



Apprenticeship Guide

east of england
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
association



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1. About this guide

Our aim throughout this guide is to support managers and staff to develop effective processes for recruiting and supporting apprentices, incorporating minimum quality standards in order to guarantee a positive experience for both apprentices and managers.

It offers help and advice at both strategic and practical levels, with case studies and examples of good practice from across the East of England and beyond.

Strategic support and advice

Advice and guidance on the strategic approach to Apprenticeships can be found in Section 4: Gaining Commitment, Section 5: Strategic Planning and Section 7: Building on Success. These sections are particularly useful to those who have responsibility and capacity to influence the strategic direction of their Council.

Practical help and advice

The practical help and advice provided in Section 3: Definitions and Section 6: Making it Happen will give operational line managers a better understanding of Apprenticeships and enable them to support apprentices in the workplace.

But before doing anything

It is worth noting that many Councils across the East of England are active on Apprenticeships, so before taking any action it is advisable to contact the relevant officer within your authority to avoid duplicating or undermining existing arrangements. A list of all contacts can be found at Appendix 1 of this guide.

Acknowledgements

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Lindsay Smith
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2. Introduction

“Apprenticeships are the proven way to train your workforce. Apprenticeships can make your organisation more effective, productive and competitive by addressing your skills gaps directly, even in uncertain economic times. There are real business benefits to taking on apprentices.”

*www.apprenticeships.org.uk
24/01/11*

‘Growing apprentices’ is an important component in Council plans to tackle issues such as rising unemployment and worklessness.

Local government employs 20 per cent of the total workforce nationally but employs fewer than 10 per cent of all apprentices.

“Apprenticeships can help businesses across all sectors by offering a route to harness fresh new talent. UK businesses consider skills shortages and recruitment difficulties a bigger threat to performance than soaring oil prices and declining consumer spending, and more than a quarter of these rate this form of vocational training higher than any other qualification.

Apprenticeships ensure that your workforce has the practical skills and qualifications your organisation needs now and in the future. The mixture of on and off job learning ensures they learn the skills that work best for your business. Over 130,000 companies offer apprentice places because they understand the benefits that apprentices bring to their business – increased productivity, improved competitiveness and a committed and competent work-force.”

*www.apprenticeships.org.uk
24/01/11*

“Apprenticeships are at the heart of the system that we will build. They bring together individuals, motivated and working hard to develop themselves; employers, investing in their own success but supporting a programme with wider social, environmental and economic value; and Government, providing public funding and building the prestige and reputation of the programme.

We will expand the numbers of adult Apprenticeships available each year. To fund this, we will increase investment in Apprenticeships by up to £250 million over the spending review period. There will be investment of £605 million in 2011-12 and an indicative budget of £648 million in 2012-13.

We will not only increase numbers, but we will improve the programme. As an advanced economy need advanced skills, we will reshape Apprenticeships so that technician level – Level 3 – becomes the level to which learners and employers aspire. To widen access, there will be clear progression routes from Level 3 Apprenticeships to higher level skills, including Level 4 Apprenticeships or higher education”

*Skills for Sustainable Growth –
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
2010*

3. Definitions

An Apprentice

An apprentice is an employee, 16 or over, who is following a structured, work-based training programme within a particular occupational area.

An apprentice can be a new recruit or an existing member of staff, working full time or part time. The National Apprenticeship Service expects that this is for a minimum of 30 hours per week.

An Apprenticeship

This is the actual structured training programme, referred to as a framework, which an apprentice follows – a mixture of on and off the job learning leading to nationally recognised and accredited qualifications.

An Apprenticeship **must** include the following components:

- a **knowledge-based element** commonly referred to as a Technical Certificate (although frameworks are not confined to this qualification). This is a nationally recognised, vocationally related qualification (VRQ) which provides the essential knowledge to do a job. It is most often taught off the job and leads to the award of a diploma or certificate such as those offered by BTEC or City & Guilds
- a **competency-based element** commonly referred to as an NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) (although frameworks are not confined to this qualification). Competency based elements cover practical, work-related tasks designed to develop the skills and capability to do a job effectively. They are based on national standards which specify what a competent person in a job could be expected to do; competence is assessed by comparing skills against these standards
- a **Key Skills / Functional Skills** element. This includes the mandatory subjects of Communication (developing and demonstrating speaking, listening, reading and writing skills) and Application

of Number (skills in interpreting information involving numbers, carrying out calculations, interpreting results and presenting findings). It may also include Information Communication Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance and Problem Solving

- a module on employment rights and responsibilities

Apprenticeships exist at three levels:

- Apprenticeships – leading to a level 2 qualification (equal to five GCSEs at grades A-C)
- Advanced Apprenticeships – leading to a level 3 qualification (equal to two A-levels)
- Higher Apprenticeships – leading to a level 4 qualification (equal to HND or a Foundation Degree)

Generally, Apprenticeships take between one and three years to complete, depending mostly on the skill levels of the apprentice and the framework they are following.

All apprentices spend the majority of their time in the workplace, developing their vocational competencies alongside work colleagues. Sometimes a mentor supports them to enhance their learning. A specialist provider usually delivers the remaining learning off the job, which may be in a local Further Education College or on the specialist provider's premises.

To comply with the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA), Apprenticeship frameworks must also include a minimum of 280 Guided Learning Hours (GLH) per year. GLH encourages and enables the apprentice to develop the technical skills of the job and to develop their knowledge of theoretical concepts across a range of context and the wider market.

Frameworks and qualifications

Sector Skills Councils are the Government bodies that work with employers in particular industry sectors to develop national occupational standards and to design and maintain Apprenticeship frameworks to meet

the needs of the industries they represent. There are currently 23 Sector Skills Councils, together covering approximately 90 per cent of the UK workforce. Details of these can be found at www.sscalliance.org

At present, there are around 200 Apprenticeship frameworks available, ranging from accountancy and business administration to textiles, engineering and construction. These frameworks cover many of the occupations and service areas relevant to local Councils.

The most common frameworks that Councils use include Business Administration, Customer Care, Information & Communication Technology, Accountancy, Vehicle Maintenance and a variety of craft areas, but there are many others that are relevant to Councils which are underutilised.

