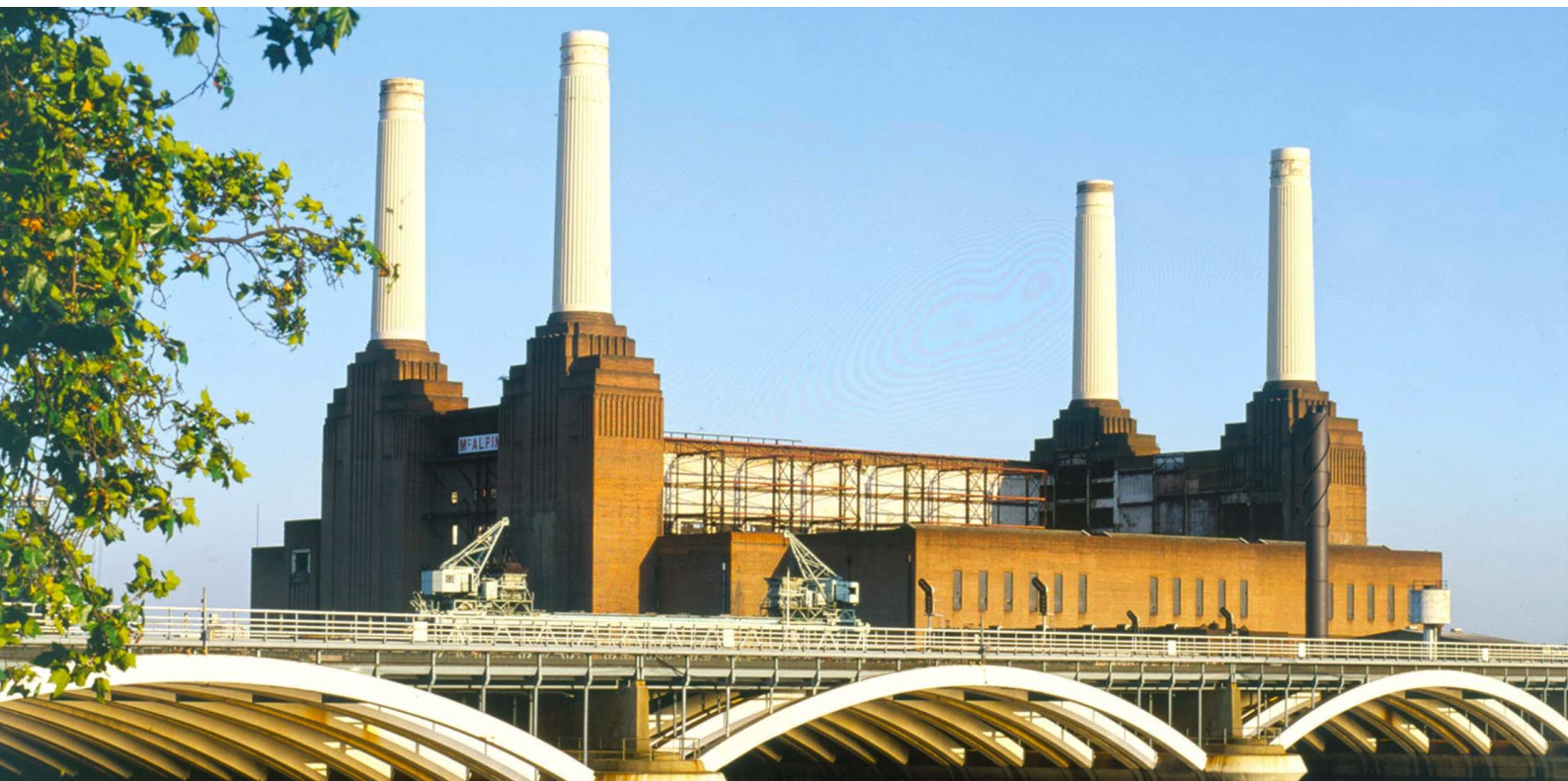




Local Government Graduate Development Programme

London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth Borough Council Shared Staffing Arrangement (SSA)





