

STEM Ambassadors Programme

Plus Dane Group are proud to be part of the 'STEM Ambassadors Programme' and CheshireSTEM. The contract is organised nationally by STEMNET and funded centrally by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (DBIS). Our aim is to ensure that all young people, schools and Organisations are engaged with a local employer who is committed to enrich the lives and future prospects of its customers. We are passionate about investing in our neighbourhoods and can provide:

This is a **completely FREE** resource to you!

- An insight into the career opportunities of working for a Housing Provider.
- Contribute to the academic curriculum with ideas around the STEM subjects.
- Develop employability skills of young people.
- Bring STEM to life with hands-on activities in the class-room.
- Inspirational advice from our Ambassadors

Meet our STEM Ambassadors:

Ria Siddall-Hardwick

Technical Assistant / Trainee Quantity Surveyor



Why I want to become a STEM Ambassador

I want to be able to pass on my personal knowledge and experiences of working and learning. I chose not to do my further education at school or university so have experience of learning in the workplace. For myself I think I will enjoy doing this as part of my job - it's good to have variety!

I have had a varied career so far. I have worked in the ICT Business Department, Cheshire Pensions and Social Services Business Administration. Now I am a trainee Quantity Surveyor, working in Asset Management for Plus Dane and really enjoy my job, as after 2 years I am still learning something new every day.

Individual specialisms I am confident with IT and preparing spreadsheets and formulas for working tasks.

My Ambassador offer I feel I have a good appropriate knowledge base after my own experiences completing my apprenticeships. I would be able to help with advice on career

routes and how to cope with completing NVQs. I think it would be good to offer a more youthful view about career options and what things have worked well, or not so well for me.

An unusual fact about yourself Nominated/Shortlisted for a 'Women In Construction Award 2013'.

Something funny to sum you up I'm Blonde, but not dumb... well, maybe sometimes.

Karen Lewis

Responsive Repairs Manager



Why I want to become a STEM Ambassador

To offer young people real life role models and the benefits of education. To promote the wide variety of career opportunities that exist in the public sector and specifically the field of social housing provision. To offer inspiration to young female students that they can overcome stereotypes and work in construction and maintenance roles.

My career so far has spanned over two decades within the social housing sector covering senior management roles in Neighbourhood Management, Supported Housing, Regeneration, Community Involvement, Customer Services and more latterly repairs and maintenance. All roles have been about demonstrating the clear link between good quality homes and environments on people's quality of life and life chances. I have focussed upon the Merseyside and Cheshire area working for four different local authorities and four different registered providers during my 21 years in housing.

Individual specialisms Qualifications in geography, economics and management. Mentoring and motivation; project management; change management; problem solving; team work and team building; management repairs and maintenance services; transferable skills from varied management roles; recruitment skills and experience (mock interviews, CV writing etc) and presentation skills.

My Ambassador offer A real life role model, inspiration and example of how pursuing an education gives you a platform to try lots of different jobs. How developing skills and experience brings confidence and self-esteem that you can then use in other areas of your life as well as in the world of work.

An unusual fact about yourself Elvis was at my wedding and I was once on first name terms with the Gallagher brothers.

Something funny to sum you up I get on well with people with emotional intelligence like me - in fact I'd say that I get on with anyone who makes an impact with their shows of emotions and less so with people who rely on their intelligence to make an impact. So I'd rather you made me laugh or cry than wowed me with your ability to win QI - which rather goes against the whole STEM ethos really.

Chris Ramsden

Business Planning and Improvements Officer



My career so far has been in the Royal Air Force 1990-2011. Joined Cheshire West and Chester Council then transferred to Plus Dane in 2012. Head Coach of Port Sunlight Rugby Club.

Individual specialisms Leadership and management. Project management. Sport & fitness. Effective listening. Fellowship.

My Ambassador offer The opportunity to realise their own potential, make the most of their strengths whilst addressing areas for development to have a fun and fulfilling future.

Why I want to become a STEM Ambassador

I realise now how interesting and fun Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths can be and the importance it has in society. I want to help those interested in STEM subjects prepare for the future but also develop my own knowledge and understanding of the topics.

An unusual fact about yourself I did a sky dive from 12,500 feet over Auckland, New Zealand. I had it filmed and the backing track is The Killers song Mr Brightside.

Something funny to sum you up People will always ask you what you want to do when you grow up. Who wants to grow up?!! Stay young at heart and make the most of every opportunity.

