

APPRENTICESHIPS IN SOUTHWARK

Introduction

1. Apprenticeships are an important learning pathway for 16-18 year olds and adults. Increased provision of apprenticeships for young people is an important part of Southwark's preparation for the raising of the compulsory participation age in education or training (RPA) from 16 to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.

What are the current apprenticeship opportunities?

2. The table below shows the number of apprenticeship training places which Southwark providers are funded for in 2011/12. These providers account for only a small percentage of Southwark 16-18 residents taking apprenticeships. The majority are doing their training at other providers outside the borough e.g. Lewisham College.

No of apprenticeship learners	Provider	Level 2	Level 3
40	Bosco	39	1
40	Southwark College	23	17
55	Central Training	40	15
100	Springboard Southwark	40	60

Funding for apprenticeships

3. Funding for apprenticeships comes via the National apprenticeship Service (NAS) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) for all ages including 16-18 year olds. New Apprentices can already be existing employees so not all apprenticeships are available to those seeking work.

What are we doing as a local authority to promote apprenticeships?

4. We are very committed to promoting apprenticeships through a number of routes. These include:
 - Encourage the recruitment of apprentices by local employers as well as through the Council's contractors and procurement of major works like housing maintenance and repairs for example
 - Recruiting apprentices into our own workforce
 - Continuing the work started through Future Jobs Fund; creating job opportunities in various sectors
 - Promoting apprenticeships with employers through Section 106 agreements. Developers and contractors are required to submit apprenticeship plans for their sites and demonstrate that they will work with local training and apprenticeship providers. The target figure for new developments is 3% of the FTE workforce on site - higher in some cases.
 - Engaging in high profile projects.

Southwark as an employer of apprentices

5. Southwark Council currently employs 14 16-18 apprentices out of 50 apprentices in total. The Council apprentice programme started in 2006, year on year the number of apprenticeships offered has increased. The programme is well promoted through a variety of media and partnership arrangements. These include:

- The council web site
- Colleges and training providers,
- Pre employment preparation and engagement via the Looked after Children service, working with JobCentre Plus, Connexions, Southwark Works, and Transport for London

100 in 100

6. From September 2010 to January 2011 Southwark Council worked in partnership with NAS and Southwark News on a campaign to promote apprenticeships in Southwark. The aim of the campaign was to promote 100 apprenticeship opportunities in 100 days. A launch event was held on 23 September 2010 in Tooley Street aimed at Southwark employers and training providers. Speakers included representatives of NAS, Southwark News and Southwark Council, a local employer and apprentices. Following the launch Southwark News promoted the campaign on a regular basis including material provided by NAS and Southwark Council e.g. case studies of individual Apprentices and of employers who have successfully taken on Apprentices. A closing event took place in February 2011. The campaign was successful as during more than a 100 new apprenticeships were provided for Southwark residents, many of them with new employers.

What more do we need to do?

7. In order to raise the percentage of 16-18 residents in apprenticeships in Southwark the local authority will continue to work closely with NAS on how to widen availability of apprenticeships for Southwark residents. Issues include:
 - How can more apprenticeships be provided by existing providers within and outside Southwark?
 - Are existing Southwark providers good quality/value for money?
 - Can new apprenticeship providers be commissioned?
 - How can we improve the understanding of the apprenticeship offer through schools and support providers?
 - How can we diversify the range of apprenticeships by level and subject area?
8. Another important way in which Southwark can directly work to increase the number of 16-18 apprenticeships is in preparing 14-16 and 16+ learners so that they are capable of taking on apprenticeships. As apprenticeships are level 2 and 3 qualifications they are not suitable for learners who have not achieved a Level 1 qualification. This means that Southwark needs to continue to commission sufficient provision at Foundation Level (i.e. Entry and Level 1) so that learners will be able to move onto apprenticeships at 16-18. This requires:

Access to Apprenticeships

9. The Government has recently announced new arrangements for preparing learners for apprenticeships called "Access to apprenticeships". This programme will allow apprenticeship training providers to take on learners for three to six months and prepare them for an apprenticeship. The programme is designed for learners who have the potential to undertake an apprenticeship but who are not yet ready to start an apprenticeship because they have been NEET (not in education or employment or training) and have additional learning and or additional social needs. As with the apprenticeship, learners will spend most of their time in the workplace learning on the job and gaining work experience. At the end of six months, at most, learners

are expected to move on to a full employed apprenticeship. Access to apprenticeships replaces Programme Led Apprenticeships (PLAs) where apprenticeship training providers took on learners who did not have an employer. This arrangement was regarded as less desirable than employed status but preferable to NEET status. Southwark was one of the local authorities with the highest number of PLAs in London. The new Access to Apprenticeships programme is intended to be an improved alternative to PLAs as it is for a limited time and designed to lead to a full apprenticeship.