

# Upskill Shropshire

## Kickstart Case Study

Oliver Bowen

A previous **Kickstart**  
**Project Support Officer**  
in our Shire Services  
Team



Oliver was 21 when he was under the Kickstart scheme, and will be starting a **Data Analyst Level 4 Apprenticeship** at Shropshire Council

### What was your role?

My role was focused mainly in the business support part of Shire Services: gathering and analysing data from the different teams within the service to see if we could present more efficient ways of making decisions.

One of my day-to-day tasks was recording and processing complaints from our cleaning or catering services, such as a delivery being late or a product wasn't up to our standard.

### Do you recommend the Kickstart Scheme?

I definitely recommend it, especially if you've never had a proper job before.

It is a really good 'getting in' point. I went for a few interviews before Kickstart; a lot of them gave the position to someone else because the interviewers knew they had the work experience in that environment. Coming straight out of college, people didn't want to hire someone with no experience.

Even though it was just six months, I would not have had the opportunity otherwise.

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### What attracted you to a Kickstart position and one within Shropshire Council?

This role was all about data and helping use that to improve our business decisions. I've always found it interesting how much you can pull from raw numbers; I did a computing course in college and an extra GCSE module on statistics.

Also, I've always heard good things about the Council; my brother had an apprenticeship with them.

### Has the Kickstart Scheme helped you develop?

This definitely developed my interpersonal skills in a professional environment. Also, it developed business-orientated skills since I never worked in an office before.

The scheme was definitely a big help. I'm in a much better place. I feel much more confident working, and going into an office job.

### Where are you now?

We discussed keeping me on. I applied for the apprenticeship which has the same responsibilities but there is more I'm now able to do.

Data analysis is the thing I've wanted to do. So, my experiences in this role is worth more than just general experience. I've definitely learned a lot about my job.

### How was the work environment?

My manager was a big help, and Shire Services has a nice atmosphere as everyone seems to enjoy what they do.

Working virtually was pretty good - we had catch-up meetings like you would have done while getting a coffee at the office. It made sure you weren't pushing yourself too hard or feel you're missing out. Everyone was available if needed by email or meetings. It was very nice and flexible.

### Do you have any advice for future Kickstarters or those in similar schemes?

Make the most of the resources around you to develop further. It was really rewarding to take those opportunities.

For example, on the occasions I was in the office, I ended up gaining a lot of insight when talking to someone about their job; what they do, what helps them, and advice for the future.

Also, with E-learning, I spent my spare time going beyond the essential courses to expand my skills; I got 20+ digital certificates to reflect my development.