

## The Creative and Cultural Skills podcast: Build Back Fairer Bonus episode: A discussion between Daisy, Toby and Izzie, apprentices from the Scottish Crannog Centre, a living history museum on Loch Tay in Perthshire. Elements of this discussion feature in Episode 4 of the podcast.

### Transcript

**Daisy** So I'm Daisy, I'm a Customer Service Apprentice here at the Scottish Crannog Centre, and I mainly focus in the cooking area, and I cook people bread and make food for them. And hopefully they like me.

**Izzie** (LAUGHS) I'm Izzie, and I'm also doing the Customer Service Apprenticeship. I like textiles a lot, and I make people clothes.

**Toby** Hi, I'm Toby and I'm doing Digital Marketing instead, so I'm kind of half in the office on the computers, and then half out also doing interpretation to the customers.

**Izzie** Everyone at work gets along so well. And even when we bring visitors in, we make them feel like they're part of the community as well.

**Daisy** Yeah.

**Izzie** I was in my first year of sixth form down in Yorkshire, but I didn't want to continue, because I wasn't really doing very well at school.

**Daisy** (LAUGHS).

**Izzie** It just wasn't for me. And then my mum saw it on Facebook, actually, and then I applied straight away. And then a month later, I had a Zoom call with the director of the museum, and a few hours later he called me up and I got the job. So then I moved up a few weeks later.

**Daisy** I left in fourth year, so that's like the start of lockdown, because I just really did not like school at all. And then my mom was on Facebook, and saw it advertised, and I was like, "all right". But I wasn't too keen on it at the start, because I was going to go to college in Aberdeen to do practical cookery, and then go to uni and do the same. But I ended up coming here because I get paid to cook here, so I wasn't going to turn it down.

**Izzie** (LAUGHS).

**Daisy** So I emailed them and, yeah, here I am.

- Toby** Well, I was actually in my senior year of school, so S6, and it was the start of the first lockdown. Yeah, I wasn't quite sure what to do, and it was kind of an early finish. My careers adviser suggested it to me, and I took the opportunity. And I'm quite, quite glad I did.
- Daisy** Awww. (CHUCKLE) I didn't really know an apprenticeship was a few years ago, because we'd always been told "you need to learn all this stuff for when you go to uni, you need to know exactly what you want to do." And I didn't really know there was really an option of apprenticeships, apart from in engineering and stuff like that. But we're doing in customer service, which is basically good for everything, I like to think.
- Daisy** Yeah, we're just about to finish. We joined the 10th of August, so we're coming up to that really soon, so... We're just about finished. We're just on our last module now.
- Izzie** Like, we are doing the apprenticeship, but it's not set, like, "this is what you're going to do". We kind of just do it as we're working, so we don't really feel like we're doing an apprenticeship.
- Daisy** Yeah.
- Izzie** But it's really nice, actually.
- Daisy** I really like it. I get to cook for people. I've made some good friends.
- Izzie** Awwwww.
- Daisy** Awwwww. I wasn't talking about you, I was talking about (LAUGHS) When we all first arrived here, we couldn't even say our names, and now we can't stop talking. (LAUGHS) I'm definitely glad I came here instead of going to... It doesn't really feel like we're doing an apprenticeship, it just kind of feels like we're working. And because we're working in the areas that we like to do, it doesn't even feel like we're necessarily working. The only thing that makes us feel like we're working is the costumes.
- Izzie** Definitely working here is absolutely amazing. We're all so close, and we all help each other get through everything. I haven't worked in any other places in the cultural sector, so I don't really know how it is to work in other places, but here it's definitely the best because we all get along so well, and talk to each other, and help each other, and we learn from each other a lot. Like, the only reason we know how to talk to customers about what we're doing is through all the other staff - like we didn't learn from a book or a piece of paper, we just listened to each other's talks, and learned from it. And we made it our own.
- Toby** It would have been a little bit easier if covid wasn't a thing, at the minute at least. Just because the others have in-house assessors, whereas I'm still doing Zoom calls and... It's not been the easiest, although it's not actually hard necessarily. But it's not terrible. I think it could be better if there was someone in person to just be able to ask questions, you know, "I don't understand this, can you actually walk me through it and show me, like, visually?" At the Crannog, specifically, it is very good. I think the Crannog is quite different to other places in the sector, just because we're more of a 'living site' rather than just items behind glass
- Izzie** A 'living site' is... We've got a museum which is separate, and we take people outside. At the moment because of covid, they're shown how to do things that they would have done

in the Iron Age. And it's all outside, and there's tour guides and staff on every single area, so you get to talk to everyone, and you get to do things yourselves.

