

1,000 new apprenticeship opportunities available this summer

The vacancies, which will be posted on the Apprenticeship Matching Service on the Careers Wales website throughout the summer, will offer young people and adults the chance to secure an exciting career in a wide range of disciplines including ICT, creative industries, construction and STEM, where skill shortages are particularly prevalent.

The job roles will all be apprenticeship opportunities with qualifications to match, with a particular focus on technical and professional skills. Some of the apprenticeships that are available now include journalist, associate scientist, quantity surveyor, ICT and computing, digital and marketing.

The Apprenticeship Programme in Wales is funded by the Welsh Government with support from the European Social Fund.

Alana Spencer, 25, winner of BBC One series, The Apprentice in 2016 is a supporter of the Welsh Government apprenticeship programme. She said,

“Young people leaving school are so lucky to have so many opportunities available to them. Apprenticeships have so many great benefits and allow young people to kick-start a career in a field they love, while also gaining some fantastic experience and industry relevant skills and qualifications that will help them to progress their career in the future.

“When I left school at 16 I was adamant that I didn’t want to follow the traditional university route into a job. I also didn’t know anything about apprenticeships at the time so didn’t even consider them as a possible avenue into becoming a chocolatier.

“When I was first starting out I had no-one to teach me so I spent my days learning how to cook by practising and perfecting recipes at home. I would then road test them with family and friends as well as at local events.

“It was exceedingly hard work and really challenging at times but thoroughly rewarding. However, there have been times when I didn’t think I’d make it and would’ve been grateful for the opportunity to get some advice and support as well as some practical, hands-on experience before venturing out alone. These days apprenticeships

are the perfect answer when it comes to wanting to launch a career in a field you're passionate about while also obtaining all the tools you need to succeed in the future. They are a win, win for everyone."

Wales has developed a highly successful apprenticeship programme over recent years. Apprenticeships are increasingly becoming a viable alternative to traditional academic routes into employment, helping people of all ages gain on the job experience while studying for a nationally recognised qualification.

With results day around the corner, the Welsh Government is urging people in Wales to consider how an apprenticeship can be the first step of a worthwhile, skilled career path.

Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, said:

"Apprenticeships are the start of an exciting and rewarding career and can benefit anyone of any age, giving them an opportunity to gain practical, on the job experience while gaining all the skills and qualifications they need.

"Apprenticeships are a key investment for employers who can train their workforce in the specialist skills they need within their organisation. Overall, apprenticeships play an important role in increasing the nation's overall skill set and driving economic growth, making sure that Wales remains competitive on the world stage.

"The Welsh Government is working in conjunction with training providers across Wales to highlight 1000 apprenticeship vacancies in organisations from various sectors within small SMEs to larger global conglomerates over the summer period.

"The job roles available offer all the benefits of an apprenticeship with qualifications to match, and there is a particular focus on improving technical and professional higher level skills. The Welsh Government is rebalancing its investment towards the priority areas that deliver higher returns and the range of opportunities that will be available over the summer reflect this.

"The roles available are open to people of all ages and provide access to high quality training for individuals who want to achieve their full potential. We already have a strong record of quality apprenticeships and our goal is to build on this and offer apprenticeships in sectors that drive growth and prospects of increased earning power."

[New £1m EU-funded project to boost prospects of young people in Mid Wales](#)

The funding has been secured by Powys Council to provide mentoring, coaching and training to young people facing a number of challenges, including low self-esteem, mental health problems and the effects of poverty.

Around 600 young people aged 11 to 16 will benefit from the funding over the next three years as part of the new Cynnydd project, which Powys Council's youth service will deliver in partnership with Careers Wales.

Finance Secretary Mark Drakeford said:

"Cynnydd will provide intensive support for hundreds of young people in Powys, helping them overcome challenges and reach their potential.

"This is another example of how EU funds are helping boost the skills and prospects of people in Wales and is on top of major Welsh Government investment in apprenticeships, traineeships, graduate programmes and employment schemes across the whole country."

The Cynnydd project aims to help young people progress further in education and training and, by doing so, to improve their future job and career prospects.

Support will include individual mentoring, coaching and counselling, and access to courses to improve basic skills, self-esteem and life skills.

The project will also develop links with local employers to offer work tasters and more formal work experience opportunities.

Councillor Rachel Powell, Powys Council's cabinet member for children, youth, libraries and leisure services, said:

"This project demonstrates the opportunity of investing in our young people's future and I am sure this additional support will enhance their confidence and skills.

"It is vital our young people have equal opportunities to succeed and to enable them to move on successfully into young adulthood.