The National Apprenticeship Service website www.apprenticeships.org.uk/ has a full list of available Apprenticeship frameworks; along with information on new frameworks currently being developed including Building Control, Planning and Strategic Housing.

Funding - cost for employers

As a contracted employee, an apprentice must receive a wage. The minimum wage for apprentices is currently £2.50 an hour, although for nineteen year olds and over, this only applies for the first twelve months after which the National Minimum Wage is payable. Further details can be found on the National Minimum Wage website www.hmrc.gov.uk

However, as skills develop, many employers tend to increase wages – in fact; research has found that apprentices currently earn an average of £170 net pay per week.

Some Councils place apprentice posts at Scale 1 - currently between £12,678 and £14,492 - for the duration of the Apprenticeship, with the salary rising to match the post grading when the apprentice qualifies.

Clearly, there are other non-visible costs for employers namely for the supervision, support and mentoring that needs to be put in

place to support the apprentice and these associated costs can be significant.

Funding from the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

NAS covers the training costs of an apprentice in full, or in part, depending on their age, i.e.

- for 16–18 year olds, NAS covers 100% of costs, i.e. makes funding available via the training provider to cover the full cost of the mandatory training required to complete the framework
- for 19-24 year olds, NAS will cover up to 50% of the mandatory training costs
- for over 25s, NAS will cover up to 40% of the costs, and it is worth researching different training providers, taking into account quality and robustness of their offer and value for money.

The Training Provider

Training providers are organisations which hold a contract to deliver Apprenticeship frameworks and can be local colleges or specialist training organisations. Some Councils hold contracts and are able to deliver Apprenticeships either internally to their employees, externally to employees within other organisations or both.

Training Providers deliver the knowledge requirements of the Apprenticeship qualification and / or assess an apprentice's competence in a workplace setting.

All contracted Training Providers receive regular Ofsted inspections to quality assure their delivery of Apprenticeship frameworks. Your local NAS Employer Services Manager can help to identify the right provider who can deliver the appropriate framework for you from a wide available range. A list of regional NAS Employer Services Managers is available at Appendix 2 of this guide.

However, you should always discuss any arrangements to procure training provision with HR colleagues first. They may already have established good working relationships with Training Providers and may even have produced an exclusive preferred list, with

strict procedures to follow for contracting with providers.

How the Apprenticeship training is delivered

Assessment of competence

Some of the Apprenticeship framework, usually the competency element, will be assessed 'on the job', i.e. in the workplace as part of the apprentice's day-to-day work activities.

The Training Provider will allocate an assessor to the apprentice who will guide them through all stages of the process.

The assessor will check the apprentice's capabilities against a set of agreed standards throughout the training, using a variety of methods, including:

- portfolio evidence (i.e. work produced by the apprentice)
- observations
- structured interviews
- witness testimonials
- video evidence

Further information and details about the actual units which make up an NVQ at the different levels is available on the NAS website www.apprenticeships.org.uk/

Off the job training

In some cases an apprentice will need to undertake some of the training away from their job (referred to as 'off the job' training).

This will usually involve the Key Skills / Functional Skills element and / or the Technical Certificate. Depending on the apprentice's actual job, or the elements of training being undertaken, off the job training could be one day a week or, in a few cases, a block release (e.g. Construction or Horticulture).

Achievement of Apprenticeship Framework

Once competence has been demonstrated, the Training Provider's assessor will 'sign off' the achieved units.

On completion, the apprentice will receive an accredited, nationally recognised qualification for each of the framework elements and an Apprenticeship Certificate at the appropriate level on completion of all elements.

4. Gaining Commitment

The Department for Communities and Local Government identified that best performing Councils are creating one Apprenticeship for every 65 employees; the average is one apprentice per 248 employees.

Three-quarters of Councils nationally are working to increase the number of apprentices in their workforce or across their suppliers and partners.

At Chelmsford Borough Council two Human Resource (HR) Apprentices featured in a "Day in the life of" article in their staff magazine in June 2010. This was a great way of informing staff about the benefits of employing apprentices. There was also an "Apprenticeship Success" article in their staff magazine in October 2010 to raise awareness.

Member and Chief Executive Commitment

Member and senior officer buy-in and commitment are crucial to ensure the success of Apprenticeships within your Council.

The drive to increase the number of Apprenticeships is often led by the Leader and / or Chief Executive and then cascaded to all directorates and services through effective communication.

The key to gaining commitment from Elected Members is to present it in the context of their role as community leaders. The skills, worklessness and NEET (not in employment, education or training) agenda is a high priority across all Councils in the East of England. Apprenticeships can offer an opportunity into employment for those facing barriers to work and are central to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

Promoting the financial and organisational benefits of Apprenticeships will help to gain commitment from the Chief Executive. These include:

- savings in sickness absence, recruitment costs, turnover and agency staff spend

- rejuvenation of the workforce, providing new and fresh ideas
- mentoring opportunities for other employees
- a talent pool for future leaders

The Business Case

Developing a strong and robust business case for Apprenticeships, which clearly demonstrates the benefits that they bring to the organisation and the wider community, will help to gain support.

The key areas for inclusion in the business case include:

- an initiative to meet the priorities of the community such as tackling local unemployment, worklessness and skills issues and meeting Local Area Agreement / Multi-Area Agreement targets
- evidence to support successful inspections, Equality Impact Assessments and Investors in People
- a way to achieve cost savings and efficiencies in relation to recruitment and retention of staff, reduction in sickness absence and improved service delivery
- an opportunity to influence suppliers and partners to employ and train local people by promoting Apprenticeships through procurement
- evidence to support the authority's 'corporate parenting' responsibility by offering employability opportunities to care leavers
- an opportunity to set an example to the wider community as both an exemplary local employer and commissioner of services

For Councils as employers, Apprenticeships:

- are an excellent return on investment
- increase productivity and retention
- reduce turnover and recruitment costs
- improve local service quality

- help increase skill levels, productivity and the employability of local people
- help to fill current or predicted skill shortages
- bring young people into an ageing workforce
- ensure knowledge doesn't retire when employees do

For local authorities as local leaders, Apprenticeships:

- get young people into paid employment
- help develop skills and knowledge, reducing reliance on public spending
- can engage, motivate and enable care experienced young people to achieve their goals through strong and effective 'corporate parenting'
- help reduce NEET (not in employment, education or training) figures and help achieve national and local targets
- widen choice for school and college leavers and help raise aspirations
- help tackle long-term unemployment
- lead to permanent jobs
- involve the local community in the delivery of local services

A number of local Councils have developed Apprenticeship Strategies or Plans which are linked to their corporate workforce strategies and objectives. Gaining formal approval to the strategies and plans has secured Member and Senior Management buy-in and commitment.

