year apprenticeship and has become a fully qualified technician.

Mitchell Simmons joined as an IT apprentice and successfully completed a NVQ level 2 in IT. Mitchell then moved to their marketing team where he is now working towards a further NVQ in marketing.

Another sponsor of this year's show is Easton and Otley College which is supporting the agricultural, sciences and food sector.

College spokesman John Nice said: "In terms of activities specific to Easton and Otley College, we will be working with Suffolk Agricultural Association and other businesses to help promote farming. Farming is incredibly advanced technologically – in fact some of the science and

■ Mitchell and Adam from John Grose
Picture: CONTRIBUTED



technology behind farming is akin to space travel and that is the kind of message that we will be explaining to attendees. In other areas of this event, our construction department will be offering have-a-go activities and engineering will be involved in a pit-stop challenge giving visitors a flavour of Formula One."

Louise Bradfield from Newmarket is about to start the second year of a foundation degree in agriculture at the college.

She said: "Overall, my impressions of the first year of the course are that I'm glad I chose this option. I did

a diploma in 2012/13 at the college – it was very practical – it's been nice linking the practical that I did last year with the theory side of things."

Major freight and logistics company, Uniserve, is a new sponsor of the show this year. They are building a major distribution centre in Felixstowe which will create more than 500 jobs, including apprenticeships.

■ **Limited stands are available at the skills show for businesses. Contact hello@suffolkskillsshow.com or go to www.suffolkskillsshow.com**



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