The Programme

Context

Since 2016 the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth Borough Council have shared a single work force – the Shared Staffing Arrangement (SSA). The SSA is one of the largest staff groups in the country, serving half a million Londoners, and delivering substantial savings that have helped to protect front line services in what continues to be challenging times for local authorities. Whilst the SSA operates as one organisation, both councils it supports continue to operate as sovereign bodies; maintaining their distinct identities and developing policies and priorities that matter to their local residents. More information can be found at <http://www.richmond.gov.uk/wandsworth>

With a population of nearly 196,000, Richmond upon Thames covers 22 square miles and is home to some of the most beautiful areas of London. Across the border, in inner London, Wandsworth has a population of around 323,000 and is currently going through an exciting phase of urban renewal, the most prominent of which is Nine Elms, one of Europe's biggest regeneration areas. Both councils are responsible for providing a wide range of public services and facilities to residents, visitors and businesses.

The opportunity to join our graduate programme is unique in London in that you will be exposed to the diverse challenges and needs that come with working across two very different councils and locations.

What You Can Expect

Our two-year Graduate Development Programme takes a small number of adaptable and enthusiastic graduates with an interest in public service, providing them with the experience and training to launch a successful career in local government. We are looking for flexible, resourceful graduates who will embrace and effect change. Our environment is dynamic and collaborative, so you can expect to work with many different groups – from consulting with local residents to working in partnership with voluntary or private organisations.

The Programme is designed to provide you with a broad range of career development opportunities, spanning the work and functions of local government. During the Programme you will take on real responsibilities in four different placements in key areas of the councils, ranging from Environment and Community Services to Resources or Education and Social Services. Placements will be allocated based on the needs of the councils at the time and will expose you to a wide variety of work and contexts.

Each placement will challenge you, develop your skills and deepen your understanding of a different area of local government. You will also have the opportunity to work directly with Directors and other Senior Managers to see how decisions are made at the highest level. Whatever area you are working in, you will find yourself taking responsibility and making a real contribution to the impact and efficiency of public services for our residents.

Support

Alongside your day to day placement line manager, you will have a strong support framework to help guide and develop you. Throughout the programme you will have regular access to a supervisor, who will support your development and work closely with each of your placement line managers, as well as a senior mentor to help you plan your own development, promote greater organisational awareness and help with problem-solving.

Training and Development

As part of the Graduate Programme, you will have a full learning and development schedule throughout the two years. This includes studying a Team Leader apprenticeship that could lead to an Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) accreditation. Training and development opportunities will focus on key leadership areas from first line management to relationship and project management. Training is delivered via a variety of methods including workshops, e-learning and action learning, as well as external events and conferences.

Salary & Benefits

All graduates will receive a competitive starting salary of £25,295 per annum and will be eligible for 31 days' annual leave. There will be an opportunity at the end of

the first year to progress to the next grade, subject to meeting additional criteria as outlined in the job profile. The majority of the work will be within standard office hours but the range of activities will mean that you should also expect to work some evenings and possibly some weekends as needed.

Location & Travel

Graduates can expect to be based for much of the time at either Richmond upon Thames Council's offices (close to Twickenham rail station) or Wandsworth Council's Town Hall (close to Wandsworth Town and Clapham Junction rail stations). However, placements may include working with partners and could involve a placement based at other locations in London. Past examples include a joint placement between Adult Social Services and the South London Partnership, and a placement in Achieving for Children – Richmond's jointly owned Company with the Royal Borough of Kingston.

Feedback from Current Graduates

"The Programme has given me a real insight into the workings of local authorities. My placements have allowed me to work with a diverse range of departments and external partners, and the responsibility I've been given on the scheme has meant that I've felt a real sense of ownership over my projects and has allowed me to develop invaluable communication and analytical skills."

"I've really enjoyed my time on the graduate scheme. It's provided me with a chance to gain an overview of how local government works, as well as the platform to take a lead on interesting and important projects. This has been complemented by an excellent training and support programme. If you're interested in local government, I'd really recommend applying."



