

Future Focus

Industry insights with Alice Bulpin

In keeping with the theme of rail, for this edition of Focus we sit down with Alice Bulpin CMILT, Senior Policy Advisor at Great British Railways Transition Team to learn more about her career and her journey in the transport and logistics industry.



Alice Bulpin CMILT,
Senior Policy Advisor,
Great British Railways
Transition Team.

How did you get into transport and logistics?

My entry into logistics was a bit unconventional because I did a degree apprenticeship, however I am glad that these are becoming more popular because it is an amazing scheme! My degree is in Businesses Management with Logistics and Supply Chain and I then followed this up with a Masters in International Logistics and Supply Chain.

I started my apprenticeship back in 2014 at the University of South Wales, through a scheme called Network 75 (which has 100% employability rate, not even the top universities can't say that!). Network 75 sent my CV out to a few different companies and I had a couple of interviews (not all in logistics). Luckily, I managed to get the job in Network Rail, and that is how I ended up in logistics. My apprenticeship and subsequent career have really opened my eyes to the size and impact of the transport and logistics industry, one that I find is does quite well at hiding! There are so many opportunities and roles that you can do within the industry, from route planning to train driving and HR, we need it all.

What interested you in the transport and logistics industry?

I did not originally plan to work in logistics, I was open to any opportunity through the degree apprenticeship. However, looking back I was always interested in how goods are made and moved, I remember watching programmes about it when I was younger. It also turns out that my past family members also worked in rail, so I feel it was meant to be!

What is your career history?

I started my career through a degree apprenticeship at Network Rail, during this time I was based in the 'Sponsorship' team, managing projects that are funded by outside parties. I also took this time to do placements around Network Rail to expand my knowledge and I put myself forward for most opportunities presented to me; something which

I recommend! For example, I volunteered at Cardiff Central Station when events were happening, this led me to getting a job project managing the Champions League Final when it was held in Cardiff, still one of my greatest achievements (and a lot of fun!).

Before finishing my degree, I managed to secure a full-time role in strategic planning, where I wrote strategic studies, provided strategic advice and looked at rail infrastructure investment for 20 to 30 years in the future! I really enjoyed strategic planning but after 4 years I was ready for a new challenge. I then went on a secondment to Great British Railways Transition Team, helping to set up Great British Railways which will run the rail infrastructure and passenger services in the future. Within this role I specifically looked at to promote and grow rail freight, something I am really passionate about. I became passionate about freight through my logistics and supply chain degree.

I have recently moved back into Network Rail Wales & Borders to look at Great British Railways and how to implement this in Wales, taking my learnings from my secondment. This is quite a mammoth task, but I am looking forward to it.

What myths about the logistics industry need busting, and how would you debunk them?

I think a lot of people think that logistics is just about moving stuff, but it is so much more than that! Yes, part of logistics is getting goods to shops or peoples front doors, but it is also about connecting people and allowing the UK to run smoothly. For example, rail freight specifically means we get the fuel for our cars and biomass to produce electricity, people rely on us every single day, what an honour!

I think there is also the perception that this industry is not for women, however, there are so many different people that I have met along the way and there really is a job for everyone in transport and logistics! I also must say that everyone who I have met through this industry have been so lovely and I have felt welcomed. ✖



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