Further details can be obtained from contacts at Hertfordshire County Council, Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council and St Albans District Council.

Senior Management Commitment

In order to sustain a long-term commitment, Apprenticeships should be included in any strategy or policy covering employment, equality and diversity, regeneration, procurement, wellbeing, children's and young people's services, anti-social behaviour, healthy communities and the 14-19 agenda.

Line Manager / Supervisor Commitment

Raising the awareness of Apprenticeships and their benefits amongst line managers and supervisors will encourage them to think about employing apprentices within their teams.

The National Apprenticeship Service has material on their website that can be used by Councils to raise awareness of Apprenticeships, their benefits and how they can be effectively supported and managed. These materials are available on the National Apprenticeship website www.apprenticeships.org.uk

The Public Sector Apprenticeship (PSA) Communities of Practice (CoP) is a shared knowledge resource for Apprenticeships across the public sector. www.communities.idea.gov.uk

A direct link to expanding local Apprenticeships is www.apprenticeships.org.uk/LAtoolkit.aspx

Providing a manager's briefing session is a good way to raise awareness of Apprenticeships and their benefits and dispel any myths or misconceptions they may have. The session could be included as part of the induction for new line managers.

Cambridgeshire County Council, Hertfordshire County Council, North Hertfordshire District Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk County Council all give information / guides and or give one to one briefing session to managers who are interested in recruiting apprentices.

St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Suffolk County Council have developed podcasts of young people's Apprenticeship stories.

Other ideas include:

- put managers who already employ apprentices in touch with others who do not
- create a 'Frequently Asked Questions' page for managers on your intranet¹
- promote the business benefits in internal communications such as staff newsletters and magazines, line manager briefings and the intranet
- provide case studies of where Apprentices are working well in other departments or similar authorities
- use the Local Government Apprenticeship Framework Map² to identify Apprenticeship frameworks relevant to your business and service needs

Commitment from Employees

Some of the tips above will be useful for getting all employees on board with Apprenticeships, such as promoting them through internal communication mechanisms.

Offering Apprenticeships to existing employees will also help to raise awareness generally (see Section 5: Strategic Planning for more information).

A key and valid concern for existing employees may be that apprentices will be replacing recently redundant staff or taking work away from colleagues who are already concerned about the security of their post. It is important therefore to ensure the support of your Trade Union.

Trade Union Commitment

Trade Unions play an important role in promoting learning in the workplace as well as encouraging employers to take on apprentices and make sure they are treated fairly.

Involving the trade unions at an early stage can help to ensure that you have ongoing support as well as being aware of any issues later on in the process.

Trade Unions, especially Learning Representatives, will have a wealth of knowledge about how to manage on and off the job training and their insights and support will be valuable in gaining buy-in into your schemes.

Union Learn has produced useful reports for its members on how to use collective bargaining to ensure quality Apprenticeship schemes are put in place.

¹ Examples of Frequently Asked Questions are available on www.apprenticeships.org.uk and on the Public Sector Apprenticeship Communities of Practice website, www.communities.idea.gov.uk

² The Framework Map has been developed by London Boroughs on behalf of Local Government Improvement and Development. A copy can be found on the Local Communities of Practice website

5. Strategic Planning

Workforce Plans

Workforce planning

Workforce planning is about:

- identifying what your Council needs in relation to its workforce in order to achieve its objectives
- analysing how the current workforce compares in relation to what is needed (e.g. in relation to skill shortages, attitudes, diversity, age profile, representation)
- developing a strategy to set out how it is going to develop, attract and retain the workforce it needs to be successful
- putting in place an effective programme of action to address the critical workforce issues that have been identified

The LG Improvement & Development's Local Government Workforce Strategy 2010 www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/18895188 advises that workforce planning works best in service areas, led by service managers, and then supplemented by corporate workforce planning in relation to generic workforce issues.

Leading by Example is the online peer to peer support and self assessment toolkit, developed with Jobcentre Plus and Local Government Improvement and Development, by councils, for councils.

www.leadingbyexample.org.uk

Workforce Data

Having a clear understanding of the make-up of your workforce in relation to age, ethnicity and skills is a key factor in workforce planning. As a result of signing up to the Skills Pledge, many Councils are now undertaking an analysis of their workforce to provide them with intelligent data that will enable them to plan for the future more effectively.

Skills Shortages

Many Councils face skills shortages in areas such as social work, planning and environmental health.

The National Apprenticeship Service has produced a regional summary of strategic demand which sets out the skills shortage areas for the region. These are:

- public sector
- construction
- engineering including building services engineering
- hospitality
- wholesale and retail trade including motor vehicle and motorcycle repair

Developing career pathways using Apprenticeships offers Councils the opportunity to promote these occupations to young people and provides a 'grow your own' solution to the problem.

Succession Planning / Talent Management

Using workforce data, Councils are able to identify employees who are coming up to retirement and make plans to ensure knowledge and skills do not retire when the employee does.

Developing career pathways for apprentices provides a cost effective way of planning for the future as it can result in the majority of external recruitment being for entry level positions, which are the least costly to recruit to.

The East of England Local Government Association has developed a Talent Management tool kit in the form of a pack of cards.
For more information please contact:
Lucy Powles at
Lucy.Powles@eelga.gov.uk

Identifying Apprenticeship opportunities for existing employees

Apprenticeships are not just for new employees. Using workforce data, Councils can identify existing employees who do not hold a minimum level 2 qualification and who would be eligible for Government funding towards the cost of their training. Utilising Government funding for those employees who are eligible enables Councils to maximise their training budgets and support more or different training interventions. Councils can also use their performance and development review process to identify Apprenticeship opportunities for existing employees. This could work through:

- operational managers identifying relevant Apprenticeship opportunities that meet the training and development needs of their employees, or
- establishing close links or co-ordination between those responsible for undertaking performance and development reviews and those responsible for workforce planning in order to identify potential Apprenticeship opportunities that arise from the process

Apprenticeships and the funding that they attract could also be beneficial to Councils to help employees 'at risk' to re-skill so that they are able to be redeployed in to other job roles. This could be particularly useful to address skill shortage areas.

