

The staff newsletter of AJ Engineering and NEWCo

WORKING FROM HOME WILL REMAIN AN OPTION FOR AJE STAFF

Working from home if that's what AJE staff wish to do is still very much an option according to managing director Alan James.

Alan has been pleasantly surprised by the way staff have embraced the home working situation since the outbreak of coronavirus in March 2020 and he sees no reason why working practices need to change.

He said: "Traditionally, it was important to me that everyone was in the office and that they could hear what was going on and be available to get advice and put forward their ideas in the development of the projects.

"However, Covid changed the way in which we had to work and from what I can tell and what has been surprising but also reassuring is that everyone seems happier working a bit more from home."

Like the rest of the country AJ Engineering was forced to adopt technology which allowed for virtual meetings and Alan now believes that this is something that can be continued if staff want.

"Traditionally, the way we have run the business was to have everyone here, under one roof. It was only because of Covid that we had to embrace the technology and that has allowed us to

make sure that we can all keep up to date with each other. We have been able to have virtual meetings and maintain this way of working and cohesive effort and it doesn't seem to be affecting output or progress."

Alan added: "Ideally I would like staff to come in from time to time, but it's now not essential. Equally, there are those who working from home is maybe not the easiest option, so clearly, they are welcome back to the office too. We are adopting a suck it and see kind of attitude and we are all too aware that we need to be cautious and careful when it comes to Covid and the pandemic."

INVESTMENT IN YOUNG PEOPLE CONTINUES

AJ Engineering's relationship with a school pupil who completed a four week internship at the company continues.

Via the Career Ready project, AJ Engineering welcomed 17-year-old Lucy Paul over the summer and she recently gave a presentation on her experience.

Career Ready is a national charity that has a network of employers and educators who all believe that every young person deserves the opportunity to kick-start a rewarding future.

AJ Engineering was matched with 17-year-old Lucy Paul and whilst her work experience stint is complete, she will continue to be mentored by the team at AJE.

Project Engineer Rob Williamson has been taking the lead on Lucy's

experience and he was invited to her virtual presentation which was also attended by senior school staff members and some from the Career Ready team.

Rob said: "It was great to see Lucy give her presentation. It gave those attending an insight into what she experienced whilst with us over the summer and it was really great to hear that she had such a positive time. Lucy mentioned that from her experiences gained at AJE, she definitely wants to pursue a career in engineering, she is still researching the discipline that she would like to do which most interests her."

Lucy is now in S6 at Elgin High School. When at AJE she spent time in all the different departments, experienced a mock interview and spent most of her time with Rob doing project management, assisting with 'live jobs'.



Pictured is David Craig, a veteran of the Arctic Convoys, alongside pupils of the nearby Bualnaluib Primary School



AJE puts mosaics in the frame

AJ Engineering has played a part in a new trail which explores Wester Ross's importance to Arctic Convoy efforts during the Second World War.

The pictures show one of the aluminium frames that were designed, fabricated and installed by our teams to display three mosaics designed by local pupils.

The Blazing a Wartime Trail around Loch Ewe was officially opened at the end of August at MacLennan Park in Aultbea.

The event was attended by those involved in the project and local school children.

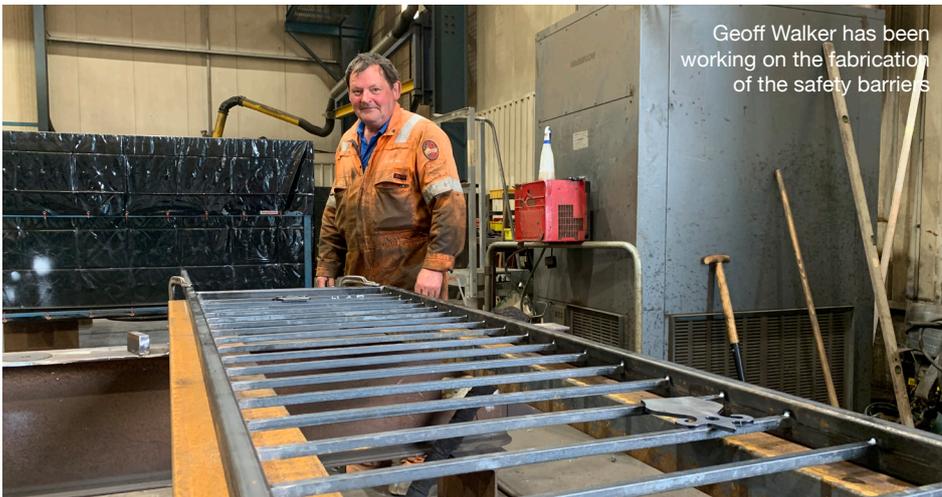
AJE director Graham Alexander said: "AJ Engineering is involved in so many different types of projects from designing, fabricating and installing huge items for bridges, buildings and renewable energy sites, to jobs like this one, which are smaller but still so important to our clients and our team. It was such a pleasure to work on this. Seeing the finished mosaics is the icing on the cake and they look

absolutely beautiful."

Loch Ewe served as a strategic point for the Arctic Convoys. Between 1941 and 1945, vessels made the perilous journey from the area to the ports of Archangel and Murmansk to deliver essential supplies to Russian allies. Sailors faced horrific conditions along the way, including extreme temperature plummets.

Nearly 1,500 merchant vessels were involved in the convoys and more than 3,000 men died.

Safety barriers move historic clocktower on



Geoff Walker has been working on the fabrication of the safety barriers

A project to develop the clock tower in one of Forres' most historic buildings into a new tourist attraction is gathering pace and AJ Engineering has been at the forefront.

Listed building consent, planning permission and a building warrant to install safety barriers on a walkway around the clocktower at the Tolbooth in Forres town centre have been secured.

AJ Engineering is now working to fabricate and install the barriers so that

the tourist attraction can open to the public.

The company has already been involved in the design, fabrication and installation of a new stairway which will give people access to the walkway.

The old wooden stairs which were removed by volunteers revealed signatures which it is believed are of workmen who worked on the tower since the early 20th century. AJE Chargehand Fabricator, Cliff Robertson who worked on

the stairway, added his signature to the wall too.

AJE Director, Graham Alexander said: "We are delighted to be working with the Forres Heritage Trust once again. We have supported the Trust which looks after the Tolbooth and Nelson's Tower on a number of projects over the years and it's great to be involved in this latest effort by the Trust and its volunteers to turn the clocktower into something really special for locals and tourists."

The Forres Heritage Trust has received some funding for the project.

It received £9375 from the Town Centre Regeneration Funding which was allocated for 'alterations to the outside gallery around the clock tower,' and the latest funding of £11,301.60 was secured from The Beatrice Partnership Fund and will be used to restore the Tolbooth clock and install the safety barriers.

Previously, the Trust received £20,000 in funding from the Berry Burn Community Fund which was used to make repairs around the walkway and to carry out extensive pointing of the stonework around the clock tower.