

## INTRODUCTION

Apprenticeships play a vital role in developing skilled, confident professionals while strengthening organisational capability from within. By combining practical, on-the-job experience with structured learning, they offer an accessible and effective route into technical careers, particularly in sectors like highways, where hands-on expertise is essential.

At the heart of our Highways team, apprenticeships are not just a training pathway; they are a long-term investment in people. They enable individuals to build meaningful careers while ensuring the service continues to benefit from fresh perspectives, up-to-date knowledge, and a diverse workforce.

## REAL IMPACT: LYDIA'S ACHIEVEMENT

One of the most inspiring recent successes is Lydia Menear, who has just completed her apprenticeship within the Highways department. Her achievement marks a significant milestone, not only personally, but for the wider team, as she becomes the first female candidate to successfully complete the course.

Throughout her apprenticeship, Lydia demonstrated strong technical ability, resilience, and a willingness to take on new challenges. She gained hands-on experience across a wide range of highways functions, from inspections and maintenance planning to working alongside contractors and engaging with the community.

Her success highlights the importance of creating inclusive pathways into traditionally male-dominated fields. By breaking new ground, Lydia's journey helps pave the way for future apprentices and reinforces the organisation's commitment to diversity and equal opportunity.



## LOOKING AHEAD

The achievements of Lydia and Jay reflect the positive impact of investing in people. As both individuals move forward in their careers, they bring with them not only technical expertise but also a deep understanding of the organisation's values and standards.

Their journeys demonstrate that apprenticeships are more than a training route, they are a foundation for long-term success, both for individuals and for the future of our Highways Maintenance service at North Somerset Environment Company.

Our Highways team has already been busy working with local colleges to tailor our next apprenticeship courses to particular industry skills, some of which that might not be covered through conventional course structure, being more industry specific. We look forward to welcoming our next apprentices imminently as we continue to nurture future talent.

## BUILDING CAPABILITY: A SECOND SUCCESS STORY

Alongside Lydia, another apprentice, Jay Summers, has also successfully completed the programme, further demonstrating the strength of the apprenticeship pathway.

Jay brought enthusiasm and a strong work ethic to the team from day one. Over the course of his apprenticeship, he developed a solid understanding of highways operations, including asset management, safety standards, and works delivery. His ability to apply learning in real-world scenarios quickly made him a valued member of the team.

Now fully qualified, Jay is continuing to contribute to key activities within the department, helping to maintain and improve our North Somerset road network.

## WHY APPRENTICESHIPS MATTER

These success stories underline the broader value of apprenticeships:

- 👉 Create a sustainable talent pipeline by developing skills internally rather than relying solely on external recruitment.
- 👉 Improve retention, as apprentices often build strong connections to their teams and organisation.
- 👉 Enhance diversity by opening doors to individuals from different backgrounds and experiences.
- 👉 Ensure practical competence, as learning is directly applied in real working environments.