

## Drop In Apprenticeships For Under-19's Is Disgraceful, Says Entrepreneur

Thursday 18 July, 2013

"With one million young people unemployed in this country - and the vast majority of them unskilled - it is a disgrace for the government to allow a drop in apprenticeships for the under-19's," said Will Davies - co-founder of aspect.co.uk and a long-term campaigner for apprenticeship reform.

Government figures published this week revealed that a 19% drop in the number of 16 to 18 year olds beginning apprenticeships between February and April this year than the same period last year.

"There is a generation of young people who are becoming totally demoralised by the job market. If we don't deal with the problem, this country will be paying for our failure for decades to come," said Mr Davies - who created his property maintenance and refurbishment company aspect.co.uk after working as an investment banker in the City.

"The government has been keen to highlight its support for 'higher apprenticeships' but skill training for less qualified youngsters that can provide real jobs are desperately needed," said Mr Davies.

"For example, there are massive skill shortages within the building trades," he said.

The figures released by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) also show that in the first nine months of 2012/13 788,640 youngsters aged between 16 and 18 applied for apprenticeships but only 86,700 (11%) were successful in securing a place.

"Employers like me have been telling government for years now that apprenticeships are the most efficient way to instil the employable skills into Britain 's next generation of workers," said Mr Davies.

"Too many of our youngsters are leaving school without the basic 'life' skills that make them employable. Employers are the people best equipped to oversee our apprenticeship system because they understand the skills they need," he said.

aspect.co.uk has returned to a system of old fashioned apprenticeships for training their own young workers.

"I can only urge other employers that if they can give young people an opportunity to demonstrate how keen they are to work; they will be astonished with the results," said Mr Davies.

aspect.co.uk developed a system of apprentice boot camps to select candidates for their own apprenticeships. Youngsters are put through a series of fitness, literacy and numeracy tests. Their next boot camp will take place later this summer.

"The individuals who were prepared to contribute the most to a boot camp were the individuals who aspect.co.uk benefited most from employing," said Mr Davies.

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Notes to Editors:

About aspect.co.uk:

www.aspect.co.uk is a leading property maintenance and refurbishment company operating across the domestic and commercial sectors, 24 hours per day. With the tagline - 'one call property care', www.aspect.co.uk manages all maintenance issues, from the drains to the roof and everything in between.

The company's motto is 'fix, support and refresh':

Fix - emergency repairs

Support - through the company's planned maintenance team

Refresh - through the company's installation and refurbishment team

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aspect.co.uk has a fully-skilled workforce - from versatile handymen to qualified technicians, including gas engineers, plumbers, decorators and drainage specialists. The company has an impressive list of accreditations and sets new, modern, professional and award-winning standards for property maintenance.

The company uses cutting edge technology to enable its workforce and ensure best customer practice, and high levels of performance.

Founded in 2004, aspect.co.uk has grown at over 100% year-on-year. The company is based in South West London, and operates primarily across the city and all areas inside the M25. In July 2011, the company launched its nationwide franchise business.

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