

Building blocks for better public services

Four young apprentices, and their local council employers, have been honoured by a leading local government think tank for their work in encouraging young people to take up trained apprenticeships in much needed construction skills.

Mark Bramah Assistant Chief Executive of APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) presenting the awards said 'These awards help us to recognise the vital contribution made by apprentices to the work of councils in helping to maintain and repair people's homes and civic buildings across the UK' he added;

'I would like to thank all the councils involved in these awards as providers of excellent training to apprentices and of course it is only right we pay tribute to those individual apprentices who have worked so hard to achieve the vital skills within the construction industry.

The winners for each category of apprentice are:

- ♦ **Paul Cook, a joiner from East Riding of Yorkshire Council in the Male Building Skills Category sponsored by UCATT**
- ♦ **Douglas Ferguson, a gas technician from Fife Council in the Male Mechanical and Electrical Category**
- ♦ **Victoria Dempsey, an electrician from 2010 Rotherham Ltd in the Female Building and Electrical Skills Category sponsored by APTUS**
- ♦ **Jennifer Taylor, a heating engineer from Bolton at Home (in the Female Plumbing Skills Category sponsored by Glasgow City Building**

The APSE Apprentice of the Year Awards for Housing and Building regularly attract top quality apprentices who have to submit a detailed portfolio of work and go through a rigorous panel interview.

Julia Gardner of APTUS said 'The quality of the apprentices I see at these awards continues to improve year on year – they are top apprentices with first class skills and fantastic attitudes to their work'.

Neil Vernon of UCATT added 'A steady stream of highly skilled apprentices is bound to emerge from councils if they continue to offer top quality training – investing in staff has an impact on the local community and these people are the most talented of a large number of committed apprentices'.

Donny Innes of Glasgow City Building commented 'I work with apprentices on a daily basis and I see the hard work they put in, the time they spend on academic study and the way they blossom over the period of their courses – they deserve all the recognition they get'.

Ends

APSE is the Association for Public Service Excellence working with over 300 councils throughout the UK

APSE specialising in providing support to local authority front line local services including the building and maintenance sector

As part of APSE's research portfolio 'The Value of Public Employment' explored the need for the public sector to maintain its status as a provider of apprenticeships and training for young people and as an employer having a positive impact upon the local economy in terms of jobs and skills

Apprenticeships bring about valuable skills and training opportunities particularly in the construction sector which has suffered in recent year from skills shortages. Apprenticeships have also been utilised effectively by councils to encourage female workers into the construction industry.

To arrange for interview or for further details about the APSE building apprenticeship awards please contact Mo Baines at APSE on mbaines@apse.org.uk or telephone 0161 772 1810 or mobile 07971 843515.