

Norfolk County Council National Apprenticeship Week 2021 #NAW2021

The Apprenticeships Team at Norfolk County Council have been busy planning a week-long celebration of events and communications to mark National Apprenticeship Week 2021, and we asked Molly Jay, Apprenticeships Coordinator, to round up on some of their planned activities:

“Here at Norfolk County Council (NCC), we are celebrating National Apprenticeships Week 2021 by showcasing our current apprentices and those who completed their apprenticeship in 2020, as well as hosting a variety of Information Sessions with our training providers for upcoming cohorts. We are passionate about the impact apprenticeships have on our existing staff as well as supporting recruiting managers across our services. Despite the current COVID-19 restrictions, we wanted to ensure we reached out to as many members of staff as possible, including Local Authority Schools, therefore we have put together a week’s worth of virtual events for our staff across NCC and Local Authority Schools.

“To open the week, there is a welcome and introduction video from Sarah Shirtcliff, Director of People, as well as a blog piece from Tom McCabe, our Head of Paid Service. These highlight the benefits apprenticeships have brought to NCC across our services, encouraging staff to explore apprenticeships options within their roles and emphasising the support available for the duration of an apprenticeship.”

NCC has kindly shared with us Tom McCabe’s Blog post this week:

“Today marks the start of National Apprenticeships Week and its theme is Build the Future. It couldn’t be more relevant because when it comes to planning for the future, while evidence and data are vital, it’s also about our people - from the skills we’ll all need to deliver services in the future, to our ways of working. Over the last few months, you have demonstrated your resilience, flexibility, ability to adapt, embrace new ways of working and find solutions to demanding situations.

It's a very strong foundation to build on and NAW is a good opportunity to reflect on the skills we need for the future as well as to highlight how apprenticeships represent one very important way we can meet those needs. Our NCC Apprenticeships team have put together a great schedule of events to help us celebrate the achievements of our own apprentices."

Tom McCabe, Head of Paid Service, Norfolk County Council.

Some key quotes from Sarah Shirtcliff, Director of People, welcome and introduction video for #NAW2021 include:

"Apprenticeships have taken us on a journey, ...and actually an education revolution in the way people can acquire skills and qualifications to set them up in their careers and successful working lives.

"We have over 300 apprentices enjoying a programme of education and qualification across all levels in the organisation. Those that have joined to develop a career with us, as a social worker for example, through to some senior colleagues.

"NCC has recently agreed on our Apprenticeships strategy, which lays out the principles of our objectives. Firstly, to ensure we are encouraging people to join our organisation into roles of social care and social work. Secondly, we really want to focus and encourage people to join this organisation, who to date may have been under-represented... be that individuals with disabilities, younger people joining the workforce, returners to work and people from BAME heritage. Really important as well, we want to ensure that those leaving care and our responsibility to them can be supported by seeking apprenticeships to that community too.

"Thirdly, we'd expect all our departments to have a plan in place for apprenticeships and that 'half our apprenticeships support existing colleagues and half are to support people joining the organisation."

The Apprenticeships Team have also created a welcome video to introduce National Apprenticeships Week as well as themselves as a team and the work they do.

One of our Local Authority Primary school heads, Penny Sheppard has opened Apprenticeships Week 2021 for schools with <https://youtu.be/ErBiBm5zZK0>. We have created a site and information events and a resource bank for schools too.

“Other events include several Information Sessions with our training providers for upcoming cohorts including project management, business administration, leadership and management and teaching assistant to name a few. We also have virtual Q&A sessions with members of the Apprenticeships Team for members of staff to find out more about apprenticeships, and we will also be running a raffle and competition throughout the week with a chance to win Amazon vouchers!

“On Wednesday, we are celebrating our NCC #2020 Achievers. 47 apprentices in total completed at NCC in 2020, an amazing achievement. Thursday, we have turned to #ThankfulThursday and will be sharing a video of messages of thanks and gratitude sent in from apprentices, managers and providers for support and strength from each other through this challenging past year.

“All the sessions will be recorded to ensure the information is accessible for anyone that is unable to attend any of the events during the week, and we are really excited to continue to promote apprenticeships across NCC and Local Authority Schools.”

If you would like to contact the NCC Apprenticeships Team to find out more about their #NAW2021 activities or to enquire about apprenticeship opportunities, please contact nccapprenticeships@norfolk.gov.uk