

APSE Scotland Highways & Street Lighting Network

Gloucestershire Highways Skills Academy

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What is the Highways Skills Academy?

This is a 5-partner virtual 'Academy' led by Gloucestershire County Council and involving its delivery contractors:

- Ringway – Term Maintenance Contractor
- WSP – Professional Services Contractor
- Tarmac – Structural Maintenance Contractor
- M Group – Street Lighting Contractor



Highways



The aim is to '**Build a sustainable, highly skilled workforce of highways professionals, construction specialists, civil engineers, and support staff**'.

Current Apprenticeships offered:

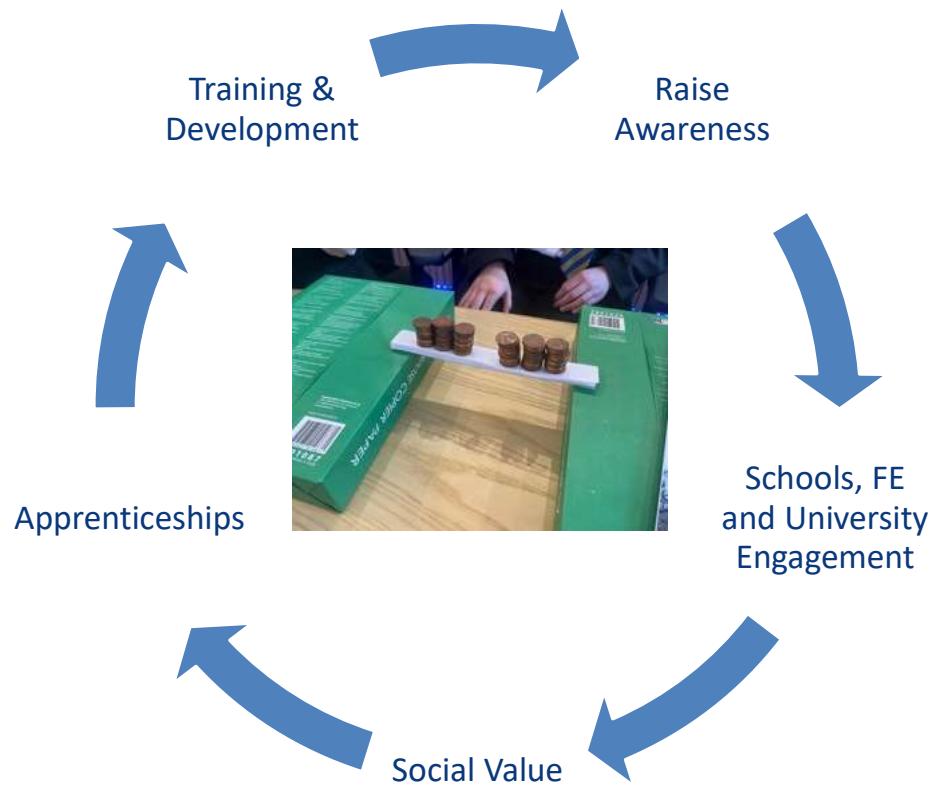
- Level 2 Highways Maintenance/Groundworker/Arbs
- Level 3 Business Administrator, Data Literacy, Customer Service
- Level 4/5 Civil Engineering, Associate Project Manager, Data Engineer, Operations Manager
- Level 6/7 Business Management, Civil Engineering, Project management



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Approach & Strategy



- Skills Shortage and the Cliff Edge Approacheth!
- Professional Qualifications and experience - upskilling
- Real Time exposure to different elements within Highways – rotations within the partners
- Also key to offer Management apprenticeships to future leaders (MBA and BA)
- Some success in developing Engineers who started within a Customer Service Environment
- Relatively Healthy Training Budget of £40K per year which equates to approx. £150 per person.
- Established relationships with schools (STEM) and training providers
- 15% of Highways Staff are apprentices
- Social Value
- Retention, Retention, Retention

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Apprenticeships currently in Gloucestershire

Level	Type	Providers	Duration & Comments
2	Highway Maintenance Groundworker Arboriculture	Local FE Colleges	18 months to 2 years
3	Business Administration Data Literacy Customer Service	Local FE College Local Providers	18 months to 3 years
4-5	Civil Engineering Data Engineer Assoc PM Ops Manager	AccXel Local Providers	18 months to 3 years Upskilling of existing staff
6-7	Business Management (BA and MBA) Civil Engineering (BEng) Project Management (BSc)	Uni of Glos Aston Uni Northumbria Uni	3-4 years



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How did we do in 2024/25

KPI	Area	Performance Measure(s)	Outturn & Comments
1	Apprentices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of our workforce who are apprentices % of apprentices completing their EPA 	15% 80%
2 & 3	Equality, Diversity Social Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage apprentices from under-represented groups in terms of sex, socio-economic groups, ethnicities and age Engage with (for example): School leavers and those who have previously been in care, the unemployed, ex-offenders, ex-Forces and career changers. 	40% of staff are women We have recruited direct from FE colleges STEM Ambassadors 50/50 and 100 futures
4	Roles within Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure apprenticeship programmes are in place from Levels 2-7 covering a range of roles in Highways 	All in place
5	Staff Promotion & Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure apprenticeship pathways are in place allowing staff to see how they can progress. 	Proven improvements in retention and promoting from within. An aspirational career path is in place. Further work required.
6	Quality of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a network of providers across a range of levels 	Local Providers for all Apprenticeship levels (except L6 Civil Engineering) Experienced private sector providers

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Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges

- Major Projects attracting higher benefits/salaries eg Hinkley Point or HS2
- Operating in a political (rather than an engineering) environment
- Other Engineering offerings with a full Apprentice Support Scheme in place rather than a bolt on to BAU
- Have experienced Poor Providers – do your homework



Opportunities and Advice

- Upskill from Within – take whatever is on offer in terms of Government funding (apprenticeship levy)
- Gloucestershire is still 'relatively' affordable
- Clear Civil Engineering opportunities in the next 5-10 years
- Other opportunities Adult Education and Local LEPs
- Social Value – NEETs/Care Leavers/Probationers/Ex Forces
- Involve your HR people as they are the experts



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Contact Details:

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