

Apprenticeships at Berthon

I am now going to talk to you about something that I am very passionate about - **apprenticeships**, and Berthon has been employing and training apprentices for more than 100 years.

This evening I am going to focus on the last **15** of those years, to give you a flavour of our commitment to our young apprentices, why it is **so** important to enthuse young people about the marine industry & skills based careers and the types of activities we have been involved in, both locally and nationally.

My background is Marine engineering and without sounding like I'm in an alcoholics anonymous meeting – my name is Keith, and I am an ex-apprentice.

As I have already mentioned, we have a very longstanding apprenticeship programme, and our latest graduates will be attending their graduation ceremony at Southampton International Boat show on the 17th September.

We have a further 20 apprentices at various stages of their 4-year programme with us, specialising in either boatbuilding (we still call them the traditional craft of 'Shipwright'), Marine engineering, Marine electrical and Yacht painting.

On Monday a further 8 young people will be starting their apprenticeship with us. This commitment to training the next generation is vital to the continued success of the business.

Over the last **15 years** Berthon has employed and trained:

127 apprentices. Spending **8000hrs** each and **1 million hrs** between them, training and honing their skills in their chosen discipline.

Collectively they have undertaken 16500 days of off the job training including City & Guilds qualifications at Level 2 and Level 3.



Everything we do at Berthon is designed to develop our apprentices into confident, highly skilled competent individuals
We have been recognised locally, nationally and internationally for the depth, breadth and quality of our apprenticeship programme, winning **14** awards since 2009.

Opportunities



We run a Duke of Edinburgh Gold award programme for our apprentices and currently have a cohort of 6 that are nearing completion.

This programme not only teaches them new skills, it also develops them as good citizens. Berthon sponsors this programme including expeditions and apprentices even undertake their volunteering during the working day.

Their volunteering was over a 12 month period at the local Lymington food bank – New Forest Basics Bank.

This experience opened their eyes to other peoples circumstances and they all found it a humbling and extremely satisfying experience, helping those less fortunate than themselves.

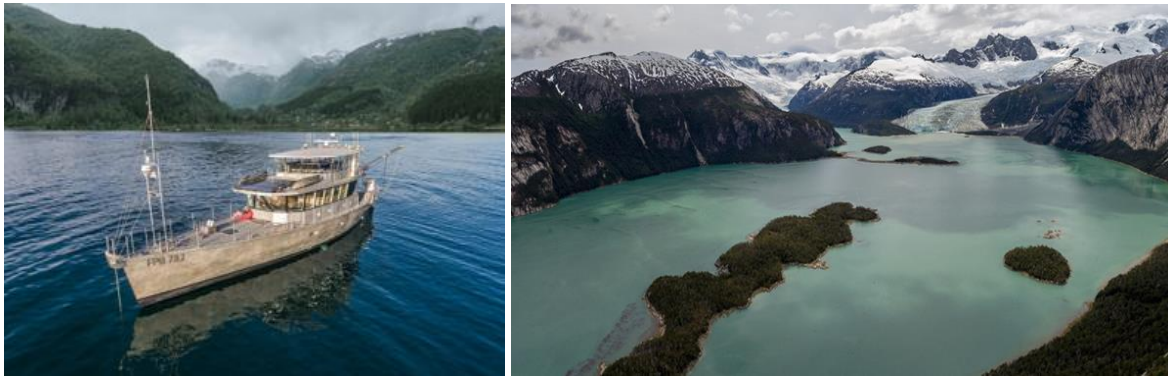


All our 4th year apprentices have the opportunity to apply for the King's Silver medal competition, which is run at Kielder Water in Northumberland, each September by the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights.

Berthon has been fortunate to have had several medal winners over the years.

The photographs show two of our apprentices, during their week long course where they were challenged in a variety of tasks including orienteering, wild camping and raft building, developing teamwork and leadership skills as well as getting them way out of their comfort zone.

The feedback I receive is always – something they will never forget and so pleased that they had the opportunity.



Apprentices have had some amazing opportunities afforded by one of our clients who was enthused by our commitment to apprenticeships.

On having an FPB64 explorer yacht – Grey Wolf, built in New Zealand, he discussed with us the possibility of involving apprentices in his voyage back to the UK.

Apprentices applied to join the four legs and following an interview process, 4 were chosen.

We flew the first to Whangerao on the North Island where he spent 2 weeks helping complete the vessel ready for the first leg to Tahiti, from there he was replaced by the second apprentice, with the third joining the boat in Panama through the canal and onward to Antigua, followed by the fourth who undertook the Atlantic crossing.

Further trips followed up to the Arctic circle for other apprentices where they encountered Orca pods and Polar bears.

Subsequently on purchasing a larger FPB78, Grey Wolf II, apprentices had the opportunity to explore the coast of Chile, Easter Island and down to Patagonia and the glaciers.

The Boatbuilders



Berthon and Brian’s longstanding relationship with St Barbe museum led us to be approached by Emily Jo Gibbs – a renowned textile artist. She had been working on a commission called the ‘makers’ and as part of this she focused on producing and exhibition at St. Barbe called ‘the boatbuilders’. Emily spent time speaking and photographing Berthon apprentices and their foremen before producing some exquisite and detailed pieces as shown in the photographs.

