



Victory Pier Spotlight on Apprentices and Training

INTRODUCTION

1. Project Background and Description

- 1.1 Berkeley Home's Vision is to be a world class business, defined by the quality of places we create, generating long term value and having a long term impact on society. To this end we have set out a set of commitments for the business. Berkeley has recognized that we need to focus on tackling the skills shortage and attracting the next generation of construction workers if we are to achieve our goals.

One of the commitments pledge Berkeley to encourage and work with the supply chain to target 5% of their workforce to be in an apprenticeship or formal training. At the Victory Pier development site we have been working for a number of years to attract young people into the construction industry and encouraged the subcontractors to employ apprentices and to upskill the established workforce.

Construction at Victory Pier for 841 apartments, 1100 student units and 3,700m² commercial space began on site in 2008 and is still ongoing with the last phases due to complete in summer/autumn 2019. Berkeley Homes is the main contractor who employs and manages a number of subcontractors during the construction phases. Victory Pier is a development site within the Berkeley Home (West London) division of the Berkeley Group.

2. Berkeley's Approach to Apprentices at Victory Pier

- 2.1 Prior to project start, the project team reviews the programme and trade packages and produce an Apprentice and Training Action Plan.

For the phase which has just completed (263 apartments and 950m² commercial) it was identified that apprentices should be targeted for the following packages:

- 1 x Façade
- 2 x Mechanical engineer
- 2 x Electrical engineer
- 1 x Joiner
- 1 x Painter and decorator

- 2.2 Including in the tender packages were specific requirements and targets, time and resources for employing apprentices and for attracting a local work force. Packages were awarded for overall value including sustainable, workforce and health & safety standards as well as financial costs.

At the Pre-start meetings, the apprentice targets were specifically discussed with the subcontractors to ensure they were fully aware of expectations and targets.

During the longevity of the construction phase of Victory Pier, the Berkeley project team has established a good relationship with the local colleges and educational institutions. We were able to forward contact details to the subcontractors for the above packages and generally provide advice regarding employment of apprentices.

- 2.3 Monthly KPI reporting to the Berkeley Group on the number of apprentices and workers in training programmes from each construction site and by each subcontractor meant that the subject was a continual focus for the Project Team and the subcontractors. Extra effort was made to meet with targets and requirements.

During the 24 month construction period of the previous phase the Victory Pier site boasted on average more than 5% apprentices on site and further 3% in training, well within the targets set prior to commencement of the development. This included:

- 2 x Façade
- 2 x Electrical engineers
- 5 x Dry liners
- 1 x Quantity surveyor
- 1 x Site manager

3. Berkeley Employed Apprentices

- 3.1 The Victory Pier development has a good working relationship with Mid Kent College. The project team attend their annual Employers Fayre and help out with mock interviews and work experience. Two exceptionally students had the opportunity to gain experience on the Victory Pier construction site. It resulted in Berkeley Homes employing them directly as apprentice site manager and apprentice quantity surveyor. They have both become highly valued workers and important in the project team. They have gained invaluable experience in working on a large busy construction site and have a long, prosperous and exciting career in front of them.

Darren Down completed his apprenticeship in September 2017 and is currently studying quantity surveying at South Bank University. Sam Lane is in his final year at Mid Kent College and has been accepted to studying for a degree as a Site Manager at Kent University. They will both continue to work at Victory Pier and have one day a week studying at the universities. Please see a profile of Darren and Sam undertaken in April 2017 in appendix A.

4. Berkeley Homes Employees

- 4.1 Berkeley Homes (West London) Ltd, in which the Victory Pier project is managed is committed in supporting the development of future talent and current employees. To this end we have hired a Future Opportunities Coordinator as a way of promoting apprenticeship and work related activities both within our own organisation and also with helping subcontractors.

Training opportunities for Berkeley employees are identified in 6 monthly Personal Development Reviews where career progression is discussed. At the Victory Pier development this process has in particular benefitted our Office Manager who is undertaking a university course in Human Resources (Appendix C3).

This approach has been highly effective as Berkeley Homes (West London) has been able to double the number of apprenticeship and people undertaking vocational training across sites in the last two years with 45 apprentices and 60 people doing training. This includes 8 directly employed apprentices within the company (see appendix B).

Furthermore, Berkeley have also identified the need to recruit high calibre Technical Co-ordinators through a 6 month Academy Programme which is due to commence this summer.

