



RAC Patrol graduates, left to right: Brandon Wagstaff, Sonny-Jo Gillam, Adil Uddin and Taylor Spicer

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## RAC Academy salutes first graduates

The RAC has four new patrols on the road thanks to the success of a new apprenticeship scheme, which has just seen its first graduates complete the two year course.

The RAC Academy opened its doors for the first time in 2015, in conjunction with Barking & Dagenham College, looking for young people in the Greater London area with ambitions to start a career in auto engineering.

Now, thanks to the success of the scheme, the RAC is looking to rollout the

initiative across the country to offer more young people the chance to gain the skills and training to set them up in a career with the most established breakdown provider in the UK.

The four patrols who completed the course are: Taylor Spicer, based in the Chelmsford area; Adil Uddin, based in North London; Sonny-Jo Gillam, based in the Croydon area and Brandon Wagstaff also based in North London.

The apprentices, all now aged 20, worked four days a week with the RAC while attending a day a week at college in order to complete their NVQ. And all four say they would recommend the course to young people looking for career-based training.

Patrol Sonny-Jo Gillam said: “The course has provided me with a lot of really good experience, because you’re not just in a garage all day, you’re out on the road meeting customers and helping them out at the roadside, which is really enjoyable.

“I was attracted to the apprenticeship because I’ve always enjoyed the mechanical side of things, but never wanted to be just in one place. I’d much rather be out and about, meeting people, so it felt like it was more suited to me and the kind of career I want.”

Patrol Taylor Spicer added: “Going from working in a garage to fixing people’s vehicles at the roadside is something I’ve wanted to do for a long time, as I enjoy the chance to be able to help people. The course has been really good, both in terms of Barking & Dagenham College and the training at the RAC.

Patrol Adil Uddin said the course was structured well to ensure the apprentices were engaged by the training. He said: “I think this is a really good step for young people, especially with such a big brand as the RAC, it’s a good career to get into.

“The course was really enjoyable, it felt like we were doing something different every day, and now I’m just looking forward to getting on with the job.”

Brandon Wagstaff said he would recommend the course especially for anybody who enjoys working with people.

He said: “The best thing for me is meeting new people every day and working with customers. I’ve always wanted to work with cars, so it’s an ideal combination in that way, and I think the future potentially, could go very well. I would definitely recommend people sign up to the apprenticeship in the future.”

The four trainee patrols benefited from a wealth of experience among the RAC trainers on the scheme including Matt Woodbridge, Tom Dawson, Dave Humphreys and Steve Dobson.

RAC service improvement manager Simon Cooper said: “The course has been a great success and the guys are now full-time RAC Patrols, out on the road coming to the rescue of our members.

“We’re now reviewing the RAC Academy in terms of what worked well and where we could improve in some areas, as it was the first time we’d been able to train patrols in this way.

“But we feel this is the start of a wider rollout, giving more people the chance to become RAC Patrol apprentices across the country.”

RAC group operations director Phil Ryan added: “This is the first time we’ve had RAC Patrol apprentices and they will leave here now to start their full-time jobs while also being a huge credit to the scheme, demonstrating what can be achieved.

“These four guys really have shown the way, and thanks to the success of the programme, and the work they have done it will enable us to do more, grow the programme and give others the opportunity that they have had.”

Sarah McCurrie, Director of Apprenticeships at Barking & Dagenham College said: “We are extremely proud that we trained the first cohort of RAC Patrol apprentices in the country and we are looking forward to continuing our successful partnership with the RAC over the coming years.

“We send our best wishes to the RAC Academy graduates and wish them every success on their career journeys.”

**ENDS**

## **Notes to Editors**

### **About the RAC**

First formed in 1897 the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of motorists for 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, buying a used car, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#) or follow [#racfuelwatch on Twitter](#). RAC Fuel Watch is a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump. RAC Fuel Watch analyses how prices changed through the previous month and compares the most recent prices with those from three, six and 12 months before.

Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 30 minutes
- RAC vans carry more than 500 parts and tools to get members' vehicles going again
- 92% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

## Contacts



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