

# APPRENTICE ON THE WEY & ARUN CANAL

Adam Rayner became the first apprentice taken on by an independent canal restoration society when he signed up as a water environment worker with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust in 2021.

Bridgwater & Taunton College, the only place offering a water environment apprenticeship, developed the Level 3 course in partnership with the Environment Agency, National Trust, Canal & River Trust and Somerset Drainage Board.

The 18-month scheme has seen Adam working with Wey & Arun Canal Trust staff and volunteers to gain on-the-job training, while studying both remotely and in-person at the West Country college with fellow students from as far afield as York and Cumbria.

With no shortage of projects and ongoing canal maintenance tasks, Adam has received a thorough grounding in many elements of canal restoration, from site work and health & safety through to habitat management. The Trust employs two full-time maintenance and restoration staff so was well-placed to take on an apprentice.

Adam's background working with the Girlguiding and Scouting movement, and his interest in the outdoors, made the role appeal. The apprenticeship means he will get real hands-on experience, and a professional training qualification at the end of it.

**“ I had no previous experience of working on canals, but with the skills and experience I've gained I am now confident and capable working with the Wey & Arun Canal Trust, managing different aspects of the waterway and working with volunteers to progress the restoration.**

**- Adam Rayner, apprentice,  
Wey & Arun Canal Trust**

