

FEEDBACK

More apprentices can only be good for business

Editor: As Ray Palmer suggests in his recent column, "we need to do more to nurture tomorrow's stars" (p28, 27.01.17), and with the apprenticeship levy coming into effect in April 2017, this is more true than ever.

Apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular as people look for more cost-effective, debt-free routes to gaining experience and full-time employment.

The past couple of years have seen a tremendous surge in the number of apprenticeships offered in the UK, with 509,400 courses beginning in 2015-16.

Apprentices not only fill our skills gaps; they do so in a cost-effective way, which gives businesses more freedom to nurture the next generation of talent.

Money is a clear concern for the young people concerned, too. With tuition fees at an all-time high, an increasing number are looking to apprenticeships as a way of furthering their prospects without student debt.

For a long time now, university has been almost a natural choice for young people. While higher education is still as popular as ever, apprenticeship schemes are truly growing in popularity with scores of people preferring on-the-job learning.

The increasing number of schemes becoming available can only be good for the industry. It feels

Apprentices come into a place of work with a new perspective and are keen to learn

TALKING TALENT Ray Palmer

We need to do more to nurture t

Where are the stars of tomorrow? I'm not referring to celebrities. My concern here is the apparent lack of star talent emerging in the property market. In the past we had Paul White, Nick Leslau and Tony Gibbon and they are all still active today. All these incredibly well-known names emerged while they were in their 20s.

However, today it is difficult to identify many, if any, fledgling property figures who are showing true entrepreneurial flair. The credit crunch

hit the graduate recruitment mar between 2008 and 2011, when f and fewer people joined the larg of surveyors.

So does this mean that, with gr recruitment curtailed, the pool of is smaller and thus fewer entrepr are emerging? I don't think so. I environment in which they start t Large firms tend to suppress tale than create the right incubation c It is also possible that the cont to larger firms of surveyors mean opportunity to demonstrate entr ability is increasingly less eviden superstars are appearing all



as though the UK is finally seeing the benefits of apprentices and it's been a long time coming.

Apprentices come into a place of work with a brand-new perspective; they're often open to new ideas and are keen to learn.

If apprenticeship schemes continue to grow at this rate, a new generation of tradespeople will be ready to step in to fill jobs belonging to a diverse range of industries.

Stuart Cavanagh, head of HR, Novus Property Solutions

Squatting case highlights supply problem in London

Editor: Stacy Eden highlights the point that increasing supply is the only way to solve the housing problem (p.25, 03.02.17).

The concerns about housing are not going away, and there are lots of views about what might be contributing to the problem.

A recent case about squatters highlights a view about another contributory factor - the many empty properties. Government figures show that more than 600,000 homes

across England are empty, of which 200,000 have been so for longer than six months.

The Autonomous Nation of Anarchist Libertarians attracted high-profile exposure recently by squatting in a £15m property in Belgravia, to raise awareness of so-called 'buy-to-leave' properties (bought by an investor who sees it as a safe haven for their capital and not intended for use).

The owner went to court to claim

repossession and the squatters were evicted soon afterwards, before moving on to occupy another building nearby.

One might wonder why a court claim was necessary. A few years ago, probably in reaction to a previous spate of high-profile squatter incidents in other high-value properties, the government made squatting in residential property illegal (section 144 Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012), which temporarily helped reduce it.

It seems, however, that arguments since have raised questions about the applicability of the criminal offence in some cases. That could be an explanation for the Belgravia group maintaining its occupation as a protest.

The press coverage it garnered suggests it achieved one of its objectives, despite being evicted. **Jason Hunter, partner (and head of the contentious property team), Russell-Cooke**



PW+ Posts and tweets

RIP Irvine Sellar. London looks better with his vision
@jasonhawkesphot

Irvine Sellar was a dreamer. But he got his dream built. I'm lucky to get to see it at work every day
@dlazarus

RIP Irvine Sellar, lovely supporter of @NoahsArkHospice charity. Also met in early @TheShardLondon plans when managing Comms in Southwark
@lisecollyer

Need to avoid post-Brexit construction workforce implosion in London. Also need innovation/skills in the longer term that improve resilience
@MFarmer_Resi

Barwell: Nearly everybody has tried to pitch me a silver bullet, but there isn't one. Need series of interventions at every stage #ukhousing
@SamuelHortiPW

If I was the chancellor I wouldn't want to trifle with @AdamJBranson and @SamuelHortiPW #calloffduty
@AiliHayman

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