



Providing opportunities for unemployed young people in Ayrshire to gain the skills and experience needed to work in grounds maintenance and forestry is a key focus for East Ayrshire Woodlands.

In recent years we have expanded our programme and now deliver full-time work placements in East, South and North Ayrshire. All trainees are temporary employees of East Ayrshire Council.

Each training team is supervised by a qualified and experienced chargehand who is motivated to help individuals develop the skills that will help them secure sustainable employment in the land-based sector.

### **How does the Programme work?**

Only young people aged 18-24 years, not in employment, education or training, and living in the appropriate local authority area can be considered for a place.

We generally seek to recruit a full team of 6 people whenever funding is confirmed for a new programme. We will post notification of our intention to recruit on our website and Facebook page, on East Ayrshire Works ([link](#)) and directly to the appropriate DWP Job Centres.

All eligible applicants will be interviewed.

If you are successful you will initially be offered a 2 week voluntary introductory training place under the Sector Based Work Academy scheme. The purpose of which is to provide both you, as applicant, and East Ayrshire Woodlands, as provider, an opportunity to evaluate whether work as a forest craftperson is the right option for you.

A further 26 week contract of employment will be offered. Contract continuation is subject to satisfactory attendance, positive attitude and achievement of vocational qualifications.

Temporary employees will be paid at the Statutory Minimum Wage rate, appropriate to their age, current at the time. The working week is fixed at 30hours and will normally be 9.00am to 4.00pm (Mon-Thurs) and 9.00am to 1.30pm (Fri).

## What will I be doing?



Training teams work across a diverse range of sites in and around Ayrshire’s towns and villages and in more remote countryside. Outdoor work can be physically demanding and you will need to be prepared to work in all weathers.

The nature of the work activity is strongly influenced by season. Throughout the summer there is often a strong emphasis on public access routes. This can range from cutting back pathside vegetation, clearing or installing drains, to repair or construction of path surfaces and steps. We are often required to install associated infrastructure such as fences, gates, seats, way markers and interpretation panels. In the winter the emphasis shifts to clearing invasive plants such as rhododendron, brashing and felling trees, chipping cut material, planting new areas of woodland, and fitting or removal of tree shelters.

Our aim is to ensure that the areas where we work are safer, more attractive and better for wildlife and conservation. Whenever we are on site we will seek to remove any litter or fly-tipping that we find.

The actual work programme for each training team is directed by the requirements of the local authority, community representative or other landowners. No two programmes are exactly the same.

## What skills will I learn?



We offer specific City & Guilds/NPTC Level 2 accredited vocational qualifications that are widely recognised by industry employers. These include:

Safe Use of Brush-cutters and Trimmers

Safe Use of Manually Fed Wood-chippers

Principles of Safe Handling and Application of Pesticides

Safe Application of Pesticides using Pedestrian Hand Held Equipment  
(incl. To or Near Water)

Ground Based Chainsaw Operator  
(incl. Chainsaw maintenance, cross-cutting, Fell & Process trees up to 380mm)

HABC Award in Emergency First Aid at SCQF Level 5

In addition we will provide instruction and guidance in a range of core employability skills throughout the placement period.

Team work, planning and organising, problem solving, timekeeping, CV development, job search and application skills, preparation for interview, importance of health and safety in the workplace and relevant regulations, safe use of hand-tools.



## **What are my progression options?**

The skills and experience that you gain whilst on the programme will stand you in good stead when applying for jobs. Many of our former trainees have gone on to work with landscaping and grounds maintenance contractors or local authorities. Often the first step is a seasonal contract or registration with an employment agency. Others have found work with forestry contractors planting new woodlands or supporting harvesting operations.

A few bold individuals have opted for self-employment, taking on garden and larger grounds maintenance contracts for domestic and commercial clients or setting up tree planting squads.

If you are interested in developing your knowledge and skills further then you could consider a further or higher education course at a number of colleges. Options include forestry and arboriculture certificate, advanced certificate, diploma and foundation degree courses, tree surgery, rural skills and countryside management.

## Who are our Partners?



East Ayrshire Works Partnership includes key partners in East Ayrshire who provide employability and training services. It is managed by East Ayrshire Council's Economic Development Service and includes a wide range of opportunities delivered by a range of public, third and private sector organisations. Support has been developed to help people at all stages of the Strategic Skills Pipeline along their journey to find rewarding and sustainable employment. East Ayrshire Woodlands Training Programme is a Stage 3 intervention.



European Union



The Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

EUROPE & SCOTLAND

European Social Fund

Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future

East Ayrshire Woodlands' Training Programme benefits from support through European Structural Fund 2014-20 programmes. The Youth Employment Initiative and Employability Pipeline programmes are co-financed by the European Union.

East Ayrshire Woodlands benefits from support through the Employment Skills Training for Young People initiative. Our Intermediate Labour Market projects in East, North and South Ayrshire are part funded under this contract which is managed by Forest Enterprise Scotland.



East Ayrshire woodlands gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by each of the Ayrshire local authorities to the delivery of our employment training projects.



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