

Raising — THE — ROOF



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IS THE KEY TO ROOFTEC'S SUCCESS

BY SOPHIE ROBERTSON | PHOTOS PROVIDED



The vision at Rooftec is simple – to provide as many people as possible with the knowledge required to make a wise decision on their roofing project. Owners, Mark and Nicola Cattanach, believe that when someone trusts you with their roof, they're trusting you with their home, their safe place. It's a big responsibility, and it's one that they take very seriously indeed. That's why Rooftec are so involved with staff training and development. Nicola is a board member of Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Forth Valley; a government initiative which aims to get businesses colleges and schools working together to increase opportunities for young people and identify routes for them to go into apprenticeships and training.

Mark went down the apprenticeship route himself, which is why the company is so involved with young apprentices today. Nicola says: "if Mark hadn't been given the opportunity of going through his apprenticeship, then we wouldn't be where we are today, as he didn't get on particularly well at school. And that's why we're so supportive of apprenticeship schemes – because school isn't for everyone, and apprenticeships give young people the chance of achieving, who aren't perhaps destined to go down the academic route."

As well as their work with the DYW, Mark also goes into schools to speak to teenagers about the benefits of apprenticeships. He hopes by sharing his story that some of the pupils without any prior aspirations will be inspired to perhaps set up their own business one day.

A former Falkirk High pupil himself, Mark's rise to success is proof that if you put your mind to something then the possibilities are endless. Rooftec are also involved with the Scottish Traditional Building Forum, who organise events where school pupils get to have hands-on experience of different trades for the day, including traditional slating and tiling.

"One of the benefits to us, of recruiting apprentices," says Nicola, "is that there is a real shortage of skilled roofers. We discovered this a few years ago during a recruitment campaign. So we made the decision to home-grow our own. It's a two-way street – we get workers with the skills we need, and our apprentices get a job at the end of it. We're really pleased that we've been able to offer all of them a position so far."

Eventually, the aim is for these apprentices to work their way up through the ranks at Rooftec, to become team leaders and eventually have their own van and their own team of workers. "Obviously this will take a few years," Nicola admits, "but this is the part of our business plan, as the company expands."

Last year, Rooftec dedicated over 160 hours to staff training which, given the size of the company, is a huge amount of time. "It is essential for us to ensure that all our staff are working to the same high standard and our exact requirements," says Nicola. That's because the ethos of Rooftec is to provide the customer with all of the information they need up-front, even if they decide to go elsewhere. Nicola says: "We're happy to provide everything the customer needs in order to make an informed choice, including details of materials, price and timescale. This was one of the things that really inspired Mark to set up his own firm, as he could see so many corners being cut within the building trade. He wanted to provide a service based on honesty and really improve the reputation of roofing companies."

One of the ways in which Rooftec hope to provide information to their customers is via their showroom in Bankside, Falkirk. "That's why we moved to a larger premises and installed our showroom," explains Nicola, "so people can come in and see the materials and learn exactly what should be involved in their project. As far as we're aware, our showroom is unique among roofing contractors in the Forth Valley area, and we're the only one dedicated to providing information and advice for roofing."

Over the past couple of years, Rooftec have won a number of awards, which shows that all their dedication to staff training and development is finally paying off. Rooftec won the National Federation of Roofing Contractors "Service to the Community Champions" in 2015 and 2016 and the Forth Valley Chamber of Commerce "Excellence in Customer Service" in 2016, as well as placing second in the UK Apprenticeship Champion category at the Red Ribbon Awards in 2016 held at Wembley Stadium.

The event at Wembley was special to Mark and Nicola as they took their three children, Robbie (18), Eve (15), and Lexi (10) along to the ceremony. "We really want to thank our kids," says Nicola, "because they have had to make sacrifices for the business, in terms of both Mark and I working long hours. So we want to thank them for their patience with that. And also we hope to be able to show to

them the possibilities that are out there if you work hard, and so taking the three of them to Wembley was a great way for them to see that. Robbie is currently doing an HND in accounting, so we hope that one day he'll be able to join the family business and save us some money!"

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Mark says: "The roofing awards are fantastic, but we value the apprenticeship ones just as much. We care passionately about young people, about providing them with a skill and developing a young workforce with an exceptional work ethic and the same values as the ones we hold."

For more information visit <http://rooftecscotland.co.uk/> or visit our showroom at 7 Castle Drive, Bankside industrial Estate, Falkirk, FK2 7UX.

