

Developing our people

We are proud to say that the VolkerWessels UK team comprises some of the very best people in our industry. We invest in the personal development of our employees and ensure their training and working environments are of the highest possible standard.

Career development and progression is key at VolkerWessels UK. With our ability to spot talent, we aim to recruit and develop the very best experienced professionals and, as a business that places people at the heart of all of our activities, want our talented individuals to reach their maximum potential.

Many of our construction professionals start their careers from an apprenticeship. We are committed to investing in our future workforce and run a number of apprentice schemes across the civil engineering, transport and construction sectors. The Apprentice Academy sees our apprentices working alongside experienced staff on some of the country's biggest construction projects.

Our apprenticeships take between one and three years to complete, depending on the level, skill and sector and are tailored to suit the needs of the individual. We are committed to ensuring a minimum of five per cent of our workforce comprises apprentices, sponsored students or graduates on formal training schemes.

VolkerWessels UK's graduate programmes develop the skills in people and provide professional accreditation via structured programmes, making them the leaders of tomorrow. Graduate opportunities exist in engineering, quantity surveying, construction management and corporate services. Our annual graduate conference is an opportunity for those on our graduate programmes to come together to enhance their professional development and share skills, knowledge and experience.

We are an attractive and responsible employer with a culture of providing ongoing training and reviews and enhancement of technical and development skills that match the career aspirations of our people, however ambitious.

Employee engagement

As a progressive and continuous improvement business, we undertake an annual employee engagement survey, entitled 'Your Say' which allows everyone the opportunity to share their feedback about the business.

In our most recent annual Your Say employee survey 91 per cent of our people understand our company values and know how their work contributes to our business objectives. 88 per cent of employees are proud to work for us and plan to still be part of our workforce in 12 months time.

Industry recognition

Every year VolkerFitzpatrick nominates engineers who are showing exceptional progress in their careers for awards. VolkerFitzpatrick's training was recognised at the CECA Southern Training Awards in 2017.

Section engineer Conor Goodwin-Tindall was awarded Highly Commended, recognising outstanding progress in his role and acknowledging his promise as a trainee engineer.

VolkerRail was successful at the RailStaff Awards, receiving the Infrastructure or Plant Person or Team of the Year award for the second year running.

This award was presented to VolkerRail's On-Track Machine operatives. The project, which made significant developments in improving awareness of health and safety issues around exposure to ballast dust, was undertaken as part of the company's Supervisor Development Programme.



We are committed to ensuring a minimum of **5%** of our workforce comprises apprentices, sponsored students or graduates on formal training schemes



The methodology of our annual employee survey provides us with a helpful framework to build an engaged workforce. **88%** of our workforce proactively state they are proud to work for VolkerWessels UK



We have a strong safety culture across our entire business operations and **89%** of our people say that Health and Safety is always a priority in our workplace



2,500 staff and subcontractors attended 130 health and wellbeing drop in clinics



Over **20,500** hazard, near-miss and close calls were recorded in 2017

A diverse and inclusive workplace

We are cultivating a process of continuous improvement in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). We are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment for all those we work with: our dedicated and ambitious people, our supply chain and partners, our clients and local stakeholders.

There is a need to bridge the skills gap and encourage people from a much wider range of backgrounds to come and join us in our exciting industry. We are focused on broadening the scope of candidates that want to work with us. A diverse workforce is the key to the future of our business and our focus is on building valuable, experienced teams and attracting and retaining a diverse pool of talent.

Having released our Gender Pay Gap reports for all the different business units, one of the key areas that we are focusing on to improve the Gap is in terms of promoting EDI, rolling out training that embeds our commitment to EDI. We aspire to become an exemplar in EDI and establish best practice for the industry.

We are receiving advice and guidance from independent experts in EDI and working with other like-minded organisations to support our continued journey. We work with Investors in Diversity to support our ambitions to gain accreditation in diversity and inclusion and are signed up to the Inclusive Culture Pledge for 2018.



We intend to be known to be inclusive by everyone we work with and those that want to work with us in the future. We want to be regarded as the place to work in the industry

All of our people will know and communicate why diversity and inclusion matters.

We are proud of who we are and the inclusive way we work, with a collective goal to sustain and strengthen our EDI culture, build on our good work to date and provide quality and add value to our clients.