The academy will draw upon a wide scope of internal knowledge and expertise through a collaborative learning and development framework, which will include a scheduled rotation around internal departments, a mentoring programme, a work shadowing rota and skill gap development assessment. On completion of the programme the candidates will take a permanent role on their allocated project in a Technical Co-ordinator position.

At Victory Pier, our Technical Assistant has been given the opportunity to take part of the academy which will greatly enhance his skills knowledge and provide excellent career prospects.

5. Opportunities for the Local Workforce

- 5.1 The project team at Victory Pier enjoys meeting with educational institutions the across local communities. This is done in various ways and for all age groups. There are several institutions close by with which we have formed a close working relationship since construction started at Victory Pier:

Primary Schools: When entering the Hoarding Competition we take the opportunity to visit the school and explain to the students what we do and what it is like to work on a construction site. We also discuss the type of jobs available. On painting day, the pupils get a tour of the construction site. It is a memorable experience for them and may sow the seeds for a career in the construction industry.

Mid Kent College: We take part in the Employer's Fayre, Apprentice Week (App D), engage in discussion with students, offer work experience, mock interviews and help with CVs. Several students who attend Mid Kent College are working at Victory Pier.

University of Kent and University of Greenwich: Civil Engineering and other subject students regularly visit Victory Pier to conduct interviews for assignments, dissertations, work experience etc.

Royal Engineers: We conduct regular visits for the Royal Engineers. They find our development site a very useful tool in understanding the requirements in setting up, logistics and management of site/camp.

5.2 Engaging with the local community at a young age gives local residents a better understanding of job roles within the construction industry not just traditional construction trades like plumbing and electrical but also less know roles with construction like finance, marketing and design.

5.3 Other development sites managed by Berkeley Homes (West London) Ltd has undertaken similar engagements with the local community and nearby areas to promote the development site to local suppliers and people:

- Richmond and Kingston Education Business Partnership have asked for BHWL to take part in traineeship mock interviews at the beginning of April 2018 to help students get an insight into the first stages of employment.
- Kingston Adult Education organised a career session with 20 young people aged 16-18, that left school with no GCSE's.
- BHWL attended the Sutton Festival of Business and discussed employment and apprenticeship opportunities as part of the business processes to taking on apprentices.
- Carshalton College organized for Berkeley Homes Capital Plc to have a talk to students regarding the Berkeley Reach Apprenticeship Programs.
- The design department are interested in getting Kingston Art College involved in the new artwork that will be in the Queenshurst site in Kingston upon Thames' reception once completed.

6. Incentives

6.1 During the past two years, The Berkeley Group have held annual Apprentice Awards. This is done to raise the profile of apprentices and to recognize and celebrate the achievements of the apprentices employed both directly by Berkeley and by the supply chain.

At Victory Pier, we had great success for the awards with one overall winner and two highly commended apprentices. The achievements of the apprentices were greatly celebrated at Victory Pier and in the companies they work for (appendix C1 and C2).

7. Berkeley Group's Approach to Apprentices:

- 7.1 Since May 2016 we have supported more than 850 apprentices working on our sites and in our offices, and over 1,100 in other types of vocational training. We have achieved this through a structured Group wide approach to tackling the skills shortage in construction whilst being adaptable to the individual requirements of the boroughs we build within. Of the 850 apprentices, 63 of the apprentices are directly employed across the Berkeley Group doing 25 different types of apprenticeship and we have committed nearly £500,000 for their training.
- 7.2 Through structured initiatives like the Berkeley REACH program we have been able to actively encourage individuals into the construction industry.
- 7.3 We particularly pride ourselves in our partnerships with Local Authorities. In recent years, we have set up a construction skills training centre at Kidbrooke Village in partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, become a strategic partner with Wandsworth council's educational programs and sit on various Boards as key advisories in promoting construction apprenticeships to young people.
- 7.4 We have over 20 full time Apprenticeship Coordinators working across The Group whose primary work is to promote, hire and facilitate apprenticeships across our workforce. They work to strengthen our commitment to actively engage subcontractors who have a proven record in being responsible employers of apprentices. This ensures that our large regeneration sites are also places for people's careers to thrive.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Berkeley Homes (West London) is committed to maximizing local employment and training opportunities on our developments. Experience has shown that our proactive approach to engagement has improved the quality of our developments, our relationships with the community by providing on-site apprenticeships, work experience placements, careers talks and site visits for local schools, colleges and training initiatives; as well as attending and hosting job fairs to recruit local candidates. The results of the work undertaken to reach out and promote the construction industry as a career and apprentices in particular has paid off as the results shows on the site at Victory Pier. This has been achieved with the full support of The Berkeley Group.