**Daisy** So we dress up like the Iron Age people, so we kind of make them feel like they're an Iron Age, so we give them Iron Age food and the cooking.

**Toby** So we found a waster from a lathe in the Oakbank that we excavated. So that allows us to then.... Yeah, well we didn't personally find it.

**Izzie** (LAUGHS).

**Toby** But yeah, that allows us to try and demonstrate a lathe, because we have evidence of that. We could just show the original artefact, and that could be it and they'd be "oh yeah, okay." But actually being able to see the lathe working, and someone actually using it, and potentially using it themselves if it's not covid times, it's a lot better.

**Izzie** So it's being able to do things how they would have done back then.

**Toby** I think obviously have not worked in any other places, but I've visited them, and I think personally I would not really actually want to work there, just because it is so kind of boring. You know, I feel I could get maybe a reception job, you know, just sitting at the desk for eight hours a day.

**Izzie** At the Crannog, we've got a few different areas: So we've got the tours inside the museum, and then we've got ancient technologies, textiles, cooking, trade... And puppet shows at the end, which is something completely different, but it's very good. And when I first started, I actually had no idea what 'textiles' was. And, now I just learned how to drop spin, I've learnt how to nålebind, which is this really ancient technique of almost knitting. I made a loom yesterday - a very tiny loom. It's a bit wonky, but (LAUGHS) now, I've actually decided I want to go into archaeology and also ancient textiles after that, just from being here since August. It might be quite hard to get into the cultural sector. We only got in because there was an apprenticeship, but I've never really seen jobs advertised anywhere else. But once you're in, it's really, really good.

**Daisy** Yeah, no, I love it here. We all just get on like a family here. But, yeah, as Izzie was saying, there's not really many job opportunities in the actual natural sector itself. Again, I've never come across any. If there is any apprenticeships going on, I definitely recommend that you want to take it. It's definitely a good opportunity, and you won't regret it.

**Izzie** Most people that are employed in this sector have some sort of degree or some high level of education within the sector. But I came in with GCSEs, and Daisy and Toby came in with highers - whatever the Scotland are (CHUCKLE) - and we were still able to come in. And from that, some of us have found out what we want to do later on. But in quite a few museums, you can only really get in if you've been in education in the area.

**Daisy** Yeah, like uni and stuff like that. Museums kind of go for people with high qualifications in the specified area. So, Izzie like textiles, so if she was at another museum, they probably want her to have been to uni, and do all this archaeology and textiles research. However, when she came here, again, she only had her GCSEs, and she's kind of gotten into her uni and stuff. I only came here with two national fives, I really was not good in school at all.