Equality, diversity and inclusion for us is:

- Making sure every one of our current and future employees feels welcome, valued and respected and are motivated to perform at their personal best
- Creating high-performing teams by bringing together different opinions and perspectives to deliver better solutions for our clients and opportunities for our people and our organisation
- Driving continuous improvement processes to maintain and enhance a diverse and inclusive environment
- Embedding a culture of diversity and inclusion through consistent key messages across our business
- Encouraging and attracting people of all ages and backgrounds through local and national recruitment in addition to engaging in education, graduate and apprenticeship programmes



Meet Hollie Woodard - head of equality, diversity and inclusion

How have you broken through the barriers that discourage women from working in construction, engineering and rail?

I entered the industry with an office role before working my way up the career ladder via positions as a quantity surveyor and project manager. I'm now focused on the delivery of our EDI strategy and cultivating a cultural shift across all aspects of our business.

Has your talent been recognised?

The Women in Rail organisation named me as one of its 20 most inspirational women in the industry.

What are you trying to achieve?

I want to reach a point when I am no longer asked what being head of EDI actually means because every individual across the business understands what is meant by diversity and inclusion.

For me, it's partly about future proofing our industry by ensuring that we are attracting and retaining a more diverse pool of talent. Diversity is a part of everyday life and not just confined to our industry. It is more than increasing the gender split to reflect society, it is more than employing from a wider pool of experience and backgrounds and it is more than ensuring everyone can be 100 per cent of themselves when at work, underpinning this is still about finding 'the right person for the job'.

Are you involved in any industry initiatives?

Yes, including Go4Set and Teentech, as well as visiting schools to help support and promote careers in the railway industry. I mentor young women across the business who are keen to develop their roles as engineers and project managers, providing guidance and support in their studies.

Our learning environment

Our aspiration is to become a genuine learning organisation and we have developed a Learning and Development strategy to enable this. We want to grow the skills and competences of our people and provide a consistent and proactive approach to personal and skills development.

Over the next three years we will drive our transformation to a learning organisation while maintaining our position as a profitable, successful business as a result. Our ambition is to be the expert in learning and development in the workplace and to be recognised across the industry for delivering exemplary and innovative training options.

As a business, VolkerWessels UK is already building the skills in house which the industry is in need of, and in doing so developing our teams, not only for the future of the business, but also the personal development of our people, retaining the knowledge within the industry.

We strive to be a best-in-class employer that attracts, retains and develops the potential in everyone. Developing a highly trained and experienced workforce means that we maintain a breadth of knowledge across all sectors and deliver value for our clients.

We want to drive innovation through upskilling and motivating employees. Performance reviews will provide individual employees with a clear vision of their development goals and objectives and we are happy to support the personal development and career pathways of our people.



£500,000 spent on training and development



24,000 hours spent on personal development

Across the group, we have the following initiatives in place to support career development:

- Consistent and systematic performance and development reviews
- In-house training academy
- ILM management and leadership training programmes
- 'On the job' learning experiences
- Career change opportunities

We are embedding a structure that supports learning, with our people being empowered to take control of their own learning agenda.

We are developing an innovative online learning platform that addresses the fact that only 10 per cent of learning gained from classroom-based training courses is directly transferred to the workplace. Online training will contain a full menu of tailored e-learning content, tools and resources.

We will continue on our journey towards building mentoring and coaching into our day-to-day work, creating a pool of talent to deliver this. We will also develop knowledge sharing communities across the business in order to harness the skills, knowledge and expertise that exists throughout VolkerWessels UK.

We will continue to be a business that is innovative and forward looking, drawing on the knowledge and experience of our teams, promoting a learning and development culture.



“ We employ fantastic people who are recognised by our customers for their positive, innovative and value-adding attributes. We listen to our people and we take their comments seriously and in return they deliver brilliantly for our customers every time.”

Andrew Edge, director of human resources

Platinum Awards

VolkerWessels UK’s fifth year of Platinum Awards saw fantastic projects and talented individuals and teams from all around the country coming together to celebrate excellence across the group. It is of great importance to us to highlight the outstanding work accomplished by all our people.

The Platinum Awards give employees the opportunity to nominate the person, project or team they feel have gone the extra mile. This year we received 190 nominations in 12 different categories. Winners were announced during a celebratory award ceremony which was a streamed live broadcast in January 2018.



A total of 16 Platinum Awards winners in 2017



7 members of staff Highly Commended



Over 190 nominations of exceptional standard