



**THIS IS
POSSIBILITY**

This is the difference you
make, working at
Warwickshire County Council.

National Graduate Programme at Warwickshire County Council



Welcome from our Chief Executive

Thanks for your interest in working with us at Warwickshire County Council.

Throughout my own local government career I've been committed to offering opportunities to the aspiring young leaders of tomorrow. Within local government it's important that we think about the future and how we can grow and support young people into middle and senior leadership roles.

This will be our second year as part of the LGA programme and already the benefits of the scheme are very clear – we've welcomed three bright, enthusiastic, individuals with leadership potential into our organisation who have made a real mark. As you will read later in this pack our graduates have enjoyed a varied and diverse programme of work during their first months with us, but what really stands out for me is they are all unanimous in praising the support they have received and the warm welcome they have had into Warwickshire.

So we now hope to further extend our Warwickshire welcome to more graduates who can start, and hopefully grow, their local government career with us. It's an exciting time to be a part of the council and I can personally guarantee that we will give you the support and encouragement you need.

As an organisation our direction is clear, we're making Warwickshire the best it can be for everyone, and I hope you will consider joining us on that journey.



Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive, Warwickshire
County Council

Welcome to Warwickshire County Council

Thank you for your interest in a Graduate Placement at **Warwickshire County Council**.

Warwickshire County Council is a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

The Council has one, simple vision – to make Warwickshire the best it can be. We want to ensure that for the people who live in, work in, or just visit, the county of Warwickshire is seen as a fantastic place with as high a quality of life as possible. This vision is supported by two key outcomes:

- **Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy, and independent**
- **Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills, and infrastructure**

About Warwickshire County Council

Those who work for Warwickshire County Council are always working towards those outcomes, they underpin every role within the organisation. We deliver a host of local authority services, via three main directorates:

- **People Directorate, responsible for social care, including care for the elderly and children's safeguarding, plus the commissioning of care provision, and public health.**
- **Communities Directorate, responsible for highways maintenance and planning, fire and rescue, waste and recycling, countryside and environmental management, trading standards, education and learning, and economic development.**

- **Resources Directorate supports and enables the two directorates above with services including; people skills and organisational development, law and governance, policy development, finance, ICT, HR, equality, diversity and inclusion, facilities, business support and customer services.**

Warwickshire County Council delivers hundreds of services to the county's residents, from education and roads to social care and fire and rescue. With approximately 4,500 employees – as well as thousands more in schools – the Council is dedicated to making Warwickshire the best it can be, open for business and growth and providing jobs and prosperity

Where are we?

We have several other satellite offices across the county, but Shire Hall in Warwick is our main office location and where we will base our graduates. However, work is what we do, not necessarily where and when we do it, and where work can be done at home, our people are encouraged to do so. This is part of our agile way of working. We empower our people to work in the way that enables them to work at their best with the aim that it'll enable them to bring their whole selves to work.



Our People Strategy



Through the later end of 2020, the council refreshed its Our People Strategy, to drive through the vision of Warwickshire County Council, a great place to work where diverse and talented people are enabled to be their best.

Embodying our Values and Behaviours, the Our People Strategy is built on 6 building blocks:

Our behaviours

Our behaviours were first introduced in 2016 and these haven't changed. Our behaviours frame how we should behave at work. They help us to understand how we should go about our work and the way we should interact with each other and our customers.



To support the achievement of our vision, five key organisational values have been identified:



High performing



Collaborative



Customer focused



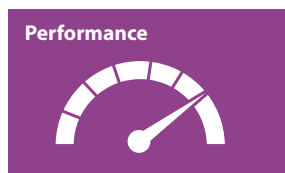
Accountable



Trustworthy

Our People Strategy building blocks

The building blocks provide the foundations for the delivery of Our People Strategy vision. We have identified six key building blocks:



For each building block we have a clear set of outcomes we need to achieve so that we can fulfill our vision and transform as an organisation in a way which is sustainable.

