



# Our Apprenticeship Strategy

· 2020 - 2022

DEVELOP GROW ACHIEVE

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# Foreword

**As part of our 'One Coventry' approach, we are developing how we view modern employment routes into the organisation by embedding apprenticeships and workplacements within our people strategies for young people who are aged 16 - 24. We want to provide a modern employment offer and viable routes into and up through the organisation for both existing and new employees.**

The public sector apprenticeship targets were introduced by Government in April 2017 and sets a target for any public sector employer in England with at least 250 employees to employ an average of 2.3% of their headcount as new apprentices between 1 April 2017 and March 2021.

## Where we are now:

- Between 2017-2019 we employed on average 1% (49) of our headcount as new corporate apprentices
- We currently have 20 strategy funded apprenticeship posts and are reliant on service areas to create further opportunities to increase the apprenticeship talent pool
- 4.05% of the council's workforce are aged between 16-24, whereas 47% are aged over 50, which suggests a risk of skills and knowledge deficit over the next 10 years if not addressed
- In March 2018 - March 2019, there were 312 Grade 2/3 posts recruited to, which presents an opportunity to develop a talent pipeline for future talent, improve the diversity of our workforce and lead the way in the public sector.

## Where do we want to be:

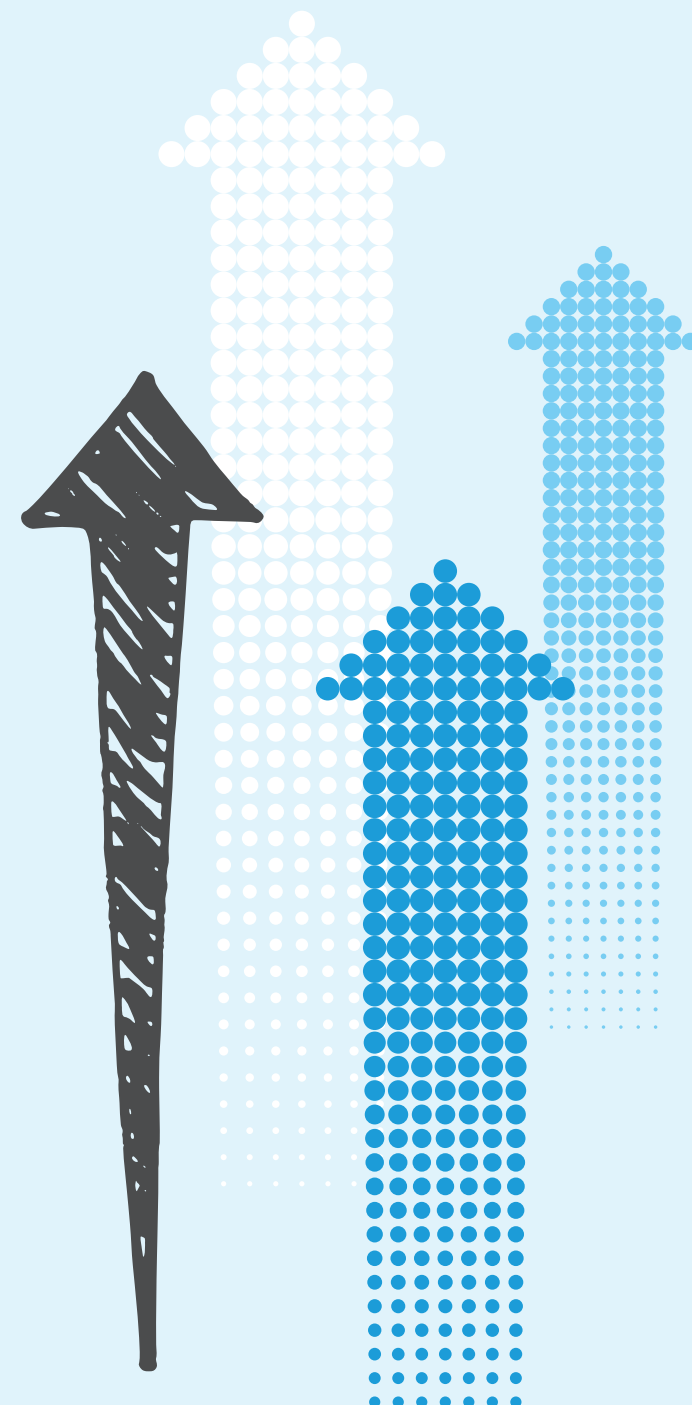
We want to attract and develop future talent within the council, by providing a structured apprenticeship programme for 16-24 year olds which retains, develops and provides transferrable skills needed to succeed in the modern economy, while contributing to our commitment to increase the overall number of apprenticeships across the council to 2.3 % of the workforce by 2022.



