

Fired up for brand new career

Date of issue 11 December 2009

Press release number NAS-09-022

As one of six apprentices recently recruited by Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, 19 year old Cheryl Turnbull from Amble has got her foot firmly on the first rung of the career ladder.

Landing a job in the Service's Human Resources department, Cheryl is now part of a team which supports the recruitment, appointment and training of all fire and rescue service employees. These include 370 operational personnel such as full-time and retained fire fighters, 70 people working in community safety and 50 support staff.



As Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service has to be equipped to deal with everything from emergency response accidents and rescues through to major incidents, terrorism and environment threats, making sure that the right people with the right skills are in place is a major consideration.

Cheryl is undertaking an Advanced Apprenticeship in Business and Administration, after a local newspaper advert for the position caught her eye. Making a good impression at the interview stage, she was soon offered the job and since then has never looked back.

“This opportunity came up just at the right time. I'd just finished college and was keen to start work and earn a wage. I applied for the Apprenticeship post and was really excited to be offered the job,” said Cheryl.

“It could have felt quite daunting starting a new job, but with Apprenticeships you're here to learn and aren't expected to know everything from day one. Now as well as working towards recognised national qualifications, I'm gaining work-related skills in a very practical way. This has boosted my confidence no end,” she continued.

A varied workload means that Cheryl is asked to get involved with all aspects of Human Resources, including recruitment campaigns, letters, reports, payroll duties and gathering statistics.

She has also been nominated as the department's designated 'carbon champion' to make sure that everyone in the team is working as energy efficiently as possible.

Cheryl's appointment forms part of a wider strategy by Northumberland County Council, which oversees the Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, to inject new skills across the organisation. As a result, the Council unveiled a major campaign to recruit 50 new apprentices this year and Cheryl is thrilled to be one of them.

Christina Purcell, Human Resources Manager, feels that Cheryl has really stepped up to the mark. She said: “Cheryl is level headed and keen to learn about all aspects of working in Human Resources. She has already helped with our recruitment campaigns for the appointment of retained fire fighters and support staff.

“The great thing about Apprenticeships is that they enable you to recruit people who already have a keen interest in your line of work. This means you can add people to your team who are committed and want to get on,” she added.

Delivery of Apprenticeships, including advising employers, engaging with learner organisations, providing funding for Apprenticeship training and a web-based Apprenticeship vacancies system, is the responsibility of the National Apprenticeship Service.

John Wayman, regional director, National Apprenticeship Service, explained: “Apprenticeships are a versatile option for all forward-thinking organisations. They mean that you won’t be left in the lurch when it comes to having the right skills in place further down the line.

“On top of this there are other real business benefits for taking on apprentices, such as improved productivity and greater competitiveness. Recent national survey results also revealed that almost 90% of employers believe that Apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce.”

To find out more about employing apprentices within your organisation, please contact the National Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600 or visit the website www.apprenticeships.org.uk

- Ends –

Photo caption:

Pictured left to right: Christina Purcell, Human Resources Manager, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service with apprentice Cheryl Turnbull.

Notes to editors

For further media information contact:

Dawn Hirst, Marketing and
Communications Manager,
National Apprenticeship Service

T: (0191) 492 6312

E:

dawn.hirst@apprenticeships.gov.uk

National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)