About Warwickshire

Warwickshire itself is a beautiful county with many cultural attractions and several wonderful towns.

Historic Warwick, the county town, famous for Warwick Castle, the finest castle in all the land; Stratford-upon-Avon, also famous as the birthplace of Warwickshire's most famous icon, the bard himself, William Shakespeare, and where the Royal Shakespeare Company theatre is based; Rugby is the main town in the east of Warwickshire, also famous as the birthplace of the sport that shares its name; in the north of the county is Nuneaton, Warwickshire's largest town and whose cultural icon is the writer George Eliot; and finally there is Royal Leamington Spa, anointed a royal spa town by Queen Victoria over a century ago and now a highly attractive town with a large student community and many shops and restaurants. As well as the towns we also have an abundance of beautiful, leafy countryside with many lovely rural villages.

Due to being right in the middle of the country, Warwickshire is also very well connected to other towns and cities, with direct train services from most towns to Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull, Oxford and London, plus easy access to several motorways including the M40 and the M6. Due to its thriving economy, wonderful towns and countryside, and the transport links, Warwickshire is a highly sought-after place to live.



THIS IS SUPPORT



Our graduate scheme at WCC

Warwickshire County Council is proud to be part of the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP) run by the Local Government Association (LGA). We are keen to work with graduates who have the potential to be senior leaders in a few years' time.

This will be the second time we have worked with the NGDP and are keen to welcome a further three graduates for a two-year fixed-term contract. Graduates will be part of our Corporate Policy and Commissioning Unit.

Placements offered over the two years will be across all three directorates to give an opportunity to learn about the breadth of service areas within a county council. Graduates will be assigned to projects on a six-month basis – the placement locations are based on business need and candidate preferences. Interview assessments for our positions are scheduled to take place in June.

Our offer

Graduates will be assigned a Line Manager within the Corporate Policy & Commissioning Unit to support them for the whole duration of their engagement on the graduate development programme. They will also be assigned a mentor who will be a Strategic Director from our Corporate Board.

There will also be frequent opportunities to meet with Monica Fogarty our Chief Executive

and also our political leader throughout the placement. In line with NGDP requirements, you will work with and have access to senior leaders across our organisation.

Whilst we do not offer a job guarantee at the end of the two years, we will work proactively with you and across the organisation, to identify appropriate next -step roles across a range of fields. We are keen to retain you if a suitable role is available. We will support you with interview skills, CV writing and opportunities to shadow people in roles you are interested in to enhance your CV and the skills you can offer.

Key documents

WCC website	www.warwickshire.gov.uk
Council Plan	https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/strategies
Latest news and corporate social media accounts	News – news.warwickshire.gov.uk Twitter – @warwickshire_cc Facebook – Warwickshire County Council Instagram – @bestwarwickshire
Corporate Plan	www.warwickshire.gov.uk/corporate
Strategy Documents	www.warwickshire.gov.uk/policies
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	www.warwickshire.gov.uk/performance/equality-diversity-warwickshire-county-council

Meet our current graduates



Case Study:
Alex Duckett

My background

My application to take part in the NGDP wasn't typical as I graduated in History from the University of Reading nearly 8 years before applying with the LGA. Since graduating I've been lucky enough to work in a few commercial sectors in both the UK and Czech Republic, but it was local government, and particularly the NGDP, that offered me the development opportunities and route into a challenging and rewarding long-term career that I hoped for.

One of the key aspects that drew me to the NGDP is the opportunity to gain insight into the incredibly broad and varied services delivered by local government. The other two graduates and I started out our journey at Warwickshire County Council in the Corporate Policy Unit, where we were given a fantastic introduction to the inner-workings of the organisation and the fundamentals of local government, including opportunities to meet most of the senior figures in the organisation.

