

## Welfare and Wellbeing: Ensuring the best for your graduate trainees

For many of your NMT(s), this will be their first transition into the workplace. As such, there are number of things you may wish to consider in order to ease their transition into your organisation and ensure their ongoing wellbeing.

### NMTs have highlighted the following as things they find important:

- A manager who is interested in their personal development
- Someone they feel confident contacting if they are struggling with their mental wellbeing (mentors and 'buddies')
- Finding the work they are doing particularly interesting
- They are able to keep up with financial pressures
- They feel the council is proactive about promoting wellbeing
- They feel included in work-related activities

## Relocating

Whilst they have made the decision themselves, it's worth remembering that your NMT(s) may be relocating to come and work for you. Whilst it's likely they would have moved away from home before to go to university, this will be a different scenario for them – at university everyone is 'new'!

Things to think about:

- Helping them understand the local housing market, particularly the rental sector, and which areas might be best to look at. Information they might find helpful could be a breakdown of the different areas in the borough, and the average prices. It can be hard to get a true sense of things just from googling! A 'buddy' from the council who's been through the process themselves may also offer a helpful sounding board.
- You could provide some information about the area which would help a person learn more about their new home and also feel part of the community. Could you provide a guide to:
  - Council hosted events
  - Heritage and history
  - Theatres, museums and galleries
  - Leisure and fun
  - Restaurants, bars and nightlife
  - Countryside/beauty spots or coastlines/beaches
  - Shopping

## Commuting

If your NMTs have instead decided to commute to you, what can you do to help? We know that some councils on the scheme offer subsidised rail passes or parking, as they do to all staff. Flexible working can also help with this. It might also be helpful to talk to them early about how feasible the options they're considering are.

## Getting to know people

As well as thinking about the practicalities of relocating, your new NMT(s) may not know anyone else in the area, and it may feel daunting for them to know how to change that. This can be particularly key for councils who only take one graduate at a time and so do not create an obvious peer group.

As with getting to know the area, it would be worth letting your NMT(s) know about the social opportunities open to them. Of course, the impetus is on them to say 'yes!' and get themselves out there, but it may benefit them to know about:

- Fitness classes other colleagues attend (and could invite them along to)
- Council run social activities like clubs or groups
- Local Facebook or other social media groups they could join
- Drama, music, sport or other groups colleagues can share their passion for (and again, could invite them along to)

When the NMT is starting out, we also recommend setting up regular opportunities to 'catch up' in an informal way, not purely based on performance management. Everyone's under a lot of time pressure, we know, but a team lunch or cake and coffee can make such a big difference to someone's wellbeing when they're still finding their feet.

Loneliness can be a genuine concern, even for young people. There is some [guidance from Mind on this here](#). Whilst the NMTs themselves can do a lot of to embed themselves in your organisation and local area, you as the employer can also do your bit to play a supporting role.

## Making the most of their NGDP network

One of the benefits of ngdp is that NMT(s) have access to entire network of people on the scheme. Encourage your NMT(s) to tap into that network, whether that's within or outside of your own council or area. Whether it's linking up with other NMT(s) in a nearby authority, sharing knowledge on a particular project they're working on, or just generally sharing their experiences on the scheme; encouraging NMT(s) to capitalise on this network can therefore help them, both personally and professionally, and will remind them that there is invaluable support on the scheme.

## Staying on

We know there is a lot of concern about retaining graduates as the formal programme ends. Partly, getting the above right, and making your NMT(s) feel welcomed will be a big factor.

In simple terms, we also know that the #1 thing you can do to keep your graduates is to let know there will be a job available for them at the end of the programme. Of course this depends on internal capacity of your organisation, but the NMT(s) will understandably want start thinking about their futures, if they're not sure they have one with you. So have that

### Sharing ideas: Staying on

One council on the scheme have an 80% level of retention after the programme. They allow graduates to start applying for internal vacancies from their second year, and encourage them to aim high. However, they also offer an optional 'third year' of placement rotations until they manage to secure one.

conversation early, and be transparent about the opportunities that are and are not available.

### Sharing ideas: Staying on

One council said: "We encourage our NMTs to attend standard recruitment training during Q4 (either as a recruiter or as a role-playing participant) and we offer a 1:1 coaching session on interview techniques with an experienced Workforce & Organisational Development Officer. Indeed the Council is currently exploring a 'recruitment on potential' approach and the NMT experience will be included in its design. NMTs are encouraged to be proactive about discussing their employment aspirations during Q4, and this may have led to the availability of a FTC. Indeed over our 3 Cohorts our 6 NMTs have raised their profile with senior managers as a resource, shown in the increase of placement offers."