St Barbe Museum permanent display



On the theme of St barbe, the working pilot boat wheelhouse, built, painted and kitted out by Berthon apprentices has been a longstanding display at the museum complete with working radar. A new display of knot tying is in the process of being completed, ready for the Lymington Afloat exhibition.

Visit and career fairs



Our apprentices also play a significant role in assisting me to enthuse the next generation of shipwrights and engineers.

We have provided immersive days for schools this year in which the pupils get hands on experience of the types of equipment and materials our apprentices work with. We have undertaken numerous school assemblies and in June assisted Priestlands school with their enterprise days. With boat design competitions for each tutor group, with apprentices giving advice on designs and materials and a 'dragons den pitch' for each class winner to find the overall best design for the year group. We provide numerous work experience placements and this year alone provided placements for pupils from 10 schools and colleges. We attend numerous careers fairs and will be attending Priestlands School, Southampton International Boatshow, Ballard School and Royal Yacht Squadron, Cowes careers fairs later this month to name just a few. We have also entertained the St. Barbe 'Saturday club' of 13-16 year olds who all had a great morning carrying out activities, learning about apprenticeships with me and having a tour of the yard.

Government and industry engagement

We have always had a pro-active approach to ensure the health and prosperity of our industry.

In early 2009 Brian and I met with the then 'Learning and Skills Council' to discuss spearheading an apprenticeship expansion pilot to encourage Marine SME's to begin or return to training apprentices.

After less than an hour in which we had displayed our passion and vision for apprenticeships we secured £850000 of government funding for bursaries for first year wages for companies employing their first apprentice.

Berthon administered the scheme free of charge and delivered a highly successful programme £100k under budget.

Over the two year pilot 60 apprentices were employed in 15 businesses as shown in the diagram with 59 of the 60 apprentices subsequently completing their apprenticeship.

Worshipful company of Shipwrights

I am now going to speak to you of our involvement with the worshipful company of shipwrights. Brian and I are both Liverymen of the Shipwrights which is one of the oldest livery companies in the city of London.

Brian had the foresight to persuade the shipwrights company to mirror the successful apprentice expansion pilot we had ran for government and provide bursaries for marine SME's new to apprenticeships. The bursaries covered the first year wage of each new apprentice - and so the Shipwrights Apprenticeship Scheme was born.

Brian and I ran and administered this programme for two years from 2012-2014, at which point Brian and the scheme committee gained £600000 of additional funding from Lloyds registry foundation to expand the scheme and employ a full-time scheme manager.

I continued to mentor businesses and subsequently joined the committee myself up until its conclusion at the end of 2022.

In all over £1m was invested in 104 maritime SME's, employing 122 apprentices.

Therefore, the Scheme was a natural extension of the Company's objective to aid the career development of young people. This training ethos harks back to the origins of the Shipwrights Company and its original purpose. The map shows the spread of businesses we supported from Scotland to the Isle of Man, the east coast, south coast and down into Devon and Cornwall.

In total over the last 15 years, we have raised approximately £2million to support marine apprenticeships in SMEs.

The Shipwrights also conduct an annual lectures programme at MAST, Mayflower studios in Southampton and I sit on the committee who organise this free to attend annual event which attracts and inspires up to 300 apprentices, students, graduates and next generation of shipwrights each year.



UK Shipbuilding Skills Taskforce

In 2022 I was invited to join the UK Shipbuilding skills taskforce that was formed by The National shipbuilding office and department for education, with the aim of identifying and addressing the skills shortages in our industry as set out in the National shipbuilding strategy. The 4 nation approach consisted of industry experts, academia, trade unions and government representatives, producing a report, with 6 recommendations to government, the first of which was for a delivery group to be formed to drive the recommendations forward, which has now been formed.

Additionally, I led on the production of a toolkit for employers 'how to leverage the UK skills system' which was extremely well received by ministers.

IfATE – For the last 10 years I have been chair of the employer groups that have built the new apprenticeship standards for boatbuilding, marine engineering and marine electrical. Working closely with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and all stakeholders, to ensure our apprenticeships are fit for purpose. We have recently completed a review of the boatbuilding standard that is now awaiting ministerial approval and the review of marine engineering will start next month.

C&G – As part of the apprenticeship development I have acted as a consultant for City & Guilds of London Institute, updating delivery and assessment materials for the Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications.

In 2018 I was awarded Honorary membership of the guild for my work.

British Marine – We have worked closely with British Marine over a number of years to encourage their focus towards apprenticeships including working with the shipwright's apprenticeship scheme manager – to promote the future workforce of our industry.

In 2012 as chair of the BM training committee I instigated the first British Marine apprenticeship graduations at London Boatshow. Now with a home at Southampton International Boatshow the graduations are in their 12th year this year.

Enginuity – Are a charity focused on promoting engineering and manufacturing and were formed after the demise of the sector skills councils. I chair their SME advisory group which lobby government regarding skills and training delivery.