Review of Entry Level Posts

Some Councils have undertaken a review of entry level posts and where appropriate, have converted these into 'Apprenticeship' positions. This means that employees recruited to these posts will automatically undertake an Apprenticeship programme.

This not only achieves savings in recruitment costs (as recruiting apprentices through Apprenticeship Vacancies is free-of-charge) but Councils are also saving money by introducing a 'career grade' for apprentices until they complete their Apprenticeship framework.

Corporate Vacancy Management Process

Implementing a corporate vacancy management process which is co-ordinated and managed centrally will enable Councils to enforce tighter

control on recruitment and potentially lead to an increase in the number of apprentices employed and result in cost savings.

This can be achieved by introducing a criteria-based recruitment process where managers must fill all vacancies with an apprentice unless they can provide a reasoned argument as to why this would not be feasible.

This process would not take precedence over the Council's existing redeployment policy where 'at risk' employees would be considered first for all vacancies that arise.

Apprenticeship Development Strategy

Taking a partnership approach to developing Apprenticeship strategies involving Corporate HR / OD, 14-19 Teams, Economic Development / Regeneration and Procurement will provide significant benefits and result in:

- the input to and ownership of the strategy by a number of key stakeholders
- the ability to establish clear links to other strategies and plans resulting in a more consistent and sustainable approach
- allow others to influence the shape of the Council's workforce plan

An Apprenticeship Working Group has been established within Cambridgeshire County Council consisting of representatives from Children and Young People's Service, HR, Community and Adult Services, Environment Services, Procurement, Economic Development, East of England Local Government Association and the National Apprenticeship Service.

By working together the group has successfully developed a cohesive Strategy and Action Plan for Apprenticeships.

Monitoring and Tracking Apprentices

Not all Councils can give an accurate account of the number of apprentices they have in place. This may be because they do not actually employ the apprentice, or each department/service manages their own apprentices and there is no centralised approach to monitoring figures.

It is important that each authority has access to accurate up-to-date information regarding the number of apprentices it employs. The reasons for this are:

- support for Apprenticeships within your workforce and local community can be used as evidence for key performance indicators within Local Area Agreements and successful inspections, Equality Impact Assessments and Investors in People
- such data will support your strategic workforce planning process by clearly understanding where your apprentices are and where they will be needed e.g. in skills shortage areas
- Ministers regularly request data on apprentices in order to gain an accurate picture both regionally and nationally

Using your Council's corporate HR system to 'flag' apprentices is one of the easiest ways of accurately recording and monitoring them.

It is important however that processes and procedures are put in place to ensure all apprentices are accurately identified, particularly where management of apprentices is devolved to individual departments / services and not centrally co-ordinated.

Procurement

According to NAS, each year the public sector alone spends around £200 billion on goods, services and capital assets and construction - £42 billion through local authorities.

The Government has committed to the delivery of 22,000 Apprenticeship places over the next three years by encouraging employers working with Government to invest in the skills of their employees and provide Apprenticeship opportunities.

£200m from the Train to Gain budget has been refocused to provide an extra 50,000 apprenticeships.

The Government is looking to all public sector procurement professionals to exploit opportunities to embed skills and Apprenticeships at all stages within the procurement process.

Councils can do this by:

- raising awareness of the Government's policies in relation to promoting skills through procurement, particularly with procurement practitioners and policy makers
- exploring opportunities to work with existing contractors to raise awareness of Apprenticeships and secure specific jobs and skills outcomes over a period of time, on a voluntary basis
- identifying opportunities to include clauses in upcoming contracts, particularly those in construction, IT, social care and facilities management
- exploring local and regional opportunities
- developing a long-term strategic approach to the use of contract clauses
- developing an action plan to deliver a contribution to the 22,000 Apprenticeship ambition

Advantage West Midlands has produced a procurement framework for jobs and skills which includes a toolkit to support public sector organisations with the development of an approach to this initiative.

Meetings have been held with procurement leads from Councils across the region to raise awareness of the benefits and impact of promoting Apprenticeships through procurement.

Councils are being supported to develop charters or pledges for inclusion on their procurement literature and websites, to use their influence over existing contractors to promote the benefits of Apprenticeships and to identify future contracts where there is potential to include requirements relating to Apprenticeships. They are also being supported to include these approaches within their existing Procurement Strategies and Processes.

6. Making it Happen

ATA / GTA

A means of recruiting apprentices into the Council, without adding to the head count, is by employing an apprentice through an ATA / GTA.

An **Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA)** directly employs and manages individuals who undertake their Apprenticeship with an approved Training Provider while being hired out to a 'host employer'. The ATA also co-ordinates the training activity for the Apprenticeship.

A **Group Training Association (GTA)** provides support on accessing, managing and the delivery of training for a group of employers to encourage their involvement in apprenticeships. A GTA is a non-profit organisation providing training and related services on behalf of a group of local employers, funded by a variety of sources including government grants.

Essex County Council provides a range of opportunities for apprentices and is committed to placing and funding an additional 1250 young people in new apprenticeships by 2012. A mixture of private and public sector roles will offer a range of opportunities for young people across the county.

Recruitment

Promoting yourselves as an employer

If you ask local people what the Council does, they would very likely say, '... bins, Council Tax... etc?' It is important to broaden their knowledge of the wide range of services available within local government if you want them to respond positively when you wish to recruit. Local Government Improvement and Development provide the free www.LGcareers.com website.

There are many ways to promote the range of jobs and your Apprenticeship vacancies:

- recruitment fairs and careers conventions provide excellent opportunities to promote the Council and the variety of jobs available. Work with Jobcentre plus and to plan ahead

- arrange open days for people to visit departments and workplaces to find out more about opportunities
- advertise vacancies on the recruitment section of the website.
- link with local schools and colleges to offer work experience and visits – include teachers in the offer where possible
- use the intranet to promote Apprenticeships to existing staff
- use Apprenticeships Vacancies Online via your Training Provider or local NAS contact. The service is free and available on the NAS website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk

If you are looking to target young people in particular, find innovative ways of engaging with them and their advisers to raise interest in Apprenticeships. Highlights the roles and positive impact of young people within your organisation.