**Martin Reeves**  
Chief Executive  
Coventry City Council



**Councillor John Mutton**  
Cabinet Member for Strategic  
Finance & Resources





# Our commitment

The council's Apprenticeship Strategy is about more than just numbers. It is our commitment as an employer to improve social mobility within our communities and strengthen the skills base of the organisation, through high quality learning opportunities that are embedded in professional career paths for 16-24 year olds. The key aims, measures, benefits and actions are listed within the action plan and will be overseen by our Cabinet Member.

This strategy outlines what we want to achieve with our apprenticeships over the next two years' at Coventry City Council. To keep us on track the strategy will be regularly reviewed and where appropriate developed to reflect local and national changes. Our aim is to promote wider access to apprenticeships across all communities in the city, upskill existing employees and to increase the number of apprenticeships undertaken by young people between the ages of 16-24 within the council.

Working with a range of service areas and external partners, we will actively promote the benefits of apprenticeships to all, make the connection to the development of local skills, workforce development and the local economy by identifying and addressing gaps in delivery to create more apprenticeship opportunities within the council and across the city.

## Our Vision

Coventry City Council's vision is to increase apprenticeship and graduate opportunities by offering high quality apprenticeship programmes across all service areas of the council, affording access to a broad range of training and development at multiple levels.

Our apprenticeships and graduates will present an opportunity to improve the diversity and inclusion of our workforce, by providing people from all backgrounds with a greater opportunity to progress with their careers, as a result of effective workforce planning and will enable the council to benefit from a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce.

# Business case

**The council's People Plan sets out our commitment to develop ways to ensure that our employees have the right skills and attributes we need to deliver council services over the next few years in a fast-changing environment. A key aim of our Apprenticeship Strategy is to ensure that by the end of their apprenticeship, apprentices are able to demonstrate professional skills and attributes, as signaled by their completion certificate.**

Through increasing the range and extent of apprenticeship opportunities, the council can help to improve the skills base of its own workforce and those across the city by utilising the apprenticeship levy and working with external partners, thereby contributing to the narrowing of skills gaps between the most affluent wards and the most deprived wards.

According to the city's latest joint 'Strategic Needs Assessment', over one-third of the city's working age population is highly qualified. However, there are significant pockets of deprivation which limit people's opportunities to succeed in life. In 2018, 35% of Coventry's working age population were qualified to level 4 or above, which means they have a foundation degree or above. This has increased by over 10 percentage points over the past decade and the city is the second highest within the West Midlands, 10% of the city's working age population has no qualifications at all. This may limit their ability to gain more rewarding employment in the city or push them to be redeployed as the city's jobs increasingly require qualified people.

Lack of educational attainment and low aspirations are major causes of a wide range of social disadvantages later in life, including poor employment prospects, social alienation and mental and physical health problems. To help people realise their full potential in life, these barriers should be addressed through championing high levels of educational attainment and raising their aspirations.

Despite the presence of two top universities and the network of prestigious companies based in the city and region, there is pessimism amongst some young people regarding their career opportunities. Some young people are unaware of the city's growing advanced manufacturing sector and the successful games industry in the sub-region. Young people's aspirations could be raised by improving their awareness of the significant and growing opportunities in highly paid jobs available in the city, and the companies' need for people with the right skills and qualifications.





# Apprenticeships can help by:

- Presenting an opportunity to improve the diversity and inclusion of the workforce
- Upskilling the workforce
- Attracting and retaining talent
- Strengthening the talent pipeline
- Reducing employee turnover
- Increasing potential earning salaries
- Filling internal skills and role gaps
- Improving employee engagement and performance



# Our Aims

## Key aims of our strategy:

### Develop skills and attributes

- Upskilling and helping our apprentices by providing high quality apprenticeship training at a variety of levels
- Create career pathways for each service area mapped to the apprenticeship qualifications, enabling all employees' access to further education and skills, therefore contributing to the council's 'Grow Our Own' workforce initiative

### Grow the number of apprenticeships

- Developing an apprenticeship culture by utilising apprentices as a tool to support strategic workforce and succession planning
- Enhancing our reputation as an employer of choice by promoting apprenticeships to partners within the community
- Increasing the range of vocational areas in which apprenticeships are offered

