

INDUSTRY: RURAL

PROGRAMME: TRAINEESHIP

BUSINESS: TREES FOR LIFE

A TRAINEESHIP WITH TREES FOR LIFE!

Driven by the vision of revitalising the forests in the Highlands, Trees for Life is a charity that works hard to maintain the Highland forests so that local wildlife and communities can flourish. Every year, the charity offers young people the chance to apply for a traineeship where they learn the skills and knowledge required to work on large scale restoration projects. Heather Ward applied for a 12 month traineeship in deer management and estate maintenance and was more than happy to share her experiences with us:

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO ENROL ON YOUR TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMME WITH THIS PARTICULAR COMPANY?

I have always had a passion for the outdoors, but have had numerous jobs inside and thought this was a great opportunity to work in an outdoor environment whilst learning new skills and knowledge which could potentially help with employment in the future.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DID YOU REQUIRE TO ENROL ON YOUR TRAINEESHIP PROGRAMME?

This role required no qualifications to apply. Trees for Life were looking for applications from young people in the Highlands, career changers and women interested in working in historically male dominated jobs. They also wanted to find people who had a keen interest in conservation and the environment that could work as part of a small team of employees, possibly sharing accommodation with others taking part in the traineeship programme.

'Good points about the traineeship include being provided with free on site accommodation and having the chance to meet and live with the other trainees who are learning different skills.'



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING A TRAINEE AT YOUR COMPANY?

There are many benefits of being a trainee with Trees for Life, the biggest one for me is being able to work alongside someone that has thirty years of experience as a deer manager. After only a couple of months I have already learnt so much. 'I will also be completing my DSC1 (Deer stalking level 1 certificate) and be doing my chainsaw certificate, which will help me with future employment. Working with friendly and helpful staff is also great!



DESCRIBE A DAILY DAY AS A TRAINEE AT YOUR COMPANY, IS THE WORK VARIED?

A typical day would be out on the hill stalking deer (in all weather). We manage the number of deer at Dundreggan to allow natural tree regeneration to take place. We take great care to ensure we manage our deer efficiently and professionally. Any deer we cull are then put into the food chain and support the Scottish venison industry. When I'm not out stalking I'm usually working on the grounds, this could be cutting grass, splitting wood, completing vehicle checks or just giving the larder a thorough clean. The jobs vary depending on what is a priority.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WANTING TO ENROL ON AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME?

If you get the chance and it's something you are interested in, then go for it! You'll have the opportunity to gain experience and knowledge in a working environment, work alongside a great team of people receiving the help and support you need. You can also earn money whilst working towards a qualification. It's an opportunity that's too good to miss and I would highly recommend it! It is the best thing I've done in my life so far



Paul Greaves, Skills for Rewilding Programme Manager highly recommends the traineeship programme for young people, he commented:

It is fantastically rewarding for staff at Trees for Life to be able to pass on skills to young people in the Highlands. Skills that will boost their employability, getting them jobs that can change their lives whilst also having a positive impact on the Scottish environment. This training programme is made possible through funding provided by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Our DYW team cover Lochaber, Skye and Wester Ross – where we aim to expand opportunities to young people, through employer-led initiatives, so that they gain valuable workplace skills and further education opportunities, making them more attractive to employers.

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