Innovative heritage sector trainee programme



The trainees, L-R: Alison Winston, Kerry Whitehouse, Anneka Muller, Lucy Maycock and Dee McKeown

- Ten graduates to-date have completed innovative paid traineeships within the heritage sector in Worcester
- Traineeships enable heritage venues to up-skill graduates in order to plug skills gaps within the sector
- A further seven trainees recruited for round-three of Nurturing Worcestershire's Treasures funded by Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Skills for the Future

Nurturing Worcestershire's Treasures is a heritage traineeship scheme funded through the HLF's Skills for the Future programme, with additional support and funding from Worcestershire County Council and the University of Worcester. The project is managed by Museums Worcestershire.

To-date ten graduates have completed the innovative paid traineeships with a further seven recruited for the third round. The first cohort of trainees had 100% employment or further study levels within six months of completing the programme, with four of the five trainees from tranche one securing employment in a heritage or related sector by the end of their traineeship.

All trainees completed their traineeships at library, archive and museum settings in and around the historic city of Worcester at host locations including: Worcester Cathedral Library and Archive, Elgar Birthplace Museum, George Marshall Medical Museum, The Infirmary at City Campus, Hurd Library (at Hartlebury Castle), University of Worcester

Research Collection, and the Museum of Royal Worcester.

Nurturing Worcestershire's Treasures has seen the trainees undertake a programme of on the job learning and structured training including studying for a postgraduate qualification. Through support from the project in terms of HR functions, recruitment, training and a supportive partnership arrangement, organisations which might not be able to offer such positions have been able to do so and address the difficulties of providing work-based learning opportunities within what are often small organisations.

Alex Kinnersley, Project Co-ordinator, said: "Nurturing Worcestershire's Treasures is enabling us to develop key skills within the heritage sector. Not only are we training the next generation of heritage workers but creating valuable partnerships across the sector enabling organisations to benefit from a range of perspectives and experiences as well as providing much needed specialist support on the ground."

Anneka Muller, Trainee at the Museum of Royal Worcester, said: "The traineeship has meant that in terms of experience within the museums sector, I am applying for jobs I would not have previously applied for, due to lacking the necessary experience. I now feel that although I may not have all the experience necessary to make a step up in the sector, I am certainly on my way there."

David Morrison, Worcester Cathedral Library, on behalf of the host organisations, said: "Taking part and supporting a trainee has allowed the Cathedral to support an important educational initiative (i.e. traineeships) in difficult economic times. It has also facilitated the growing links between the individual museums, libraries, and archives in the city."

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lotter Fund, West Midlands, said: "Skills for the Future is an HLF programme that funds work-based training in a wide range of skills that are needed to look after buildings, landscapes, habitats, species, and museum and archive collections. We have been delighted to support Worcestershire County Council's determination to offer young people the opportunity to train in roles that will equip them for future work in the museums, libraries and archive sectors."

Notes to editors

To view YouTube videos of the trainees within their host venues visit the following: Worcester Cathedral, The Infirmary and George Marshall Medical Museum, and Nurturing Worcestershire's Treasures is a work-based training scheme funded largely through the HLF's Skills for the Future programme. To-date ten trainees have completed the programme learning a range of technical and wider work based skills through on the job learning and tailored sessions. Graduate trainees are based with a variety of heritage institutions in and around Worcester, and as well as gaining work-based skills relevant to the heritage sector are studying for a post graduate certificate with the University of Birmingham.

Additional quotes from trainees:
Deidre Mckeown, Trainee at Worcester Cathedral Library and Archive, said: "I have found that I am in a much stronger position to apply for jobs that interest me in the heritage sector. A lot of jobs in heritage ask for time-based experience, so the traineeship is great for demonstrating that you have worked in a relevant, paid position with the sector."

Kerry Whitehouse, Trainee at The Infirmary and George Marshall Medical Museums, said: "I would love to continue working in museums in Worcestershire and in particular in collections if I can. The skills that I have developed have mainly been in the IT area. I've never been very confident there but with this traineeship, I have been using programmes that I never used before and have also increased understanding in other programmes. I have also increased my

experience of organising events and feel much more confident in that area. It has given me the tools and contacts to be able to promote the museums more widely. I feel that I now have the experience and confidence to try for jobs that were previously out of my reach."

Additional quotes from host organisations:
Cathy Sloane, Museum Director, Elgar Birthplace Museum, said: "As a small independent museum we have benefitted from the additional posts in terms the increased support the trainees have given in many areas of museum work, from front-of-house, collection care, marketing and fundraising as well as the main tasks that they were assigned."

Amanda Savidge, Museum Director, Museum of Royal Worcester, said: "The museum operates on a minimal staffing structure and working with the trainees brought a fresh perspective to our work. Working in partnership with the other host organisations brings immense benefits and unifies Worcester's Heritage sector."

Further information

Helen Annetts, PR on behalf of Nurturing Worcestershire's Treasures, on tel: 07779026720 or email: HelenLAnnetts@hotmail.co.uk