Opportunities

After collaborating on a range of projects in the CPU (including developing a guide to corporate strategy bi-weekly policy summary for the leadership team), we each set out on

the first of our individual placements, which for me meant a stint in the Waste and Environment Team. I immediately got stuck in to working on several projects, including the creation of a £1million Climate Emergency Grant Fund, as well as behavioural change initiatives aimed at boosting recycling across the county. My next placement will mean another big change – moving to work in public health and social care where I'll be supporting the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Bill 2020. It's something I have no prior experience of, but I'm really looking forward to making a contribution and taking the opportunity to develop my skillset.

Why Warwickshire?

I couldn't be happier with my move to Warwickshire. The support and guidance we've received has been second to none and the high importance given to employee wellbeing has been a pleasant surprise, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. When talking with members of my NGDP cohort at other partner councils, it seems that Warwickshire County Council have gone above and beyond what was expected of them by the LGA, which is particularly impressive as this is the first year they have participated with the programme. The placement coordinators have been receptive and responsive to our feedback, so I imagine that future cohorts will have an even better experience than we're having.

Was it a good decision?

In short yes! In my opinion, the NGDP gives an unparalleled opportunity for anyone interested in starting a career in local government, or the public sector more generally. Not only can you take advantage of the development opportunities offered by both the LGA and your host council, but you also get a unique chance to work alongside senior members of the Council and partner organisations, often in service areas that you didn't know you were interested in!



Case Study:
**George
McVerry**

My background

I studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Reading.

Opportunities

- **Policy summaries that have been a great success among higher tier staff**
- **Organisational wide approach to strategy**
- **Council response to central government consultations and external partner evidence requests**
- **Covid-19 Resilience Cell support**
- **District & borough transport strategies as part of the Local Transport Plan refresh**

Why Warwickshire?

I knew I wanted to work at a county council to be able to experience a wide range of services that might not be possible at a smaller council and being based in the Midlands I wanted to remain in the general area. Warwickshire County Council ticked these boxes and as a local authority were getting involved in exciting projects. What first drew me to WCC was how warm and inviting the staff were during my interview. WCC's location in the Midlands also meant that working neighbours would include WMCA, city councils and district and

as a local authority were getting involved in exciting projects. What first drew me to WCC was how warm and inviting the staff were during my interview. WCC's location in the Midlands also meant that working neighbours would include WMCA, city councils and district and boroughs that were close to where I'm based.

The working culture at Warwickshire County Council is the most supportive and welcoming environment I have ever experienced. Everybody is invested in the graduate scheme and ensuring we have an enjoyable and valuable learning experience. There is a consistent open-door policy and hierarchy of employees is not a noticeable feature. I have been able to be involved and experience so many different avenues of local government thanks to the openness of all the staff.

Was it a good decision?

Yes 100%! I can't imagine working anywhere else as a new graduate. Warwickshire is such a varied county with so much to offer. As a young graduate you can enjoy some of the best that the Midlands has to offer including great green spaces and close links to large cities like Coventry and Birmingham.





Case Study:
Laura Pain

My background

Originally from Cornwall, I studied History and Politics at Loughborough and applied for the NGDP whilst doing a Masters at Exeter.

Opportunities

I've felt so grateful and surprised by all the opportunities I've had at WCC even in a short space of time. What has really stood out after speaking to others on the scheme is how much time and exposure we've had with members of senior leadership, having a strategic director as a mentor and regular catch ups with our Chief Executive has been such a brilliant opportunity and meant we've had the best possible overview of the council's work at every level.

We've been given the opportunity to work in all three Directorates and so far I've had the opportunity to meet with directors across the council, support the council's COVID response, produce policy briefings and work collaboratively on developing the council's approach to writing strategy in the Corporate Policy Unit. On my second placement within Sustainable Communities I was able to work with different business and community stakeholders across the county and further afield, working with District, Borough, Town and Parish councils on covid response and recovery, as well as preparing for more long term challenges and planning. I was able to get involved in preparation for the Commonwealth

Games and a big public realm art project, working with different parts of the council and artists throughout the county to commission large pieces of public art. My third placement is with the Health Wellbeing & Self-care team, with projects on sexual health services, family wellbeing and promoting independence. On each placement we've had the opportunity to shape our work to our interests and been encouraged to pursue them.