### Embed apprenticeships

- Working with the organisation to identify skills gaps and opportunities to utilise and retain apprentices as part of our people strategy, talent management and career pathways

- Promoting the council's 'Grow Our Own' workforce planning initiatives in each service area and supporting apprentices who seek to secure progression to permanent employment in the council

### Promote, equality, diversity and inclusion and social mobility

- Widening participation in the council's apprenticeship programme by targeting underrepresented groups of young people such as looked-after young people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people (BAME), young people with SEND, Carers, NEETs, and young refugees
- We will ensure that apprenticeships are a key component of an inclusive council which represents and reflects the diversity and inclusivity of our diverse communities

### Improve the quality of apprenticeships

- Develop and apply robust systems for monitoring the quality of the apprenticeship experience, ensuring that improvements are implemented in a timely and rigorous manner





# Method

## We will create opportunities for apprenticeships by:

### Offering our current workforce, opportunities to upskill and gain new qualifications via the apprenticeship levy

- Utilising the apprenticeship levy qualifications to target skills shortages, personal/professional development and provide opportunities for employees at all levels across the council

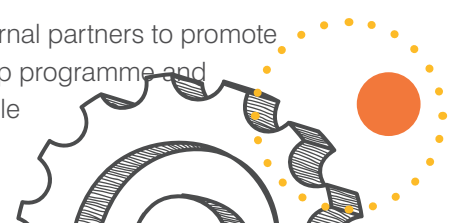
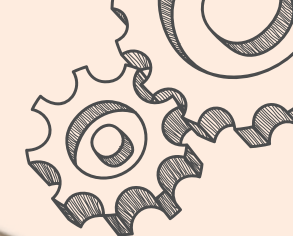
### Developing our current apprenticeship scheme

- Providing quality training and development throughout the apprenticeship programme to ensure apprentices between the ages of 16-24 have adequate support. This will include on-the-job training, mentor support, skills development training and a comprehensive induction

### Promoting apprenticeships internally and externally for 16-24 year olds

- Actively working with service areas to create talent pipelines that are aligned with our career pathways
- Identifying opportunities to appoint apprenticeships to service areas with hard to fill roles and skills shortages
- Working with external partners to promote our apprenticeship programme and vacancies available

In order to develop apprenticeship opportunities further, apprenticeships will be embedded within our people, talent management strategies and career pathways. This will be achieved by strategic workforce planning to identify the council's workforce gaps and utilise apprentices to grow and upskill the shortfall.







### Recruitment/onboarding

A dedicated recruitment/onboarding window for new apprentices to apply and begin their employment journey with the council.



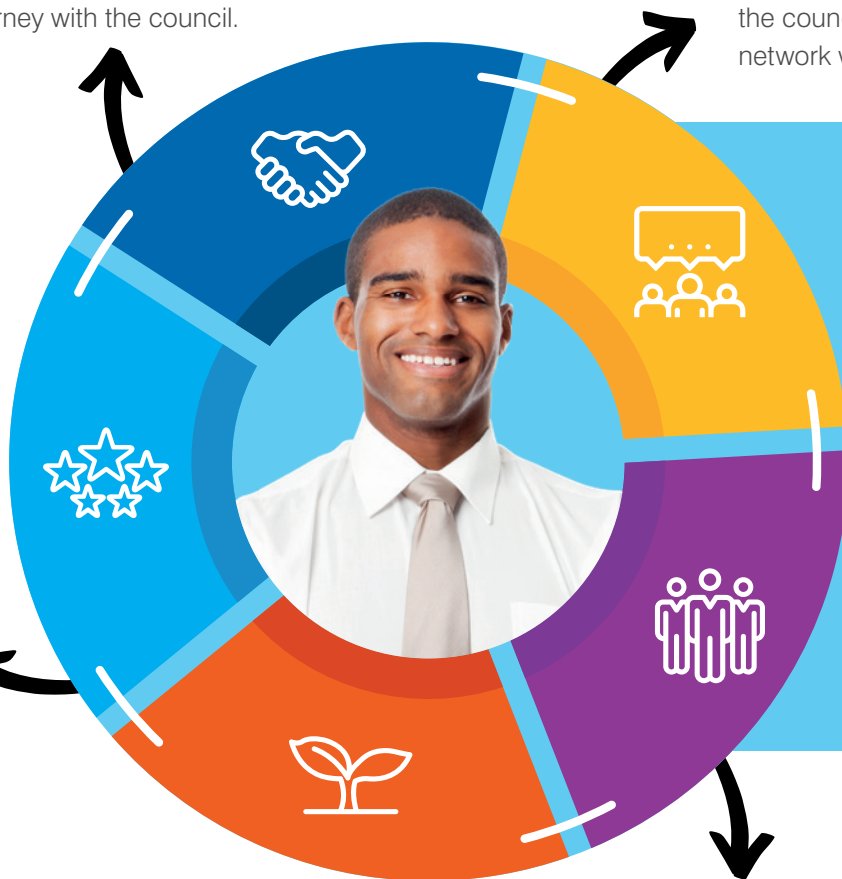
### Apprenticeship induction

An Induction which will provide new apprentices with an overview of their apprenticeship programme, the council and an opportunity to network with other apprentices.



