

Kent & Medway Apprentice Graduation Ceremony

Press Release

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KENT & MEDWAY APPRENTICE GRADUATION CEREMONY SUCCESS!

The third Kent and Medway Apprentice Graduation Ceremony took place virtually, via the Remo conferencing platform, on 8 October 2021 and proved a great success. The event which aimed to enable a live audience of apprentices, family, employers, training providers and guests, saw 140 people join the live celebration.

The graduation proved to be the most successful to date in terms of record sponsor engagement, nearly 300 apprentices registering to be part of the graduation, and over 170 employers engaged through their apprentices – 140% and 240% increases respectively compared to 2020. The event organising partners believe that the celebration may be the biggest of its kind in the south-east if not England this year.

The ceremony not only put the graduating apprentices centre stage but included inputs from key speakers from stakeholder organisations and those responsible for delivering the apprenticeship strategy in England.

These included: Christian Brodie, Chair of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP); Mike Cherry, National Chair of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB);, Jane Hickie, CEO of Association of Employment & Learning Providers (AELP); Pauline Smith, CEO of CXK; Elizabeth Flegg, Chair, South East Apprentice Ambassadors Network (SEAAN); and Rachel Cooper, Strategy Director, Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IFATE).

This year's apprentices had undertaken apprenticeships from Level 2 to higher level university equivalent Level 4 and 5, and came from a wide range of employers covering more industry sectors than ever before. The ceremony was hosted live on-line by compere Nicola Everett of KMTV, KMFM and Kent Online who also provided the pre-recorded graduate roll video segments for the event.

The event was also recorded to ensure as many people could see the event at their convenience. The video content can be seen at: <https://www.appgradkandm.org/past-events>.

Nicola Everett, professional presenter, said: "It was a great event and fabulous to see so many guests attending the live transmission. A great aspect was that when the graduate names were read out in the roll videos, that they could be celebrated and applauded live by the virtual guests. We all look forward to being able to get back to a traditional format at a county venue perhaps in 2022, but this year's ceremony proved a perfect balance of recognition and live celebration of Kent and Medway's amazing apprentices."

Mark Hill, project manager for the Graduation Ceremony; said, "Naturally as event organisers with the key partners representatives, I am very pleased that we managed to plan and deliver such a successful event. There was always the option to postpone, but the organising partners were keen to ensure that the profile of apprentices, and the importance of apprenticeships was not lost amid the recent and current challenges presented by Covid 19, especially as so many apprentices celebrated at the event would have made huge contributions as essential workers in the last year."

The graduation also involved the support of 18 training providers including several independent training providers and all three of the Kent further education colleges. With apprenticeships playing a key role in the strategies of the Kent County Council and Medway Council, both authorities were core backers of the graduation.

Michelle Flegg, Workforce Development Strategy Manager at Kent County Council, said: "It was important to ensure that the value and role of the county's apprentices to the economy and throughout the pandemic was recognised in the apprenticeship graduation ceremony 2021. It was such a fantastic event to see so many apprentices and employers celebrated their achievements in completing their apprenticeship"

Cllr Rodney Chambers, Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships, said: "As a sponsor for the Apprenticeship Graduate programme, we are very proud of the hard work and achievements of Kent and Medway's apprentices. The candidates have worked extremely hard, especially during unprecedented times, and I hope that they enjoy their graduation ceremony. We value apprenticeships enormously, both as an employer and in the wider community, aiming these programmes at young people, supports Medway's aspiration to become a Child-Friendly City. We would like to wish 2021's apprenticeship graduates every success in their future careers and welcome more young people to sign up to the programme."

Cllr Jane Chitty, Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, said: "I am so pleased that young people have been given the opportunity to learn new skills, be a team member in a professional workplace and gain a path to a future career with apprenticeship schemes. We are all excited that the apprentices get the recognition they deserve in person at the 2021 Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony. More than 170 employers and 18 training providers were involved in the programme, giving Kent and Medway's young people the best start to working life and enhancing skills to carry with them in the future. I am thrilled that we are helping to create the right opportunities for young people to thrive, and I encourage people to find out about apprenticeships at [medway.gov.uk/apprenticeships](https://www.medway.gov.uk/apprenticeships)."

Plans for the 2022 graduation are already underway. It is hoped that the celebration will return to a face-to-face format, as per the 2019 inaugural event held at Rochester Cathedral. This will again take place in October.

ENDS.

The Events so far:

To see the **2019 graduation at Rochester Cathedral** and the **2020 Virtual Ceremony** videos visit: <https://www.appgradkandm.org/past-events>

2021 Event Programme

https://de7cb97a-d161-40fe-95e5-89fe11a76a7d.filesusr.com/ugd/c07644_0f9bcd0e6b894130bbd28131306af7e5.pdf

The Graduation Ceremony Team

The partners who are organising this event are: CXK; Careers and Enterprise Company; Canterbury Christ Church University; The Education People; Federation of Small Businesses; Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO); Kent Further Education (KFE); Medway Council; Rule 5 Solutions and Wire Belt Company Ltd.

Additional Supporting Funders and Sponsors

The event is funded by the organising partners and additional external partners and sponsors including: The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) via the South East Apprenticeship

Ambassador Network (AAN); Berry Gardens; Clarion Housing; IndEx and Pegasus Precision; Kent County Council; Megger; National Grid and NHS Health Education England.

Kent & Medway Apprentice Graduation Ceremony Registration Requirements 2022

Any Kent and Medway based apprentice who has completed and achieved their apprenticeship, at any level or discipline, between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022 can be registered. This includes those that may have had their end-point assessment and achievement delayed from 2019/20 or 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

For more information visit the website at: www.appgradkandm.org Twitter: @AppGradKandM
Instagram: AppGradKandM or via: info@appgradkandm.org – Mark Hill, [Rule 5 Solutions](http://Rule5Solutions.com)
Use the hashtag #AppGradKandM

Key Statistics 2021

- 290+ graduates
- 170+ employers
- 18 Training Providers
- 140 live guests for the virtual transmission on 8th October 2021

Partners & Sponsors 2021

K&M Apprentice Graduation Ceremony Partners & Sponsors 2021

