

Meet Laura, Ground Control's Trees and Timber, Level 2 apprentice



What apprenticeship are you doing at Ground Control and what does this cover?

I'm just starting a 2 year Trees and Timber apprenticeship in South Wales. My tutor will visit me on site to assess my progress and I'll have occasional visits to the college in North Wales for specific technical aspects.

The course covers all areas of the forestry industry including safe machinery use and climbing techniques. I am really looking forward to learning about certain bits of kit like a tree harvester.

There are lots of practical tickets that we have to do as part of the apprenticeship that include climbing and safe use of chainsaw and wood chippers as well as the theory part like tree identification.

What do you do on a day-to-day basis in your job within the Arb team at Ground Control?

I work in the Arb Utility team which maintains vegetation around power lines and pylons. I currently work as a Groundsperson so I mainly work on the chipper on the ground. Eventually once I have done my aerial rescue and climbing with a chainsaw tickets I will be able to get climbing which I am really excited about.

I'm also generally the one that drives the 4 x4 tipper truck which pulls the chipper along which is fun.

What is the best part of your job?

Definitely driving the tracked chipper on site!! This allows us to load everything on to the chipper and then to drive to more remote sites where we can't get standard vehicles.

Often, we are working in the middle of a farmers field and have to respect the landowners wishes if they don't want our 4x4 on site. The landowners are generally really lovely and offer us cups of tea when we are working which is nice!

I also love interacting with the public especially if we are working near to footpaths. People often chat to me and comment that it is great to a girl doing this type of work which makes me really proud.

What advice would you give to anyone wanting to get into an Arb related apprenticeship like yours?

Be prepared to work hard. You don't realise how hard it can be at times but it's worth it. Just have a go and try it if you can or try to find someone already in the industry who can talk to you about tree surgery and forestry to give you an insight.

What do you enjoy outside of work?

When all the hard work is done, I do love winding up my team up wherever possible!

At the weekends I love watching rally car racing and drifting. If you don't know what it is then Google it!