### Recognised qualification

Support to gain a functional skill and work towards gaining a recognised qualification.



### Apprenticeship development programme

Additional training such as learning a new skill, mental health awareness, CV and interview skills, facilitation skills and an introduction to equality, diversity and inclusion.



### Mentor and coaching

A dedicated mentor to support and offer guidance and direction throughout the programme.

# Apprenticeship programme overview

Our comprehensive apprenticeship programme provides opportunities for apprentices between the ages of 16-24 to gain a recognised qualification whilst receiving training to support their personal development throughout their journey.

# Success measures and action plan

|            | Aim  | Benefit   | Measure  | Action   | Accountability             | Timescale  |
|------------|--|---|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| <b>1</b>   | Develop skills and attributes  |   |  |  |                            |  |
| <b>1.1</b> | We will upskill and help our new and existing apprentices and employees by providing high quality apprenticeship training at a variety of levels   | Maximise the use of the Apprenticeship Levy and increase the skills and professional qualifications of employees within the council   | Track the number of apprenticeship qualifications gained and offered across the council aiming for 100% coverage.<br><br>Increased use of the Apprenticeship Levy              | Engage with training providers to ensure that training meets the skills gaps identified within the council, offering a range of qualifications at all levels.<br><br>Ensure that new standards being made available through the Levy are considered and promoted across the organisation | Organisational Development | Monthly - ongoing as new standards and training provision increases.<br><br>March 2022 |
| <b>1.2</b> | Creating career pathways for 16- 24 year olds in each service area mapped to apprenticeship qualifications, enabling access to further education and skills, therefore contributing to the council's 'Grow Our Own' workforce initiative | Enable service areas to identify skills gaps, embed apprenticeships into their workforce planning and provide a clear pathway for employees to progress within the council creating a talent pipeline | Produce clear entry career pathways for each service area and provide workforce data to identify opportunities for new and existing apprentices to progress within the council | Engage with each service area to map and create career pathways aligned to the apprenticeship standards  | Organisational Development | March 2022   |



## Success measures and action plan

| 2   | Growing apprenticeships   |   |   |  |  |            |
|-----|---|---|---|--|--|------------|
| 2.1 | Promoting the council's 'Grow Our Own' workforce initiatives in each service area and supporting apprentices who seek to secure progression to permanent employment in the council  | Provide talent and succession opportunities across the council to nurture talent and reduce the councils ageing workforce | Work with apprentices & service areas to secure permanent employment for at least 50% of apprentices at the end of their training           | Ensure that all vacancies, at the appropriate level and where a relevant standard can be applied, are considered for an apprenticeship.<br><br>Develop a talent pool for future applicants | Organisational Development                                 | March 2022 |
| 2.2 | Apprentices are identified and recruited as part of the service areas talent and succession plan, with a development role in place at the end of the programme.<br><br>Identify opportunities for apprentices to replace Grade 2/3 posts where possible | Promote career progression within the Council and create an internal talent pool  | Increase the number of apprentices recruited to posts Graded 2 & 3.<br><br>Increase in number of apprentice starts by 1.3% (60) corporately | Create clear measurable development roles for apprentices from the recruitment stage   | Recruitment Team<br>Job Shop<br>Organisational Development | March 2022 |

