

# CELCIS REACH: Emma Aeppli| Access and opportunity for young people

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As a corporate parent East Renfrewshire Council is as concerned as any other parent that its young people can get into work and be productive members of society. Here Emma Aeppli tells us more about the Family Firm model.

Working very closely with other corporate parents within the council so that means working with the different departments, working with the different champions across various departments within the council, trying to bring them together for partnership working and trying to ringfence and create placements, work experience, taster days – anything employability related that will ensure that our young people are getting access and opportunity within the council and also the local community. In addition to corporate parents within the council, I work closely with external local businesses as well where possible. So, I am really trying to get Family Firm out on the agenda with local businesses and we are working closely with a large construction company in East Renfrewshire at the moment to create work experience opportunities.

At the heart of the Family Firm model is the young person and it is about the accessibility to those experiences for our young people. One of the big wins – the project has been up and running for about a year and a half since I have been in post – has been a commitment from our Environment Department. We have a champion in the Director of Environment and we have a commitment to ringfence traineeships specifically for care experienced young people in East Renfrewshire, which is a fantastic development, and is also a good example of how we work collaboratively to create these opportunities and then to support our young people into them.

Other wins have been placements within the council as well. We have had quite a few departments step forward and employ our care experienced young people and provide really meaningful work experience placements which has really introduced them into the world of work and given them opportunities in terms of their self-esteem and their progression. The challenges are the same that other local authorities are facing – the funding issues, trying to get other departments involved that might have

misgivings around taking on one of our young people. But we are doing a massive marketing campaign at the moment to really emphasise how wonderful it is to take on one of our amazing care experienced young people, so we are making a lot of progress despite the obvious challenges.

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