AAN – Brian and I have been apprentice ambassadors for a number of years. Brian chaired the Southeast network and was awarded the title of honorary apprentice advocate.

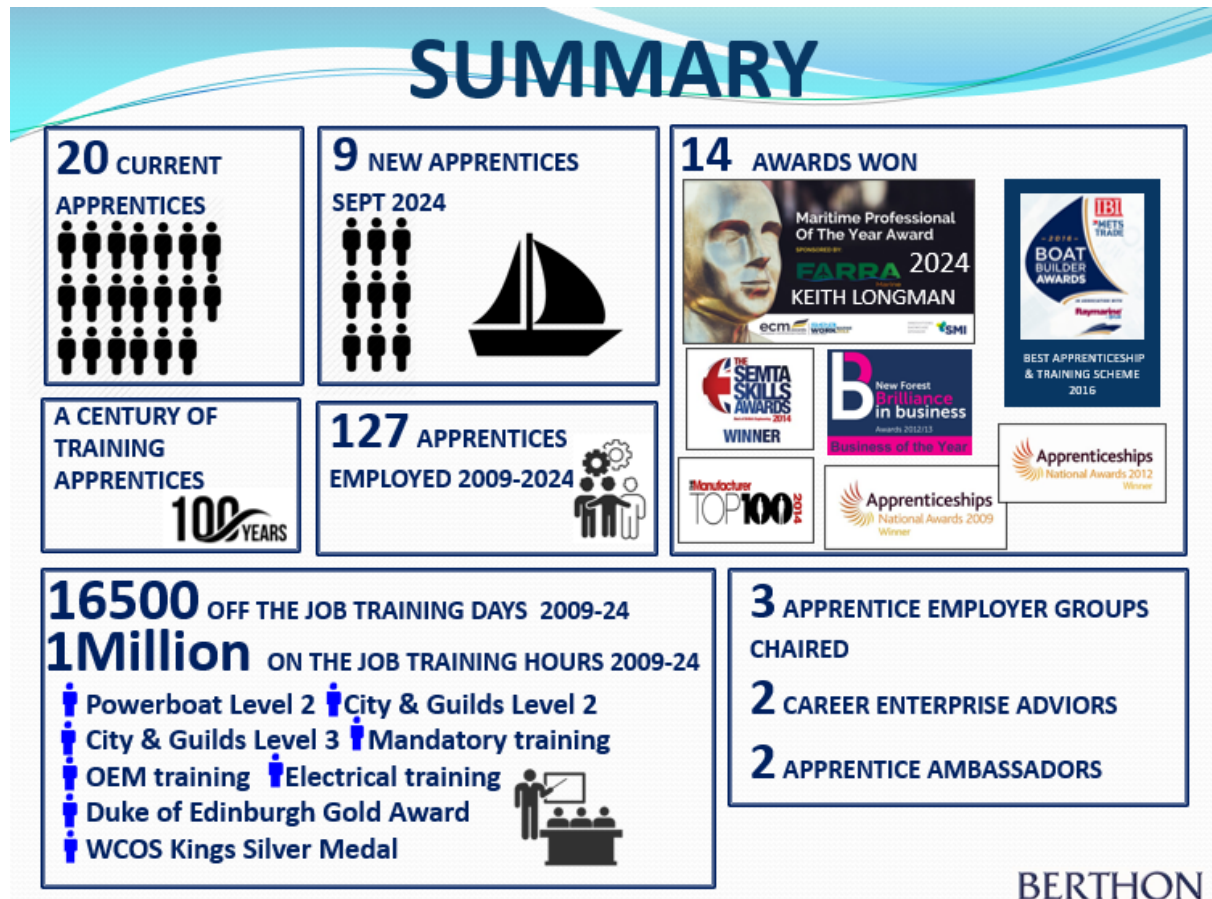


Careers & Enterprise company – Both myself and Brian's brother Dominic are careers enterprise advisors for local schools. I work with Priestlands school and Dominic works with NFA on the waterside.

Our roles are to support the schools with careers advice and ensure that the schools are hitting the requirements of the 8 Gatsby benchmarks which assess the development of their pupils in employability skills.

Some of the things we do have been shown in previous slides such as supporting enterprise days and providing immersive days at the shipyard.

Maritime UK Solent and Solent partners - We have worked on a number of initiatives with Maritime UK Solent and Solent partners the latest of which is the development of a skills bootcamp for marine electricians to help plug that particular skills gap.



This last slide showcases some of the incredible statistics attributed to Berthon regarding the enduring legacy which is our commitment to apprenticeships and skills.

- Over a century of training apprentices
- **127** apprentices, **16500** training days and a total of 1million training hours over the last 15 years, meaning our apprentices are the highest skilled in the industry.

Incidentally two of the apprentices that I trained when I was engineering foreman are now running the department themselves.

Our 20 existing apprentices will be joined by our new cohort on Monday morning as they start their careers with us and I will be excited to see how they develop over the next 4 years.

I am sure Harry May, Brian's other ancestors, the Reverend Berthon and the other custodians of Lymington shipyard through the centuries would be rightly proud of our continued success!