

## Apprenticeship Ambassador June Round Up Pictures



Emily Bampton and Jack Owen presenting the Apprenticeship of the Year award at the Oxfordshire Business Awards. Below with winners Stuart Barr.



James Parfitt at his old school, The Bicester School, where he spoke at the Year 12 Future Plans Day.

Brad Eaton at the Oxfordshire Apprenticeships Roadshow in Milton Park.



Jack Owen, Engineering Apprentice with BMW MINI Plant Oxford



Emma Farrow, Legal Apprentice with Brothertons LLP

Ambassadors Jack Owen and Emma Farrow featuring in the Oxford Mail Apprenticeships Focus supplement.

## Make an Apprenticeship your plan A!

With over 250 Apprenticeship vacancies in Oxfordshire, now is a great time to be looking for an Apprenticeship! They're available in all sorts of roles from Teaching Assistant to Landscape Gardener, Fitness Instructor to Estate Agent. Whatever you're interested in, there's an Apprenticeship for you!

Here are some top tips for finding an Apprenticeship...

- Do your research – visit [www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk) to search for vacancies and register for alerts. Keep looking and asking around for opportunities and look carefully at job descriptions – the role may be more interesting than you think!
- Find something you enjoy and are good at – most people don't start their career with their dream job or a job for life, it's about finding the right thing for you now
- Keep your options open – don't just apply for one Apprenticeship, apply for lots. Apply for sixth form, college or university too and give yourself choices
- Be persistent. Apprenticeships can be competitive and you might not get the first few you apply for. But you'll learn from the experience and feel better prepared for the next application or interview
- Get some experience – a part time job or voluntary work shows an employer you're motivated and have already gained valuable skills

Jack Owen secured an Engineering Technician Apprenticeship with BMW MINI Plant Oxford after doing work experience there. He has a company car and is doing a business degree at Oxford Brookes University, paid for by BMW. Jack says: "To a prospective employer, an individual who has completed a highly regarded Apprenticeship will always stand out in comparison to a person who just has a university degree."

Emma Farrow is a Legal Apprentice with Brothertons LLP in Banbury. She says: "My advice is not to just go for the conventional route - look at both the Apprenticeship and university routes and don't rule anything out. Different learning styles suit different people."

The Oxfordshire Apprenticeships Roadshow is touring the county next week, calling at the following locations:

- Tuesday 28th June – Market Square, Witney, 9am-5pm
- Wednesday 29th June – Milton Park, 9am-5pm
- Thursday 30th June – Tesco Superstore, Oxford Retail Park, Cowley, 11am-7pm
- Friday 1st July – Tesco Superstore, Lakeview Road, Bicester, 11am-7pm
- Saturday 2nd July – Castle Quay Shopping Centre, Banbury, 10am-4pm

Come and see us for more top tips on finding and applying for Apprenticeships and to find out about current local vacancies.

See [www.oxfordshireapprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.oxfordshireapprenticeships.co.uk) for more information.



Look out for the Oxfordshire Apprenticeships Roadshow!

## Apprenticeships



**JOINED UP THINKING:** Adam Fisk, 17, joined the maintenance team at the Museum of Natural History straight from school aged 16. He is now studying joinery and helping make display stands and cases for the museum's exhibits and exhibitions. He is pictured, inset right, with head of maintenance Pete Johnson. Pictures: Jon Lewis



# Gaining skills to improve prospects of great career

**Gill Oliver**

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**D**INOSAURS, spiders and other exhibits at the Museum of Natural History wouldn't be there, if it wasn't for Adam Fisk and his colleagues.

As a general maintenance apprentice with Oxford University, Adam helps build the beautiful cabinets and other structures used to show off the museum's treasures.

The 17-year-old was accepted on a three-year apprenticeship after GCSEs at Bartholomew School in Eynsham.

His course, which started in September last year, includes learning bench joinery skills with Kidlington-based ACE Training.

As an ambassador for Oxfordshire Apprenticeships, Adam visits the county's schools recommending this route to other youngsters.

He said: "I have had no regrets from the moment I started.

"Not only will I come out of the apprenticeship qualified, I have had the chance to meet a

lot of people within the industry.

"I've also learnt quite unusual skills that I otherwise wouldn't have, such as building a dinosaur and conservation."

He added: "I've had the chance to use skills in a non-workshop environment and have had a brilliant experienced mentor.

"Hopefully, after my three years

**I've also learnt quite unusual skills that I otherwise wouldn't have, such as building a dinosaur and conservation**

— Adam Fisk

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working as an apprentice there will be a full-time job available for me at the museum." The main advantage of an apprenticeship is the work

experience, according to Oxfordshire Apprenticeships' Melanie Ringer.

She said: "Employers really value them, because it shows someone is committed and has already started gaining skills before they step into the world of work."

The National Minimum Wage for apprentices is going up in October from £3.30 to £3.40 per hour but lots of employers pay more than that to attract and keep good candidates.

Ms Ringer explained: "We have high-calibre employers in Oxfordshire who value apprentices and are prepared to back that up by offering good money.

"What we are finding is that firms recognise the financial value of apprenticeships, because it means they can bring someone in and train them to do things exactly the way they want them done."

In Oxfordshire there are on average, 200 apprenticeships advertised each week, varying from science and tech, engineering, catering and retail to fashion, charity and F1.

Employers range from big players such as BMW's Mini Plant and the universities through to smaller, independent firms.

It's a myth that youngsters have to

choose between going to university or an apprenticeship.

Ms Ringer pointed out: "An apprenticeship doesn't close off your route to an HND or degree.

"Some employers will pay for you to go on to university. Sometimes people think it's one or the other but it's absolutely not."

Apprenticeships can also offer a route to professions such as

doctors, vets or teachers for a student who fails to get the grades for medical school or veterinary college.

An apprenticeship as a veterinary nurse, nursing or teaching assistant can offer an alternative route in.

Ms Ringer added: "It's a way to chalk up good work experience and qualifications as a springboard to the next step in your career."

### OPPORTUNITIES ALL YEAR ROUND

**KEEP** your eyes out for apprenticeships all year round, advises Melanie Ringer.

Ms Ringer, of Oxfordshire Apprenticeships, says some employers advertise at this time of year because they are looking for school leavers.

Others have recruitment windows, so the best tactic is to follow them on Facebook, Twitter and other social media and keep an eye on their website for information about forthcoming recruitment days.

A number of companies take on trainees to fit in around the academic year, which starts in September, because apprentices might attend college as part of their course.

It is also worth remembering apprenticeships are not just for young people, but are open to anyone of any age.

That means older workers stuck in a dead-end job should also check the Oxfordshire Apprenticeships website to find opportunities to learn new skills.

Ms Ringer added: "There are a lot of people in Oxfordshire on apprenticeships who are older than school-leaving age."

Whatever type of apprenticeship, her tip is apply for more than one.

She said: "Do 10 applications, rather than one and if they don't have exactly the right subject you want, try for something similar. "Whatever you do, keep your options open."

Adam Fisk in the Oxford Mail Apprenticeships Focus Supplement.

See more pictures of what the Apprenticeship Ambassadors have been up to this month by liking their [Facebook](#) page.