

## My week back as an Apprentice – Anna Delvecchio

March 8, 2019



*The theme of this year's National Apprenticeship Week is 'Blaze a Trail'. Few people exemplify that as clearly as Anna Delvecchio of Amey, a former apprentice who now works closely with industry and Government. She decided to go back to being an apprentice for the week, while giving a group of apprentices the opportunity to shadow her.*

**So how did she get on?**

“It was brilliant, and I enjoyed every minute of reverse shadowing and the apprentices understanding my role. I’ve spent the last week with a group of Amey apprentices working across transport and rail. It reinforced that the transport sector absolutely has so many roles covered by apprentices.

“Over the last week and prior to NAW, I have met many talented apprentices who are inspirational doing different types of apprenticeship programmes. It was incredible to see so much talent in so many apprentices in a short space of time.

“Let’s start with Jay. He is an apprentice tree surgeon. He taught me so much about trees in just four

hours. He is brilliant. He doesn't want a career in the office and loves working outdoors. It was freezing cold, pouring down with rain and there he was enjoying his job – looking after trees in the rain with a smile!

“Holly is an inspirational role model for STEM and engineering roles. She currently works in our Highways Design team and did her apprenticeship programme in Engineering. She is a great example of someone we should use to inspire young girls to think about a career in engineering

“Danny only started his apprenticeship programme six months ago training in overhead line equipment (OLE). He currently works for our design team. I spent the afternoon shadowing him and he showed me a typical day for him.

“Lamar works in Highways design and talked to me about his role – completing drawings, surveys and going on site.

“And lastly Deivydas. I've known him the longest. He was a street lighting apprentice. Deivydas is an absolute advocate for apprenticeship programmes, just like me.”

**What do you think is the biggest misconception about the transport sector?**

“The transport and logistics sector is so much more than ‘trucks, trains, cars and sheds’. I met someone recently who referred to it as this. For me, it’s the perception and helping change that. So where does perception really start?

“Role models play a vital role in helping change the misconception and can massively help raise the profile and the face of the transport and logistics sector. The skills, capability and diversity of roles offer so many great career opportunities for everybody. Role models can make a considerable difference in attracting the next generation to join a great sector. Apprentices can help so much here. The sector is absolutely on a journey but we all must focus collaboratively and collectively on how we can make the sector more diverse.

“To help Britain keep moving, both in goods and services, for our customers and passengers, 365 days a year – that’s an exciting sector to work in.

**So, what’s your one piece of advice for the sector on apprenticeship week?**

**My challenge:**

“To take half a day to shadow an apprentice and for them to shadow you.

I have found it so invaluable and have learned so much in the last three days. Wouldn’t it be great if we could get more individuals in the sector to shadow apprentices throughout the year and then promote it

and what they learned for next year's NAW!

Also, Let's not forget that apprenticeships are not just for younger people. At Amey, we have a number of older apprentices which highlights that apprenticeships can cover all age groups

### **What's next?**

"I will be helping Amey champion our apprenticeship programme with our apprentices as well as continuing to support the good work of both Women in Transport and Women in Rail.

"I will also be helping CILT with their Big Logistics and Transport Diversity Challenge and I have a little project that I have been working on with a few which is progressing very nicely. Watch this space!

### **So, what did the apprentices make of their time with Anna?**

*"I was very interested to meet shadow Transport Secretary Andy McDonald," says Lamar. "He was clearly very busy but seemed very calm and it was interesting to hear about his work. We also met Robin from BEIS who had started off as a history teacher. He was keen to hear about our backgrounds as well. A really interesting day."*

*Danny was fascinated joining the dots between the operational work he is engaged with every day and the bigger policy decisions that can influence this. "We saw different government departments and got to see how their policies can affect our everyday work. We heard how they are hoping to recruit an additional 20,000 apprentices".*

*Holly agreed that she gained a sense of perspective on the work of the industrial strategy. "That was interesting to hear first-hand about the sector deals and how these are linked to skills and productivity."*

*"It was an exciting opportunity to meet the government departments and Andy McDonald," says Deivydas. "I'm so inspired."*