Consider the type of language to use, avoid jargon and present an attractive image. If your advert looks too official, stuffy and boring they may not be interested in applying.

Always provide a name and telephone number for someone they can ring to find out more and ensure that this person is enthusiastic and engaging to young people.

Application and Selection

It is worth remembering that most young people who apply for Apprenticeships may be school leavers who are applying for a job for the first time. Is your process appropriate, or is it too daunting and difficult? Do you have a generic person specification, which includes the basic attributes required of an apprentice including the skills and knowledge they will need?

Remember also that the apprentice will not be recruited as an experienced staff member and may not have all of the skills needed for the role but have the potential and willingness to learn and develop.

Think about inviting interested applicants to a special recruitment event in order to explain about Apprenticeships, the recruitment process, legal issues such as Criminal Records Bureau

checks and ID verification and to support them with their applications. If possible, have an existing apprentice available to talk positively about their experiences.

Ipswich Borough Council has worked with the Young Chamber of Commerce and North-Hertfordshire District Council has been involved with College Careers Fairs. In the past Cambridgeshire County Council have had open days for young people.

Appointment and Induction

An induction programme is the first experience a new staff member has of a new organisation after the recruitment and selection process.

The quicker apprentices become familiar with their new environment, improve speed to competency, establish good working relationships with other staff members and understand their role and how it fits into the organisation, the quicker they will integrate and be happy and productive employees.

Induction need not be a very formal process but it needs to be properly managed. First impressions and experiences in the first few days, weeks and months of employment can greatly influence an individual's perception of their work area and the Council as a whole and can in turn influence motivation and retention.

However keen new recruits may be, they may have anxieties about how well they will:

- get on with their co-workers
- understand the standards and rules (written and unwritten) of the organisation
- make a good impression on their new manager or supervisor
- be able to do the job.

A good induction introduces the apprentice not only to their immediate colleagues, but to other workers with whom they may have less day-to-day contact, including trade union representatives or employee representatives on any staff committee or Council.

Remember:

- Try not to overload new starters, especially young people, with too much information in a very short time.
- Encourage new starters to use your intranet to meet peers across the organisation. Young people often feel isolated and alone.
- Setting out the plan of induction at the beginning avoids the problems that can arise in trying to arrange time in the future, when the employee is established in the job.
- Don't forget induction needs for part time workers. They may need some time on days, or modified shifts, to cover the induction period.
- Try to let new starters do some practical work, as this will assist their learning and enable them to relate what they are being taught to what they will be doing.
- Anticipate problems that may arise for new starters with disabilities and get advice from HR colleagues, the apprentices themselves and other colleagues such as the Access to Work Officer or the Learning Disability Partnership team.

The outcome of a successful induction will be that the new starter has a good feel for the organisation, and should continue to feel that they made the right decision in joining you as an apprentice.

Support Networks

Corporate HR

Corporate HR staff will be able to provide support and guidance on a range of employment related issues, and will be likely to have had wide previous experience across all service areas in learning and development and induction of new staff.

Managers / Supervisors

Line Managers / Supervisors should give the apprentice an induction into their role and provide some on the job training. They can support learning for an apprentice in various ways including:

- providing opportunities to learn or develop new skills including any relevant 'in-house' training
- identifying meaningful and useful tasks that are relevant to the key skill and designed to address a real business problem in the apprentice's job and workplace
- setting a clear example, demonstrating and explaining how to do things and why things should be done in a certain way
- encouraging apprentices to take responsibility and make decisions
- helping the apprentice to keep a written log of their activities at work
- asking them questions about their work and listen to what they say, also observe carefully how apprentices are performing and progressing, giving constructive feedback (advice and praise) whenever it is due
- rotating or extending jobs so that the apprentice can practice new skills and become more valuable to the organisation – this highlights the fact that the key skills are transferable to different jobs
- above all, managers should give positive support, time and encouragement.

Training Provider

Training Providers can help to recruit apprentices by placing vacancies on the NAS Apprenticeship Vacancies online website. This website is promoted widely to people searching for jobs and advertises national, regional and local Apprenticeship opportunities.

It is always a good idea to discuss how you would prefer the Apprenticeship to be delivered with various training providers, to ensure that they can meet your needs, e.g. flexible delivery outside normal hours.

Some of the best practice has tended to come from authorities who have built strong working relationships with their training providers, based on a sound customer relationship set out in a service level agreement.

Luton Borough Council and Tendring District Council are employer providers, and have both been successful in their Apprenticeship programmes.

The Training Provider, along side the employer, is responsible for managing and delivering all the training and support required for the Qualification Framework. They will also carry out an induction on to their training programme, monitor and support the apprentice, carry out regular reviews and provide additional support where necessary for the apprentice to achieve their qualification.

Review meetings

Review meetings will include the apprentice, the Training Provider and the apprentice's supervisor / manager.

The purpose of the meetings is to assess an apprentice's progress, identify any potential issues and agree actions to address problems.

It will help to link together targets set by the apprentice's manager and the requirements of the NVQ and vice versa. The Training Provider will also set targets for coursework and assignments, celebrate achievements and discuss any areas for concern.

Added value

Many Training Providers offer added value sessions such as Customer Services Training, Health and Safety training, First Aid Certification or IT qualifications for free.

It is worth discussing any additional training offered by the Training Provider with HR colleagues to ensure that it meets corporate learning objectives but also to maximise these opportunities for the rest of the Council.

Buddies and Mentors

It is excellent practice to have a buddying and mentoring scheme in place for new apprentices.

Buddying is a mutual support relationship between employees. A buddying relationship would be equally balanced with no senior partner.

Many Councils have buddying schemes in place for new employees. It is helpful for the buddy to be from the same department or service but not from the same team. This will mean that the buddy will know many of the same people and needs of the service but not be directly involved in the day to day work of the apprentice.

A buddy will be responsible for showing the apprentice around the Council buildings and local area, discussing any work issues that the apprentice might feel is too small to mention to their manager and generally helping them fit in to Council life.

This should not be a formal arrangement and may fall by the wayside after approximately 6 months when the apprentice develops more support mechanisms within their own team, training provider and with other apprentices.

