

## Abbey recruits apprentices to invest in next generation

BUCKFAST Abbey has responded to the rising levels of youth unemployment in Devon by teaming up with a local training provider to launch a new apprenticeship scheme.

Nineteen-year-old Lewis Ware has started a career as a trainee plumber in the abbey's busy works department, maintaining the Abbey Church, monastery, guest house, hotel and other buildings on the extensive site, which is home to a working community of Benedictine monks.

The abbey is now in the process of recruiting a painter and decorator, and says it plans to take on many more apprentices.

Human resources manager Jen Totman said: "Lewis is the first apprentice we have taken on for a long time. However, here at the abbey we have a proud history of learning on the job.

"When the Abbey Church was being rebuilt in the 1930s, Brother Peter went abroad to learn masonry skills and came back to instruct the monks who were working with him.

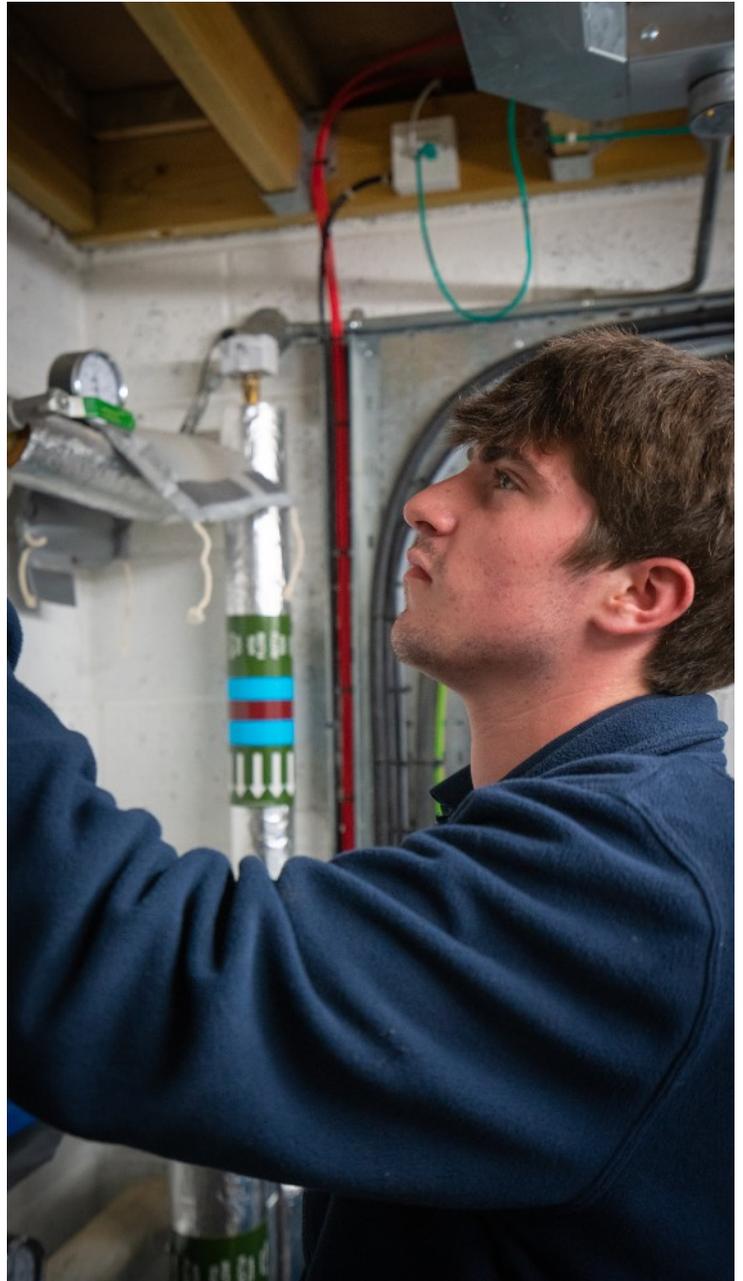
"Buckfast Abbey is a place of community, where we are passionate about education and valuing our people. We are looking to invest in apprentices to be the next generation of our team.

"The combination of work-based experience, study and a wage can be the support that some people need to start a career or change their direction."

The placement has been organised through Exeter-based PGL Training Limited.

Lewis said he was delighted to be working at Buckfast Abbey, adding: "I wanted to experience what it's like to work in the real world and learn at the same time.

"All the staff at the Abbey are very kind, and it's a relaxing environment. I would definitely encourage other people to consider an apprenticeship."



Apprentice Lewis Ware says he would recommend apprenticeships to young people.



Plumbing and heating engineer Connor Clay, left, with apprentice Lewis Ware at Buckfast Abbey