Why Warwickshire?

Moving to Warwickshire was a very big move for me and not somewhere I'd even visited before. I was sold by the mix of big towns for events, socialising and shopping and the more rural side of Warwickshire, as well as its great transport links (for me, this was road). Warwickshire appealed to me as a County Council because of the wide variety of work the council undertakes and because of that, the variety of opportunities I could have. The most enjoyable part of working at WCC, for me, are the people I work with. Every person we have met at the council is so generous with their time and genuinely invested in your experience and growth. We've been encouraged to grow our own network and make our contacts

Was it a good decision?

Joining WCC was absolutely the best decision. Even with the pretty unusual start in the middle of a pandemic and working from home, I have always felt welcome and appreciated. The positive, warm and generous culture that's been created at WCC is such a joy to join and be part of, with the strongest focus on staff wellbeing. I have felt challenged and pushed, but never overwhelmed, and always supported. For a county I'd never visited before, I've really found a home in Warwickshire.

THIS IS COMMUNITY SPIRIT



Frequently Asked Questions

Ahead of your decision around which council you would like to work with, we've tried to answer a few of the common questions we think you will be keen to know the answers to as you consider your Local Authority options for your graduate placement.

What team will I be a part of at WCC?

Your "home" team will be the Corporate Policy & Commissioning Unit. We're a newly established team here at WCC, who work strategically across all the council's directorates. We focus on understanding key national, regional & local policy influences and set frameworks for the council's approach to developing strategy & commissioning activity. Being part of our team will give you exposure to areas of interest across all the council's remit and a provide you with a good grounding in the key political, financial and external issues that impact on a Local Authority every day.

During your first few weeks you will get to know the authority by being an integral part of our team and learn about several key areas; financial management, political awareness, programme management, data & intelligence and our Change Programme.

Recovery from Covid-19 is also a massive part of the council's focus now so you will have an opportunity to contribute to this important work too.

Where will the placements be in WCC?

We are committed to hosting our graduates in each of our directorates. Placements will take place across the Communities, People and Resources Directorates. They will rotate over the two years and you will get an opportunity to be involved in both strategic and delivery focused work / projects; matching our approach of being a Commissioning and Delivery organisation. Placements will be approximately 6 months depending on the work involved. Plans for the detail of the placements are currently being finalised.

What ICT Equipment will I be provided with?

As a council employee, you will be provided with high-quality IT equipment to help you work effectively remotely. This will include access to a Microsoft Surface Pro device.

WCC utilises Microsoft Teams which has been an invaluable resource during the last few months to keep in touch and "meet" about key issues. You will have a dedicated WCC email address and access to Microsoft Teams and all its functionality to stay in touch with your colleagues.

There is currently a £100 allowance for all employees to help them buy ICT equipment including office chairs to help you work more comfortable remotely (subject to managers approval and if applicable at time of appointment).

How will WCC support me personally in my new role if the team are not in the office?

It's important to us that you feel welcome at WCC. Things are very different now but there are a number of ways we will support you with your transition into employment here:

- **You'll have support from your Line Manager – you'll be part of our regular team meetings and have scheduled monthly 1-1's, along with an annual appraisal.**
- **You'll have an informal "Buddy": someone you can ask day to day questions of and to help you navigate our organisation and get to know people.**
- **There is a newly created Young Employers Network you can be part of.**
- **You'll be part of the Council's "Welcome to Warwickshire" Induction Programme so you understand what's expected of you as a council employee. Modules include Information Compliance & Health & Safety.**
- **We'll navigate getting you set up on our IT system and with any HR pre-employment checks / needs.**
- **We will arrange for you meet key people across the council – from Directors to Project Managers.**