Informal Mentoring

Horsemouth is a free to use social networking site for informal mentoring. It connects people seeking support and guidance on a wide range of issues - education, career, work, family and health - with others who are willing to give and share from the benefit of their own experiences. It is open to anyone over 16 and users of the site are anonymous.

This unique partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service will mean that people can get tailored advice and support. Used in conjunction with the range of careers information and guidance services available, the initiative will help people make better informed career decisions by tapping into the knowledge of those that understand their situation.

Formal Mentoring

Employees interested in progressing their own personal learning, development and career as well as contributing to the development of other employees in the Council, may want to become involved with mentoring.

Mentoring is a process where one person offers guidance, advice and support to facilitate the development of another in the organisation. The mentor is unlikely to be the line manager but will usually be a more senior employee with the knowledge, experience and skills to guide the

mentee in their chosen direction. There are no prescribed objectives of mentoring; it is for the mentee to establish their own objectives and agree these with the mentor.

A mentoring partnership will provide:

- support for development to ensure effective learning for the future and the transfer of new skills into a workplace situation
- support for learning on the job to enhance job related knowledge and skills for the present role
- support for working towards a specific qualification
- support for developing in a profession
- support during training and development courses / phases

If you have a corporate mentoring scheme, then it is good practice to link with this and tailor certain aspects tailored for apprentices.

Tailoring could involve graduates from the Council mentoring the apprentices, or Level 3 or 4 apprentices who completed their courses the previous year. This would also ensure that the CPD requirements of graduates and advanced apprentices were covered.

North Hertfordshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council have mentoring schemes, which the apprentices actively participate in.

7. Building on Success

Progression and Career Pathways

Apprentices who commit to a long period of study and training to achieve their qualification are often keen to progress.

In the same way as your Council should review its skills profile and needs before deciding where an Apprenticeship can be most relevant and beneficial, by considering future skills and staffing requirements it can ensure that successful apprentices can continue to develop.

In most of the occupational roles covered by Apprenticeship frameworks, someone who completes an Apprenticeship is well placed, at the right time, to continue onto an Advanced Apprenticeship – whether that is in a transferable discipline such as customer service or administration or an industry specific pathway such as care or engineering.

The completion of an Advanced Apprenticeship, with all the work experience and achievement of qualifications that it entails, equips an individual for progression in the workplace to a more senior post or, in some areas of work, for a work-related Foundation Degree, a generic management qualification, or perhaps a higher level professional qualification, such as those offered by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development, or other professional bodies in areas such Accounting, Amenity Horticulture, Sports and Recreation, IT.

Successful apprentices may also be interested in becoming assessors or mentors to new apprentices, thereby helping the organisation to enhance its capacity for supporting lifelong learning and development.

To help apprentices prepare for future progression – including further training and promotion to new job roles - it can be very helpful to encourage them to maintain a personal development portfolio, encouraging them to take personal responsibility for their own learning plan and continuing development.

Measuring success

It is important that Councils measure the success of their Apprenticeship programmes, not only to demonstrate that they have achieved any aims and objectives set, but also to provide

factual, statistical evidence which can be used to support future business cases.

Examples of performance measures are:

- starts: number of people starting an Apprenticeship programme
- completions: number of apprentices completing the scheme
- workforce: percentage and / or ratio of Council workforce who are or have recently been apprentices
- services: number of services who employ apprentices
- diversity: profile of apprentices against the profile of the district, e.g. gender, age, disability, ethnicity
- targeted recruitment: number of apprentices from vulnerable groups, e.g. NEET, Ex-Offenders, Care Leavers
- return on investment: overall costs and savings of apprentices
- retention: number of apprentices who stay within the Council and those who go into full-time education, employment or training after completion of their Apprenticeship
- turnover: length of time apprentices stay with the Council
- absence costs: sickness absence rate of apprentices compared to the whole workforce
- recruitment costs: overall cost of recruiting an apprentice compared to recruitment of other employees
- satisfaction levels: customer satisfaction (apprentice, line manager, colleagues, mentors) - compare team satisfaction/morale of those teams with apprentices to those with none

Celebrate Success

Celebrating the success of your Apprenticeship programmes will provide the following benefits:

- provide encouragement to current or future apprentices
- raise awareness of Apprenticeships and their benefits throughout the organisation
- promote the organisation's commitment to Apprenticeships and organisational learning
- promote the organisation as an employer of choice
- create enthusiastic managers
- help with staff motivation

There are a number of ways to celebrate success:

Internally

- staff briefings
- magazines and newsletters
- intranet
- noticeboards
- special rewards/recognition schemes
- internal award ceremonies

Externally

- internet
- local newspapers
- local news
- case studies
- as part of National Apprenticeship Week
- nominating an apprentice or your Council for a National Apprenticeship Service Apprenticeship Award
- sharing your story on the Public Sector Apprenticeship (PSA) Communities of Practice (CoP).

8. Appendices

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**LIST OF NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE EMPLOYER SERVICES MANAGER
LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTACTS FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND**


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SUCCESS STORIES IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

Luton Borough Council

Outline of Story	<p>Outward Bound training event is designed to promote independent enquirers, effective participants and reflective learners. The programme also supports the development of apprentices' employability skills in that they undertake activities designed to enhance their team working, leadership, communication and problem solving; all of which promote Personal Learning & Thinking skills.</p> <p>The apprentices learn to take responsibility for their own actions and what is required to form an effective team, principles which are applied within the workplace.</p> <p>The event is held annually at CRS Adventures, River Dart in Devon and approximately 40 first year Luton Borough Council apprentices attended the event in October 2010.</p> <p>Outward Bound is an example of experiential learning where apprentices have to work together to overcome both physical and mental challenges. An example of the kind of tasks undertaken is Steeple Chase where problem solving skills are required to enable the whole team to get from one side of a course – over and under obstacles – to the other side without touching the floor. Tasks like this require a good understanding of the individual strengths and weaknesses within the team, effective planning and communication; together with good leadership and decision making skills in order to complete the task successfully.</p>
Name Job Title Location	<p><i>Pat Penniston</i> <i>Corporate Learning & Development Manager</i> <i>Luton Borough Council</i></p>
Please describe how and why you started	<p>It was identified through research with our employing departments and external employers that young people often lacked confidence at the start of their careers and very often lacked the skills necessary to successfully secure employment. Further research identified that young people are reluctant to interact with others of their age unless they come from the same or similar backgrounds. This very often restricted their development and their lack of understanding of different cultures and background led to missed opportunities</p> <p>As a direct result of the above the programme has been designed to raise awareness of individuals' motivational values and their impact on others, together with breaking down barriers, challenging perceptions and learning to trust. Apprentices are now able to identify potential conflict situations at an early stage and manage them more effectively.</p>
What challenges did you face?	<p>Selling the value of the programme to apprentices and employers gaining their commitment. Spending a week away with 40+ young people!</p>
Who else was involved?	<p>Supervisors – volunteers from Luton Borough Council staff and the work-based learning team. CRS staff – task instructors</p>