## Success measures and action plan

|            |  |  |  |   |                            |            |
|------------|--|--|--|---|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>2.3</b> | To enhance our reputation as an employer of choice by promoting apprenticeships to partners within the community | Attract future talent to the council, provide job opportunities and boost the local economy  | Produce analysis which includes the tracking of applicants and expressions of interest   | <p>Draw up an annual calendar of events and activities to promote apprenticeships including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School heads meetings</li> <li>• Career workshops</li> <li>• Job Shop</li> <li>• Recruitment fairs</li> <li>• Open Days</li> </ul> <p>Work with councillors to promote the apprenticeship programme across the city</p> | Organisational Development | March 2022 |
| <b>2.4</b> | Increasing the range of vocational areas in which apprenticeships are offered                                    | <p>Opportunity for employees to develop a new skill and gain a recognised qualification.</p> <p>Increase skillsets for employees across the organisation</p> | Tracking of apprenticeship qualifications available and map at least one apprenticeship standard to each service area where possible as part of the workforce planning | <p>Engage with service areas to identify the workforce skills shortages and opportunity to utilise the apprenticeship levy.</p> <p>Embed apprenticeship qualifications into the appraisal system.</p> <p>Report on appraisal training needs and target services areas where apprenticeship standards may fulfill their requirement</p>                            | Organisational Development | March 2022 |



## Success measures and action plan

|            |   |   |  |   |                            |            |
|------------|---|---|--|---|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>3</b>   | Embedding apprenticeships   |   |  |   |                            |            |
| <b>3.1</b> | Working with the organisation to identify skills gaps and opportunities to utilise and retain apprentices as part of our people plan, talent management and career pathways | Address skills gaps increase retention and provide career development opportunities | Skills gap analysis Recruitment and retention data | Gain Senior Management (SMB) buyin by presenting the aims and vision of the strategy.<br>Present at DMT level to identify opportunities to recruit apprentices.<br>Gather and analyse workforce data for each service area, identifying opportunity to utilise apprentices as part of their talent and succession planning.<br>Collaborate with the recruitment team as part of the above | Organisational Development | March 2022 |

## Success measures and action plan

|            |   |  |   |  |                            |            |
|------------|---|--|---|--|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>4</b>   | Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion - add social mobility   |  |   |  |                            |            |
| <b>4.1</b> | Widening participation in the council's apprenticeship programme and targeting underrepresented groups of young people such as looked-after young people, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic young people (BAME), young people with SEND, Carers, NEETs, and young refugees | Providing apprenticeship opportunities for 16-24 year olds from all backgrounds within the local community | To increase the equality employee data held to 85%                            | Work with Children's Services and other internal and external partner agencies and organisations to target under-represented groups.<br><br>Regularly monitor and evaluate to ensure there is a fair representation across the council. See Appendix 1 for a current data snapshot | Organisational Development | March 2022 |
| <b>4.2</b> | We will ensure that apprenticeships are a key component of an inclusive council which represents and reflects the diversity and inclusivity of our city   | Coventry City Council seen as an inclusive employer of choice  | Apprenticeships embedded within the quality, diversity and inclusion strategy | Monitor the diversity of all apprenticeship starts, to enable a more inclusive workforce and social mobility throughout the council.   | Organisational Development | March 2022 |



## Success measures and action plan

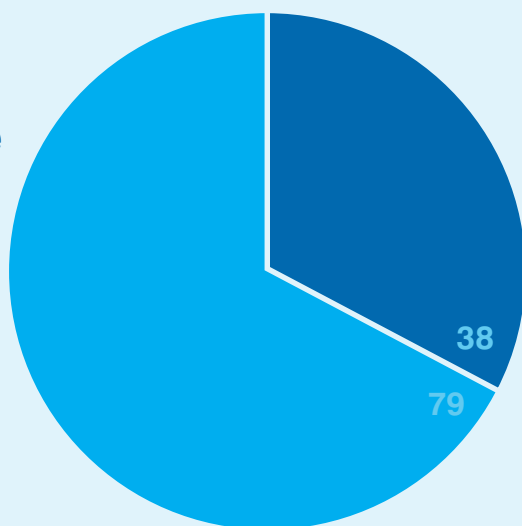
|            |  |   |  |  |                            |            |
|------------|--|---|--|--|----------------------------|------------|
| <b>5</b>   | Monitor the quality of apprenticeships   |   |  |  |                            |            |
| <b>5.1</b> | Develop and apply robust systems for monitoring the quality of the apprenticeship experience, ensuring that improvements are implemented in a timely and rigorous manner | To ensure apprentices receive quality training, development and support throughout the apprenticeship programme     | Evaluation stats.<br>Feedback reports from training providers and apprentices.<br>To achieve at least 85% of all feedback as 'Good' or above | Engage with training providers to agree service level agreements and to ensure high quality training and support for apprentices.<br>Produce annual apprenticeship report  | Organisational Development | March 2022 |
| <b>5.2</b> | Monitor retention and achievement of apprentices   | Engaged apprentices who feel valued.<br>Reduced turnover of apprentices   | Engagement surveys and exit interviews.<br>Achieve minimum of 50% retention  | Establish tracking systems to monitor retention and achievement.<br>Conduct exit interviews for apprentices leaving the organisation.<br>The council's Future Talent Board will monitor the progress and implementation of the Apprenticeship Strategy | Organisational Development | March 2022 |
| <b>5.3</b> | Improve consistency of placement support   | Reduced turnover.<br>Consistent, quality placement experience for the apprentice and clear guidance for the manager | Apprenticeship feedback, progress tracker.<br>Achieve satisfaction of 'Good' or above as overall support whilst on programme.                | Provide training/guidance to placement managers  | Organisational Development | March 2022 |