Karen Craig

Business Development and Performance Manager



My career so far has been in Local Government since 1985 in several different service areas including Planning and Building Control, HR, Leisure and Tourism and Social Housing. I have held different roles but the core skills and outcomes have remained, which are broadly to deliver smart, efficient and customer focused services. I have seen a culture shift in the last eight years within Local Authorities as they strive to become more business and customer focused and my role and skills have developed over the years to support this.

Individual specialisms Lean systems thinking, application of technology to support services, performance management, project management, developing business and customer insight to drive service improvements, Microsoft Master in the use of excel, developing teams and individuals, good listening and organisational skills.

Why I want to become a STEM Ambassador

I want to inspire young people and help increase their confidence, raise their aspirations and encourage them to engage in their long-term education by helping them understand its importance. I also believe every young person should have a good role model to support and guide them and I believe it will be challenging, inspiring and enlightening for me.

My Ambassador offer I can provide advice and guidance based on my own experiences, be a sounding board against which they can bounce new ideas and help them resolve problems. Help them grow in confidence and encourage and motivate them to do well at school. Last of all I will support and encourage them to believe in themselves.

An unusual fact about yourself I was known locally as the bouncy castle lady!

Something funny to sum you up I quite often get my words mixed up much to the amusement of my friends and family who recall the "Best Ones" at family gatherings.

Our offer

To schools:

- The world of work - how the STEM curriculum can be translated into careers.
- Practical training sessions - hands-on interactive activities to inspire and promote creativity and team working.
- Positive role models - mentoring students to succeed.
- Provide work placement opportunities.
- Job-shadowing.
- Building relationships eg Judging competitions.

Karen Traynor

Resident Consultation Officer



I have worked for over 25 years and have had a varied career. This has ranged from working in the private sector and public sector. I started work in my teens as an Administration Assistant in a computer programming company and moved on to work as a training and development officer in an oil company, working both in London and on the Wirral. After my children were born, I decided to take a career break and helped out in a local pre-school, where my children attended. This led to a career in this field and I became a Supervisor for the pre-school. Once my children had grown up, I then decided to return to office work and joined the public sector, where I have been now for 9 years. I am continuously developing my knowledge and skills in this area and very much enjoy working with the general public.

Individual specialisms I am a Resident Consultation Officer and spend most of my time talking to our customers and improving our service for them. My passion is helping people to reach their potential.

Why I want to become a STEM Ambassador

As a mother of two teenagers I understand that education is a two-way street in partnership with school and home. We need more vocational education at school, University isn't for everyone and I would like to inspire the next generation to see the bigger picture and what other options there are.

My Ambassador offer I understand the importance of educating people from an early age with money management. I can deliver a very relevant budgeting session, raising awareness of the pitfalls of bad finance and the value of planning ahead.

An unusual fact about yourself I met Bill Wyman from The Rolling Stones at Heathrow Airport and said Hi - I was 5 at the time.

Something funny to sum you up I like to sing along to chart music but I am constantly being told by my daughter, aged 16, that I am making up my own words to the song...keep me off that karaoke.

Jan Ellcock

Support Services Manager



My career so far started in housing as a Repairs Assistant - far too many years ago for me to remember! I moved around within the service over the years into team leader roles and then became a Manager in Supported Housing.

Individual specialisms Mentoring, motivation and support, problem solving, team work, managing people, recruitment skills.

My Ambassador offer The importance of a good education, support and inspiration, building confidence and self esteem to realise true potential.

Why I want to become a STEM Ambassador

To drive forward the ethos that a good education will reward you in later years as you move forward in your career. You can develop strengths and confidence to demonstrate that you can achieve so much by working hard and having a positive attitude.

An unusual fact about yourself Everton season ticket holder from age of 11 to 19 in the glory days! Now you work out how many years ago that was!!

Something funny to sum you up Don't play 80's music around me as I will be inclined to start dancing.

Our offer

To Partners:

- Employability skills including mock interviews/feedback.
- Provide work placement opportunities.
- Job shadowing.
- Team building activities through Community events.
- Access to our Residents Academy training programme.

Plus Dane Group is a **Neighbourhood investor**. We maximise investment in neighbourhoods to enhance people's quality of life, opportunity and choice.

We do this by delivering **seven promises** drawn up with tenants, residents and neighbourhoods:

- Increased investment in existing property.
- Ensure neighbourhoods enjoy good wellbeing.
- Increased community safety measures.
- Further supporting vulnerable customers.
- Working in partnership with residents.
- Increased creation of local jobs.
- Increased supply and choice of homes.

We deliver each of our promises with our **values**:



Contact Sharon Vaughan for further details:
email: Sharon.vaughan@neighbourhoodinvestor.com

tel: 0151 373 2514 or 07423 526 517