- **We want you to enjoy your time with us, so we will introduce you to other new starters in a similar position and people who are also commencing their career in local government. This will help you to get to know others around you and build a social network.**
- **Your Health & Wellbeing is of utmost importance to us – you will have access to a range of Wellbeing support available to all of our employees.**
- **We also have a range of staff networks, run by our people for our people, which provide members with the opportunity to support one another, connect, and discuss prevalent issues and enact change. More information can be found on the last page.**
- **A lot of this may happen virtually, but we will do our best to help you settle in quickly.**
- **Once we do get back into the office we will support you to make that transition from home to a real-life work setting.**

How will WCC support me with my ILM Study?

The ILM Leadership course provided by the LGA is integral to your time as a graduate with us. We're fully supportive of your need to work on this throughout your time here.

We've familiarised ourselves with the syllabus and key outcomes and have structured your time here to help you build an evidence base you can use to support your ILM with some real-life working examples.

We are also happy to give you regular time during working hours to complete the coursework.

What opportunities are there for personal / professional development?

In addition to the learning opportunities provided by the LGA via the ILM, you will have access to the councils own Learning and Development Programme. We will encourage you to attend relevant courses. These range from Managing Budgets, Introduction to Project Management and Working in a Political Environment. We have our own on-line learning module in our "Your HR" System and are running a lot of courses virtually so you won't miss out.

You will also have the opportunity to be mentored by one of the council's Senior Leadership Team.

We will also arrange opportunities for you to meet and work with others at close by local authorities such as Oxfordshire, Coventry & Solihull.

Partnerships are a key aspect of local government work so during your time with us you will work with partner agencies such as the Local Enterprise Partnership, our District & Borough's and others such as the West Midlands Combined Authority.

What opportunities might there be for me at WCC after the 2-year programme?

Whilst you are with us, you will get to see a whole range of careers available across local government which could be for you. We will help you explore opportunities and job roles that interest you so you can apply for relevant posts towards the end of your two years. We hope you would love to stay on at WCC, but we will explore with you what opportunities we and other council's have.



Probation Period

For all employees joining the County Council, including Graduates, your employment will be subject to a probationary period, which will normally last for six months and be a general assessment of your attendance, performance and attitude at work. The probation period can be extended if necessary. At the end of the period, subject to your performance being satisfactory, your employment with the County Council will be confirmed.

Annual Leave

Graduates will receive 23 days (170.2 hours) annual leave per year in addition to bank holidays.

Pension & staff benefits

We know that our people want to do the best job possible, so we believe in properly rewarding them for their hard work and commitment. You will be automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme unless you opt out, and eligible to join the staff benefit scheme, which includes employee discounts, our cycle to work scheme and employee assistance programme, agile working, employee awards and staff networks.

Key Contacts

If you have any further questions please contact

Daniel Nash	Apprenticeships and Placements Practitioner Email: danielnash@warwickshire.gov.uk Policy Lead, Corporate Policy & Commissioning Unit
Lou Richardson	Email: louiserichardson@warwickshire.gov.uk

Warwickshire County Council is committed to equality of opportunity for all employees and is keen to address areas of under representation in its workforce, this is because we really understand the importance of different voices, experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds within our workforce. Therefore, we strongly encourage applications from members of underrepresented groups.

The council has a number of staff network groups which provide peer support and safe spaces for our people who hold these and other identities. We recognise the power of staff networks to improve the wellbeing of our people, and the culture of our organisation.

We currently have seven staff networks:

- **Carers Staff Network**
- **Christian Staff Network**
- **Cultural Staff Network**
- **Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) Staff Network**
- **LGBT+ Staff Network**
- **Women's Staff Network**
- **Widows / Widowers Staff Network**

The people who work for us are our greatest asset and when they feel valued, included, safe and supported, this positivity reaches the people we are here for, our communities and customers.

**THIS IS THE
DIFFERENCE
YOU MAKE**

