

## The benefits of being an Apprentice



How an Apprenticeship at George Wimpey is helping Ryan build a great career

**“I’m surprised to have got so far so quickly through my Apprenticeship. I’m lucky that I had a great first year learning brickwork and then I struck lucky when I was taken on as an Apprentice by George Wimpey. They have been a massive help and I’m really grateful.”  
Ryan Williams, Advanced Bricklaying Apprentice.**

### Awards

Ryan Williams is aged 23 and lives in Ashford. He recently completed an NVQ3 Advanced Apprenticeship in bricklaying with George Wimpey and the company has been so impressed with his ability and commitment that it not only voted him its regional Apprentice of the year four times in a row, as well as its national Apprentice of the year once, it has now sent him on an HNC Course in Site Management at Richmond College.

George Wimpey is one of the largest housebuilders in the UK. It is also one of the largest employers of Apprentices, with up to 400 at any one time across the UK following Apprenticeships in over 20 different trades.

### A bit of a surprise

All this is somewhat of a surprise to Ryan, who never considered site management as a career when he left Sunbury Manor School.

“I left school at 16 and went to do an NVQ1 in bricklaying with a friend of my dad for a year,” he

explains. “We used Richmond College as my training provider and I enjoyed the whole year. Unfortunately I couldn’t find a company that could offer me an NVQ2 training so for a couple of years I went to work as a groundworker and brickworker for a groundwork company. The work was OK, but we were building drains and other similar constructions and sometimes it wasn’t the most pleasant job!”

### Back to college

Luckily, Ryan spotted an advertisement for Apprenticeships at George Wimpey in West London and jumped at the chance.

“They took me on and it was great. I enjoyed working with my team and returned to do my Apprenticeship through Richmond College. I soon progressed from Level 2 to a Level 3.

"I was very pleased to be offered the opportunity"

### Winning cash awards

Ryan also began to enjoy himself when he started winning awards – because often there were cash rewards too. George Wimpey operates an award scheme to acknowledge and promote hardworking Apprentices. Often cash incentives are offered, which Ryan says is a great encouragement.

"I was delighted to be put forward for an award, it was great to think that all the hard work had been recognised." Apprentices who produce a high standard of work, are punctual and work well in a team, are put forward for these awards.

When Ryan had completed his NVQ3, George Wimpey recognised that he had potential for site management, so it offered him the chance to do a two-year HNC course in Construction.

### Back to college yet again!

"I was very pleased to be offered the opportunity," says Ryan. "The only thing is that I'm back at Richmond College one day a week again – I think they thought they'd finally got rid of me!"

Out of the latest group of seven qualified Apprentices, three, including Ryan, are trainee managers with George Wimpey, the other four are working for the company's subcontractors.

Whilst Ryan appreciates the opportunity he has been given, he is also keen to maintain his bricklaying skills, and would be happy to return to bricklaying in the short term.

### Thanks George!

"This management training has happened very quickly. It's taken me by surprise, and if I'm honest, my family too. George Wimpey have been great employers and given me the opportunity to realise potential that I didn't know I had."

His cash rewards have also helped him too. "I've paid off my mum, because I owed her a bit of money, and the rest contributed to a recent trip to Mexico. Thanks George Wimpey!"



**If you would like further information about Apprenticeships in South London call the Apprenticeship Hotline on 0800 169 4824 or visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)**