# Appendix 1

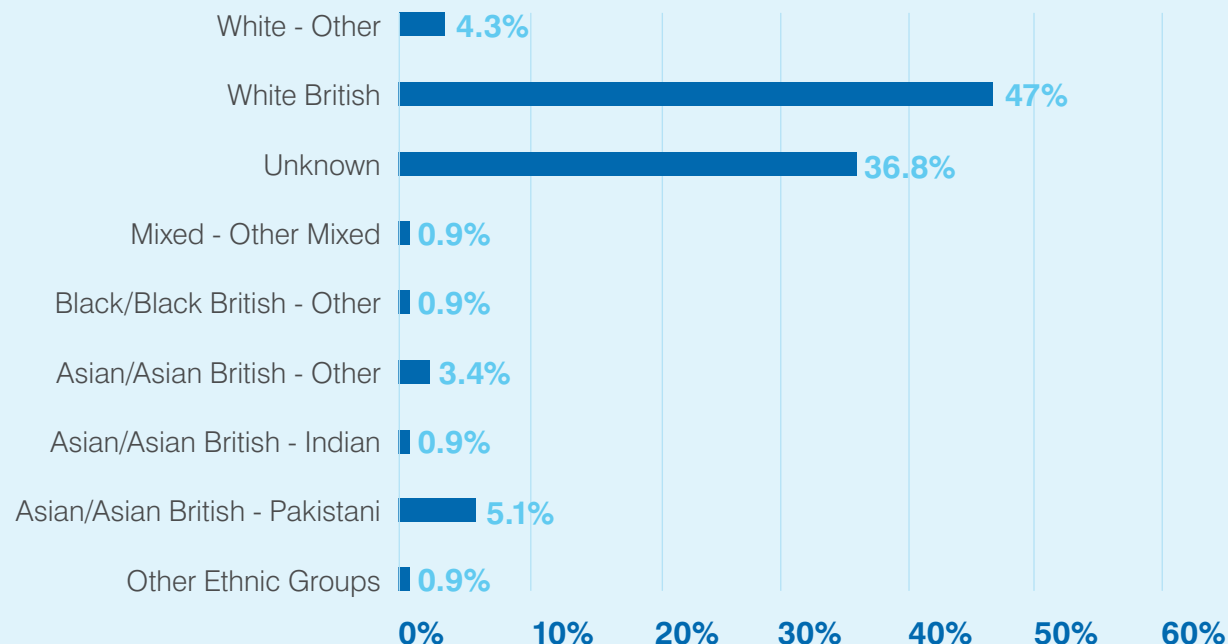
## Number of apprentices on programme

- March 2019

- Corporate
- Schools



## Equality data - March 2019



## Age analysis - March 2019

| Core Council/School | Age Band | Headcount | Percentage     |
|---------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Core Council        | 16-24    | 29        | 76.32%         |
|                     | 25-29    | 5         | 13.16%         |
|                     | 30-44    | 4         | 10.53%         |
| <b>Core Council</b> |          | <b>38</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |
| School              | 16-24    | 53        | 67.09%         |
|                     | 25-29    | 4         | 5.06%          |
|                     | 30-44    | 21        | 26.58%         |
|                     | 45-59    | 1         | 1.27%          |
| <b>School</b>       |          | <b>79</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |

## Disability analysis - March 2019

| Core Council/School | Disability Status | Headcount | Percentage     |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Core Council        | Disabled          | 1         | 2.63%          |
|                     | Not Disabled      | 33        | 86.84%         |
|                     | Unknown           | 4         | 10.53%         |
| <b>Core Council</b> |                   | <b>38</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |
| School              | Disabled          | 1         | 1.27%          |
|                     | Not Disabled      | 43        | 54.43%         |
|                     | Unknown           | 35        | 44.30%         |
| <b>School</b>       |                   | <b>79</b> | <b>100.00%</b> |