<p>What are the next steps?</p>	<p>Apprentices are tasked with putting together a presentation in their teams about their experiences on Outward Bound. Each team presents to a theme such as communication & listening skills, problem solving, planning & organisational skills, confidence & self esteem, leadership skills and supporting & motivating others.</p> <p>The presentations will be delivered to Member, representatives of the Senior Management team, supervisors and assessors in February 2011. This forms part of our Apprenticeship Week programme.</p>
<p>Who was your sponsor or champion?</p>	<p>Cllr. Robin Harris</p>
<p>Please provide quotes from your main contributors or sponsors. Or names of colleagues we can contact on your behalf.</p>	<p>“As a leader D was confident and commanding. He encouraged the team and set jobs for everyone. The team respected D as a leader. He always considered the ability of the team and dealt with conflict in a responsible and calm manner.” – Jessie Belmonte (CRS Instructor)</p> <p>“R is highly motivated and is completely committed to the team. R has gained respect from this and consequently she can influence those around her. R had a wonderful bubbly attitude. The team grew close as a result of this when times were hard. R never gave up, she kept going all week. What a great attitude.” – Mary Hyam (CRS Instructor)</p>
	

Essex County Council

Outline of Story	As part of its pledge to create 1,250 apprenticeships Essex County Council wanted to achieve 300 of these within Essex County Council, Local and District Government Authorities, Health, Education, Essex Police Authority, Care and Voluntary Sectors across the whole sub-region inclusive of the two Unitary Authorities of Southend and Thurrock
Name Job Title Location	<i>Kevin Downs</i> <i>Skills Manager, Public Sector Apprenticeships</i> <i>Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex</i>
Please describe how and why you started	In response to major skills challenges faced in Greater Essex and key to the Essex Economic Recovery Action Plan, Essex County Council Skills Unit developed to contribute to an effective reduction in numbers of adults without a level 2 qualification, reduction and prevention of NEET target group, development of a single skills strategy for Essex, Industry-specific apprenticeships to allow growth of fresh talent in ailing industries and the increase of Public Sector opportunities through apprenticeships by development of a robust recruitment process at entry point into Public Sector organisations.
What challenges did you face?	Development of a sustainable recruitment process for ECC apprentices, lack of understanding of Apprenticeships amongst young people, parents and employers, current economic climate, public sector pay and recruitment slow-down, significant organisation change and restructure and career instability amongst existing establishment headcount
Who else was involved?	Essex Partnership, Essex County Council Corporate Leadership Team, ECC HR and Directorate Leaders and Capita Resourcing, HR Representatives from 12 District Authorities and 2 Unitary Authorities, and National Apprenticeship Service.
Which Networks have you shared this with?	ECC CLT, DLT. HR Partners from all representative stakeholders, Connexions, National Apprenticeship Service, Regional Training Consortia
What are the next steps?	To evaluate programme effectiveness and to work with partner organisations to ensure sufficient resources remain in place to continue a sustainable model for apprenticeship growth in the sub-region
Who was your sponsor or champion?	Peter Martin, Leader, ECC Councillor Ray Gooding, ECC National Apprenticeship Service
Please provide quotes from your main contributors or sponsors. Or names of colleagues we can contact on your behalf.	Rebecca Tite Account Executive Communications Essex County Council telephone: 01245 430094 extension: 20094 mobile: 07879 116380 email: rebecca.tite@essex.gov.uk
Is there anything else you would like to add?	Essex County Council will utilise a sustainable ATA or GTA model as appropriate to realise a target of 1250 apprenticeships across the sub-region, supporting both Public and Private Sector Employers to meet the overall aims and objectives of the Essex Skills Strategy.


Chelmsford Borough Council

Outline of Story	Apprentices in Chelmsford Borough Council
Name Job Title Location	<i>Martine Kettles</i> <i>HR Business Partner (Apprenticeship co-ordinator)</i> <i>Chelmsford, Essex</i>
Please describe how and why you started	<p>We are very keen to support the National Apprenticeship Scheme. We want to build the skills of our workforce and attract young people into the organisation as part of our succession planning strategy.</p> <p>We began recruiting apprentices in January 2010. Since then, 8 apprentices have been recruited into the organisation and each appointment has been a very successful one for the apprentices and for us as an employer. All of the apprentices are performing very well in their roles and doing well on their training programmes. This has been a great start for us and something that we are keen to develop further.</p>
What challenges did you face?	<p>It was important for us to familiarise ourselves with the various training providers and gain an understanding of how the apprenticeship scheme worked as quickly as we could. There was a lot of support available to us both locally and nationally. We found the teams at EELGA, the Skills Team at Essex County Council and NAS to be very helpful in answering any questions that we had and are supportive of the work we are doing. It has also helped to meet with them in person and to build a good working relationship with them.</p>
What are the next steps?	<p>We hope to continue to help and support our current apprentices and to recruit more apprentices into the organisation.</p>
Who was your sponsor or champion?	Chelmsford Borough Council

Maldon District Council

Name Job Title Location	<i>Lisa Aldridge</i> <i>Revenues Administration Officer</i> <i>Maldon District Council</i>
Please describe how and why you started	Applied for a Business Administration course at Lota College as I felt this would be a great place to start and get qualifications as well as work experience within another work environment.
What challenges did you face?	The challenges I faced were; whilst at college and at work I had to talk and help customers over the telephone I felt this was a challenge because I was quite a shy person and wasn't confident at talking to customers over the phone in case I was unable to help them with a query but college and my colleagues at work helped me with this to get over it and I now feel confident to do this although I still may not no the answer, I don't panic about it.
Who else was involved?	Teachers and colleagues at work who helped me through everything, from the duties I had to do through to my college work/ assignments.
Is there anything else you would like to add?	College and my colleagues in my work environment have helped me so much I feel I have achieved a great deal of things by just being here. I have now been kept on in the same work environment and have a temporary contract as a Benefits Officer which I hope to continue with for my career.

