

Fife Works Helps Trainees Play Part in Housing History....

Ten construction industry trainees are being given the chance to play a part in housing history - all thanks to an innovative project designed to help maximise their training and employment opportunities.

The youngsters, all of whom are on training courses across Fife, have been given an invaluable opportunity to gain live site experience at the ground breaking Housing Innovation Showcase in Dunfermline thanks to co-ordination by Kingdom Housing Association's Fife Works project.



The £3.3m Housing Innovation Showcase is a joint venture between Kingdom and Fife Council. It involves the construction of 27 new homes using sustainable methods set to revolutionise the way affordable homes in Scotland are built. The trainees were selected by staff at the Fife Works project in conjunction with Carnegie College in Dunfermline and Fife Council following a highly competitive application process, with over 90 youngsters vying for positions. The successful applicants are now practising skills such as plumbing and joinery on one of the most exciting construction sites in Scotland.

Fife Works was established by Kingdom in 2008 to help unemployed people in the region find work. The trainees are working with a number of the project's preferred partners, which include Assist / Powerwall; Future Affordable, a partnership between Springfield Properties, David Blaikie Architects and Kraft Architects; Bobin Developments / BecoWallform system; CCG Scotland / IQ system; Champion Homes working with Scotframe, Scottish Passivhaus Centre and the Porotherm system; Cube Re:treat, a collaboration by Cube Architects, Dryburgh Associates and John Heaney Builders; Lomond Homes / Breathing Wall system; and the Stewart Milne Group / Sigma II system.

Bill Banks, Deputy Chief Executive of Kingdom, said: "When we develop new capital projects it provides an opportunity to address much more than just the provision of good quality affordable housing. "Through our wider role activities, it allows us to incorporate other initiatives, such as the Fife Works projects, into the project. This is an example of how we have been able to provide added value in terms of education, skills development and training, as part of our commitment to Community Benefits."The skills gained through the project will allow the trainees to gain experience of a real project, which will not only help them, but will address the wider issues, such as the skills shortage, within the construction sector.

"Lynne Dunn, Co-ordinator of the Fife Works project, said: "It is encouraging in the current climate that employers are still giving young people the opportunity to gain skills which will help them compete in the current labour market."The students are very enthusiastic about gaining live site experience. It will give them the edge over other applicants when they finish college and compete for apprenticeships in a very tough labour market. It is important that the community enjoys the full benefits of the Housing Innovation Showcase.

Carriad Ruby Williams, 18, from Dunfermline, currently on the Construction Futures Course at Carnegie College, said: "It has been a fantastic experience so far. I originally thought I wanted to become a plumber but I have enjoyed the joinery experience I have gained so much that I have decided it is now what I want to do. I'm really glad I was chosen for this opportunity and I have had a lot of great support from Fife Works and the staff at college.

"Liam Linton, 18, from Dunfermline, currently working towards a National Progression Award in joinery at Carnegie College, said: "I am really pleased to have been given the chance to get real construction experience. I am really enjoying it and I am grateful to Fife Works and Carnegie College for their support."