

PERSIMMON REPORTS RENEWED INTEREST IN APPRENTICESHIPS ACROSS THE U

Submitted by: Golley Slater PR (Birmingham)

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Persimmon Homes, the UK's second largest housebuilder reports an encouragingly high level of interest for apprenticeships across the country with over 1,000 applications received last year for positions within the company.

With currently 340 apprentices throughout the Group, an increase of 50 per cent since 2003, a figure set to grow further, and with the launch this month for the second year of Persimmon's 'Apprentice of the Year' awards scheme, the company fiercely opposes claims that there is a lack of new blood interested in coming into the industry.

John White, Persimmon's chief executive and former apprentice himself is encouraged by the response. He comments: "We receive a good level of applications for apprenticeships, demonstrating that there is a high level of interest amongst young people looking for a career with us.

"Construction is one of the UK's biggest industries and one that can boast a wide range of rewarding career options whether individuals are looking for the outdoor life on site or behind the scenes back at the office. From apprentices through to site managers and graduates, Persimmon is committed to training and developing talent of the future and I am encouraged by the high level of applications which clearly shows that the industry is attractive to jobseekers.

"We all know that there is a skills shortage and I strongly believe that it is our responsibility to do everything we can to encourage people into the industry to maintain the skill set. We can't afford to fall behind as the future of our industry and the quality of craftsmanship will dwindle. Meeting the Governments stiff housing targets and satisfying the growing demand for homes will also be compromised."

But what is Persimmon doing to overcome these issues and promote the image that construction does offer people a 'Job for Life'?

John continues: "We have introduced a series of initiatives which included launching our highly successful 'Homing In On Opportunity' campaign, aimed at 14 to 16 year olds.

"Pupils and teachers can now download from our website a comprehensive careers manual which clearly and precisely demonstrates the diverse nature of jobs in the industry and the qualifications needed.

"In Essex, for example, we teamed up with businessdynamics – a national business, education and enterprise charity - and ran a series of workshops aimed at 14 and 15 year olds to dispel the myths about housebuilding. I was delighted to read the feedback from the pupils indicating it had given them an interest in the industry and made them realise that it doesn't just involve working on site.

"We actively seek to employ apprentices such as bricklayers, plumbers, scaffolders and painters and support their on-site and off-site training. Rewarding their hard work and dedication is key and our Apprentice of the Year Awards Scheme was launched for the first time in 2003 to do just that and

recognise our own talent.

“This year we formally introduced the Persimmon Site Manager Development Programme which gives our apprentices who want to further their career the opportunity to do so, providing them with a structured training programme to plug a gap in the external training available. We have also taken on a further intake of graduates on our Management Development Programme to grow into our future senior managers.

“A career in housebuilding does offer people a ‘Job for Life’ in the skills that they learn and the structured career paths available. Starting as a bricklayer or joiner provides an opportunity to move into management in the future. The opportunities genuinely are there.”

Persimmon currently builds over 12,000 properties a year from one bedroom apartments to seven bedroom executive homes at over 300 developments across the country.

For further information on the careers available in the construction industry, download Persimmon’s Homing In On Opportunity Careers Manual by visiting www.persimmonhomes.com or call 08459 10 10 11 for details of your nearest Persimmon Regional Office.

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