Application Process

Our Selection Criteria

We are looking for future leaders who can drive through innovation and change. Our application process will assess you against the criteria listed in the person specification. There will be a two-stage short-listing process and an assessment day where you will be assessed and interviewed.

Key Recruitment and Selection Dates in 2019

Applications open	Week commencing 28 May
Closing date for applications	Last day 12 June
Shortlisting stage 1 - Review all applications received	Week commencing 10 June
Shortlisting stage 2 - Psychometric tests to be sent via email to be completed online	Week commencing 17 June
Final Short-listed candidates invited to Assessment Day	From 24 June
Assessment Day at Twickenham	9 or 10 July
Offers of employment made	From 15 July
Start dates to be agreed/confirmed	September

The dates on the above timetable may vary slightly but will be kept to where possible.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is there an age limit for applications?

No, we are an equal opportunities employer and represent a diverse community, we welcome applications from people of every age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

2. Are there special procedures for candidates with disabilities?

We are committed to employing disabled people. One of these commitments is to guarantee to interview anyone with a disability, provided their application meets the minimum (essential) requirements of the job vacancy, and to consider them on their abilities. When completing your application please indicate any adjustments you may require.

3. Do I have to have workplace experience to apply?

This is not a requirement; however, some workplace experience could be helpful. All applicants will be shortlisted according to the criteria outlined in this application pack, whether this be achieved through the workplace, academic career, or extracurricular activities.

4. Will I receive feedback if unsuccessful?

Candidates will all be informed if their application has been successful or unsuccessful at each stage of the process. Individual feedback will unfortunately not be available at the short-listing stage but can be, upon request, be given after the Assessment Centre.

5. Do I get to choose my placements whilst on the Programme?

The selection of placements on offer is decided based on business need but we try to take account of individual interests and development opportunities when allocating them to graduates.

6. What happens at the end of the 2-year programme?

During the Programme you will be employed on a fixed-term contract and encouraged to apply for permanent roles in your final placement. We will expect you to begin to formulate your career aspirations during year two and will give you support in finding opportunities.

As you enter your final placement, we will work closely with you to do what we can to try and secure longer-term employment in the SSA in an area which interests you.

All of our alumni are successfully pursuing further career opportunities, most of whom have remained in the public sector, with a significant number in the SSA.

7. Am I guaranteed a job?

Contractually, the answer is no. However, it is in the Councils' best interest to retain aspiring leadership talent, so we'll make sure you are made aware of any opportunities that arise, particularly during your final placement. We'll also provide advice on careers in local government, signposting you to career paths that might interest you.

We are proud that all the alumni of the scheme to date have been successful in securing their next position before the end of the two-year programme, and several have remained within the Council's employment, working in diverse areas such as Corporate Services, Housing and Regeneration and the Performance and Programme team.

8. Will I be required to work in both Richmond and Wandsworth?

Yes, you will be joining a shared staffing arrangement and placements could be based in Richmond upon Thames or Wandsworth Council offices, or possibly working across both sites at the same time.

9. What Training and Development will be available?

The Graduate Programme is geared towards learning about working in Local Government. There will also be a tailored programme of activities, helping you to develop the skills, knowledge and experience to launch your career and gain a greater understanding of the varied work of Local Authorities. Activities include: shadowing, introductions to different departments, Q&As with senior managers and Councillors, organising and assisting at a number of Council events, and working during elections, amongst others.

The Graduate Programme also offers more formal training and development opportunities which focus on key leadership areas from first line management to relationship management. Current graduates are enrolled on a level 3 Team Supervisor apprenticeship, which could lead to an Institute of Leadership and Management accreditation and, with manager approval, are able to sign up for a number of the extensive courses and workshops that the Councils offer, for example, Introduction to Project Management, Presentation Skills, Time Management, Problem Solving, Excel Training, to name but a few. Graduates also participate in Action Learning Sets and, with the guidance of a Learning and Development Advisor, share experiences and issues, learning from one another in a constructive and insightful way.