**Izzie** (CHUCKLE).

- Daisy** But, I've come here and I've got a Customer Service Apprenticeship out of it. And hopefully, I'm going to carry on. We're still waiting to hear back from that.
- Toby** I agree with others in that it is definitely quite scholarly: You need all these qualifications and past experience to work there. But I think it is definitely a good opportunity, at the Crannog at least, actually giving young people in the area a chance to do something, really. Get interested, even, in the field - people might not necessarily be interested.
- Izzie** Yeah, because when we started we were like 16, 17. We hadn't been to uni by then, obviously, so we didn't have the high levels of education that other places would want, but we still managed to get in and do a really good job, I like to think.
- Daisy** (CHUCKLES) Yeah, we like to think we did.
- Toby** If they at least know about it beforehand, and they know they actually can consider it as an option...
- Izzie** Rather than university.
- Toby** Yeah.
- Izzie** So that if they don't have to... If they don't want to go to uni, but they feel like there's no other option, they're able to make that decision before...
- Toby** Before they actually have to...
- Izzie** Yeah, leave.
- Daisy** If we were to introduce ourself as apprentices, I think people wouldn't necessarily look down on us, but they would look at us and think "oh, they're still in an education", and stuff like that. But if we were to say "oh, we've got a Customer Service Apprenticeship", they would take us more seriously. So I think there is some negatives to the way other people see it.
- Izzie** People just think that maybe an apprenticeship isn't as serious as the results that you get from college or university, or anything like that. They might think that you're not as well educated, almost? But then you're doing an apprenticeship in the area that you're interested in.
- Daisy** It's just the way we word it. If we were the correct way, then people like us. (LAUGHS)
- Toby** I've definitely had a few comments on the reviews. They've said the apprentices, and they've used the word "volunteer" in correlation with us. So I think people, yeah, even just more... "It's not actually even a job, even if they are getting an education." They're thinking of as more volunteers, instead of actually working.
- Daisy** Well, we just range between 16 and 19. We've all come from different backgrounds. Before we arrived, they had already employed a diverse range of people - so, obviously, this included gay, autistic, people with disabilities. And we've added to the diversity by bringing a younger vibe. So yeah, we've got a Freedom Flag outside. Some local businesses questioned us about it, but we still have it up.

**Izzie** Yeah, because we've actually actually had people come in just because they've seen the Freedom Flag, and they've known that it's a safe place for everyone to come in. Recently, it's all become very important and relevant at the moment, because you've got all the protests, and all the marches and stuff like that. And people are only just recently being educated; [those] within the sector for a long time don't know the changes that have happened. So they're not really living up to the expectations of, maybe, other people, because they don't know how to.

**Daisy** My way of seeing the museum was literally a big building with glass and artefacts. No one would tour you around, no one would... It was kind of just like a walk around site.

**Izzie** All inside.

**Daisy** All inside. Quite boring. I'm not so fond of museums anyway, but I think coming here has changed my perspective on that. And I think museums just need to make it way cooler for people to actually engage, and not get bored.

**Izzie** I think how they present the artefacts and their information...

**Daisy** Make it more interactive...

**Izzie** Yeah, because here we've got a talk through the museum, so we tell them about all the artefacts. And then we go out and show them how to use the technology they would have used. You can get to make a clay pot, sometimes, or smash pots. They always have stuff to do. And then you can learn about how to use a loom, how to drop-spin, how to make different colours. What they would have eaten, and you get to taste it as well. And there's so much that you can make from fewer artefacts in a museum.

**Daisy** Yeah, we try to make history fun interactive, so people don't get bored. It's very child friendly, so there's always stuff for children to do.

**Izzie** And adults.

**Daisy** And adults, yeah, for everyone, but... Yeah, we've got a very funny puppet show at we do at the end, and children love it. It's just amazing.

**Izzie** Everyone loves the puppet show.

**Daisy** (PUPPET SOUNDS).

**Izzie** Oh my gosh.

**Toby** Just be less boring, really.

**Daisy** (LAUGHS).

**Toby** To put it bluntly.

**Izzie** They need to make it accessible to everyone as well. Because another apprentice, Will, he's actually partially sighted, and he's saying that when he goes to museums with the artefacts in the glass, he can't see through. So he has no idea what artefacts there are, so that needs to be a different way of showing it. And also, they always have to be

sustainable, as well - especially now we're getting into more sustainable and environmentally friendly times. So they need to change to help with that as well.

**Toby** I used to think, before I was doing the apprenticeship, I'd probably take anything in the computer area; either if that's hardware or software. It's opened me up to more of the practical stuff. I didn't think I'd enjoy talking to the customers as much, especially put on the costumes and that.

**Daisy** Oh, the costumes are horrendous.

**Izzie** No they're not.

**Toby** It's not that bad, to be fair, it's not the worst ever.

**Izzie** You just need to dress up a bit. Well, the moment, I'm actually doing a university course online in Archaeology in Practice - it's excavation. And I'm hoping to do the Museum Gallery Practice Apprenticeship this next year. And then the year after that, hopefully doing Experimental Archaeology course. And then eventually, I'll get enough money in my career to have a chateau in France.

**Daisy** (LAUGHS)