



## **Press Release:**

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# **FPS Apprentice Scheme Delivers First Batch of Tomorrow's Piling Operatives**

The Federation of Piling Specialist's (FPS) is celebrating the achievement of its first group of apprentices who, having successfully completed its Piling Apprenticeship Programme, are now in the best position possible to build a long-term career in the geotechnical sector of UK construction.

The FPS Piling Apprenticeship Programme, now in its third year, was developed in conjunction with the CITB and is designed to bring a structured approach to the learning of piling techniques, through a combination of off-site training modules and the more traditional 'on-the-job' on-site practice.

The scheme is paid for by employers (FPS Members), and supported by CITB grants in most cases, with members invited to put forward their most suitable candidates. Apprentices are employed throughout their training and upon completion are well qualified to develop their skills further, even specialising, to become plant operators, rig drivers, or even foreman.

Speaking about the scheme, FPS Chairman, Jim De Waele commented: "The return on investment in the next generation of piling operatives cannot be underestimated, which is why the FPS, together with the CITB, have developed this course to ensure they acquire the right knowledge and skills from the outset. The first 'graduates' of this scheme are some of the best qualified out there and return to their sponsoring companies ready to become the next generation of skilled piling operatives, rig drivers and in time, foremen and supervisors. The fourth group started in September of this year and I am sure they will be just as successful."

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The FPS Piling Apprenticeship Scheme is a two-year programme and takes each group of eight trainees through a structured syllabus, where information is conveyed in a co-ordinated and logical way. This includes 24 days of off-site training, where theory and technical information is taught and supplements the on-site elements, with all stages continually monitored and development and progress assessed.

For more information about the FPS please visit [[www.fps.org.uk](http://www.fps.org.uk)].

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**Notes to Editor:**

Established in 1964, the Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS) has proactively worked with its members to drive up standards within the industry. From a handful of members back in the days when rotary techniques were coming into use and crane-mounted and hydraulic equipment was in its infancy, the FPS represents most of the leading piling and geotechnical specialists in the construction sector.

Its independent auditing process, which all prospective members need to go through, ensures the highest standards are met, and this audit is repeated every three years to ensure standards are maintained and continually improved.

The FPS works closely with its members to establish standards and provide guidance across all piling and geotechnical areas as well as on wider construction related issues that affect the sector such as Building Information Modelling (BIM). Safety and training is always one of its highest priorities.

**For further information contact:**

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***FPS Graduates with Tutors: J Proctor (1<sup>st</sup> left) and C Williams (2<sup>nd</sup> right)***