Babergh District Council

Outline of Story	Apprentice who completed level 2 and Level 3 NVQ, has gone on to work within Babergh and now progressed two salary bands.
Name Job Title Location	<i>Cain Clark</i> <i>Revenues Recovery Officer</i> <i>Babergh DC</i>
Please describe how and why you started	Started on 18 th February 2008 as an Apprentice within the Natural and Built Environment Division. Worked between planning and environmental on a variety of tasks
What challenges did you face?	Combining study with working was a challenge but the variety of work allowed for lots of opportunities to ensure that the elements of the NVQ 2 and 3 were able to be met.
Who else was involved?	Cain worked closely with a supervisor throughout his apprenticeship and with his assessor from West Suffolk College. He received support from HR to expand roles in order to fulfil the criteria of the NVQ's and to monitor and ensure progress.
What are the next steps?	Cain finished his apprenticeship and secured a role with our customer services team, he then moved to work within our Revenues Team where he is doing very well having his work evaluated at a higher level in July last year and receiving a pay award for this.
Please provide quotes from your main contributors or sponsors. Or names of colleagues we can contact on your behalf.	Sophie Bray – sophie.bray@babergh.gov.uk Andrew Wilcock – Andrew.wilcock@babergh.gov.uk Sue Fayers – Sue.fayers@babergh.gov.uk
Is there anything else you would like to add?	I would add that I interviewed Cain for his Apprenticeship here at Babergh and his enthusiasm and flexibility has been an on-going theme throughout his time here and noticed by all who work with him.
	

Thurrock Council

Daniel Aldridge is undertaking a Young Inspectors Apprenticeship (NVQ 'Customer Services' Level 3) in the 14-19 & Youth Development Team at Thurrock Council, from July 2010 to July 2011.

Helen Sweeny - (Local Support Worker, Young Inspectors Programme) Mentor

Daniel applied for the position of Young Inspectors Apprentice in June 2010; from his previous experience, skills and his sheer enthusiasm for working with young people he was successful in joining the 14-19 & Youth Development team.

Since starting as an apprentice Daniel has been able to develop his experience and skills even further. Firstly in terms of his NVQ he is strengthening his customer service skills; dealing with young people both electronically and in writing; he has developed his ability to build professional relationships and act as a role model to young people. Daniel has also developed more specific skills in areas including risk assessment and collecting, analysing and interpreting feedback from young people on the Young Inspectors Programme.

Secondly Daniel has developed in himself; growing in confidence, maturity, taking on a variety of tasks and on many occasions being asked to go above and beyond for Thurrock Council and Thurrock's young people. For example, because of the fantastic reputation Daniel has gained for himself he has been asked to join staff on recruitment panels, he has been asked to give numerous presentations, and has supported staff across the Borough with young people's projects and on residential.

Not only has Dan been an asset to the team and to the Young Inspectors Programme, he has shown himself to be an asset to Thurrock's young people. Because of Dan's success and his advocacy of Apprenticeships, other young people are now interested or employed as Apprentices within Thurrock. There could be no better example than Daniel to highlight the talents and skills of apprentices and celebrate their value.

Daniel Aldridge

"The main attraction for me to get involved in the apprenticeship programme was the idea of having some real work experience in that particular area of work, whilst also learning about it through an NVQ qualification and at the same time, getting paid for your hard work. This to me seemed like the perfect idea as I never really enjoyed college, I felt held back and just wanted to progress into the world of work.

I feel that my apprenticeship has definitely met my expectations and then some, the opportunities that have been given to me have been amazing and I thank everybody that offered them to me for that!

From being the Young Inspectors Apprentice I have learned and developed an awful lot. Mainly I feel that I have matured as this is my first full time job, and that makes me feel that maybe I needed to grow up, and I think that I have done. Also I am now able to talk and work with many new people. This is because when I started out we went around the youth service meeting people just so that I knew exactly what our team has to offer young people in Thurrock.

From being on training sessions I've met young people from all over the authority, many who are much older than myself, yet I still got on and worked with them just the same. This shows a vast improvement in my confidence.

When delivering the ASDAN accreditation sessions I had to stand up in front of the group of Young Inspectors and tell them what it is they will be doing, this is something that I definitely struggled with before in the past. From being on the apprenticeship I no longer worry about speaking in front of people, as I have had to do it so much.

I have been able to sit on interview panels to help to recruit other Apprentices at Grangewaters and for Thurrock Youth & Connexions. I have also been on a year 9 mock interview day at Ockendon School and had the chance to give a presentation about my Apprenticeship at the Strategic Partnership meeting. I will then have the chance to do the same at the Park Inn in February for National Apprenticeship week, to try and encourage other businesses to take on Apprentices as well.

I am enjoying myself so much more than what I ever thought I would, mainly because of the team that I'm in, and also all of the fantastic opportunities that have been offered to me".

Waveney District Council

Waveney District Council is currently working in partnership with the James Paget University Hospitals Trust and Norfolk and NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney offer a Public Service Apprenticeship Programme.

Eleven apprentices are employed across the three organisations –
3 at Waverney District Council
6 at the James Paget University Hospital Trust
2 within the NHS Great Yarmouth and Waverney

The overall aim of the programme is to widen awareness of working in the public sector. Nine of the Apprenticeships are in Business Administration and two in Health and Social Care. The other partner in this is Great Yarmouth College who are delivering the apprenticeship - all apprentices attend the college on a day release basis and are getting to know each other and sharing their experience of public service.

They all joined in September 2010 for a one year placement during which time our aim is to give them as much experience of the public sector - a "takeover day" took place in November 2010 where all apprentices came together at Waveney District Council to look at the way projects are managed, how funding can be obtained and how the democratic process works. Tours and work visits are also being arranged to the hospital (for those who aren't based there), and to the local police and fire stations.