"The youth service team will work closely with Careers Wales to offer young people personal support and the chance to gain

employability skills and experience. I am delighted this funding will enable us to roll out the Cynnydd Powys project to help our economy and communities to grow.”

[First Minister commemorates the battle of Passchendaele 100 years on](#)

First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, will open the service alongside the Mayor of Langemark-Poelkapelle, Alain Wyffels, and Minister-President of Flanders, Geert Bourgeois. During his address, the First Minister will pay tribute to all those who took part in the Battle and read a passage from the Bible (Micah 4: 1-5) in Welsh.

The Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) was one of the most horrific battles of the First World War, remembered as a remorseless slog through the mud and rain. The 38th (Welsh) Division played a central role in the battle, capturing key positions on the ridge at Pilkem.

The battle is of particular resonance for Wales as it claimed the lives of many Welsh soldiers including the renowned Welsh language poet, who was posthumously awarded the bardic chair at the National Eisteddfod in Birkenhead in 1917. After the National Service, the First Minister will lay a wreath on Hedd Wyn’s grave at the Artillery Wood cemetery on behalf of the people of Wales.

First Minister Carwyn Jones will speak in front of the 9ft dragon sculpture, which honours the Welsh men who fought bravely in the conflict. He will say:

“It is a great privilege to be back in Langemark for this important occasion. It has been 3 years since the memorial was unveiled and it offers us a fitting place to pay tribute and reflect on the sacrifices of all those who took part in the Third Battle of Ypres 100 years ago. In this peaceful spot today, it is hard to imagine the horrors of war faced by our soldiers and the agonising wait of families back home who might not know the fate of loved ones for many months. Some of those who lost their lives are remembered for their contribution to Welsh culture – such as poetry and sport – but, it is important we remember all those Welsh men who died during battle. Today we honour them all, for their bravery and courage.”

Today’s service, which will be attended by the Prince of Wales, forms part of the events for 2017 in Cymru’n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918 – the official

programme for First World War centenary commemorations in Wales.

Earlier in the day, the First Minister will also represent Wales at the UK Government Service of Remembrance at Tyne Cot Cemetery.

Carwyn Connects with Eisteddfod

Visitors to this year's National Eisteddfod in Bodedern, Anglesey, will be able to put questions directly to the First Minister, Carwyn Jones, as he holds a Carwyn Connect event at the festival.

Friday 28 July 2017

The Carwyn Connect events give people the opportunity to ask the First Minister questions, face to face, on any issues which affect them or their local community.

The hour-long session will be at the Welsh Government's stand on the Maes at 2pm on Monday, 7 August. Those interested in attending are encouraged to register on the Eventbrite website. Questions can be submitted in advance via email to cabinetcommunications@gov.wales or at the event itself.

Right to Buy suspended in Cardiff

The move comes as Welsh Government legislation to abolish the Right to Buy across the whole of Wales is proceeding through the Assembly.

The Right to Buy allows eligible social housing tenants to buy their council or housing association property at a discount. The proposed legislation will end these rights, protecting social housing stock from further reduction.

Over the past 30 years, the Right to Buy has resulted in a significant reduction in social housing stock. Between 1981 and 2014, 138,709 council homes were sold – this is a 45% reduction in the social housing available since the policy was first introduced.

Research also indicates that many of these homes end up in the private rented sector and, as a result, cost local people more to rent and, in some cases, the public purse more in housing benefit.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“I have agreed to Cardiff Council’s application to suspend the Right to Buy to help them deal with the pressure their social housing is facing and to ensure that homes are available to those who need them.

“While this will help one area for a short period of time, we also need to address this issue for the long term. This is why we are legislating to abolish the Right to Buy in Wales.

“The Right to Buy is depleting our social housing stock. This damaging policy is further increasing the pressure on our social housing supply and is forcing many vulnerable people to wait longer for a home.

“Legislating to end the Right to Buy is the only sure way to prevent this and give social landlords the confidence to invest in building more of the affordable homes Wales needs.”

Cardiff Council Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Cllr Lynda Thorne said:

“I am very pleased that Welsh Government has granted the Council permission to suspend the Right to Buy scheme in Cardiff for five years. Local authorities are able to do this in areas of housing pressure and that is certainly the case in Cardiff.

“Cardiff is one of the UK’s fastest growing cities and with over 8,000 people currently on the waiting list for social housing, we have to do everything we can to ensure we are providing good quality housing for those most in need, both now and into the future.

“In 1985, the Council had 23,000 properties but largely through the right to buy, that figure has reduced to our current stock in the region of 13,400 properties. This decision enables us to safeguard our much needed housing provision for current and future generations.”