

At its recent annual general meeting, held on Saturday, October 11, the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) looked back on what is one of this year's greatest success stories – its Vehicle Restoration Apprenticeship Scheme.

Regular readers will remember that *Classic Car Buyer* reported in July that the FBHVC's Apprenticeship Scheme was given accreditation by Ofqual, meaning that it could be adopted by any college with the appropriate facilities and teaching staff, and in addition those colleges choosing to offer the course could access government funding to provide it. Finally, the accreditation also means that students will receive an industry-recognised qualification on their completion of the course.

What sets this Apprenticeship apart from others is that this is the only course that covers all aspects of vehicle restoration.

Earlier this month, Karl Carter, the FBHVC's skills and trade director, told club and trade representatives that two colleges – Banbury and Bicester College and S&B Automotive Academy – would be running the course this year.

At the AGM, he expanded on this: Eight apprentices are currently signed up with employers for the course at Banbury and Bicester College. That total is expected to rise to 10 in time for the course starting in early November. It's a similar story for the S&B Automotive Academy in Bristol, with six signed up with employers and ten expected. That's potentially 20 apprentices across two colleges. To put this achievement into context, Karl had not been expecting there to be any sort of take up this year – the original plan, according to Karl, was simply to have something in place and ready for the 2015/2016 academic year.

Re-elected chairman David



In order to ensure there are enough skilled professionals capable of restoring classic cars in the future and that tried and tested techniques aren't lost forever, the FBHVC created its Vehicle Restoration Apprentice Scheme earlier this year. Now that everything is in place to train the restoration specialists of tomorrow, Chris Hope asks what we can expect next

Whale was keen to stress that this Scheme would not have been possible without the financial support of Bicester Heritage, McGrath Maserati and the MG Car Club. These three benefactors were able to cover the £12,000 required by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) to develop the bespoke qualifications for inclusion in the Apprenticeship's framework.

The Scheme itself is the result of six years of hard work on the part of the FBHVC's trade and skills committee, and in particular Cedric Ashley, who demonstrated the need for such a scheme in the first place: He was able to show that 43 per cent of skilled staff currently employed are aged 45 or over, and will therefore be retiring within the next 20 years. What's

more, he demonstrated that in the next five years alone more than 1000 young people with the necessary skills to restore historic vehicles will be required – just to replace those who are retiring.

#### SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Although the Federation is more than justified in taking time to pause and reflect on its achievement, it was good to hear from Karl Carter that the Feds won't be resting on their laurels – after all, 20 apprentices is still a long way away from the 1000 that are needed (as a minimum) over the next five years.

Karl is adamant that what this Scheme needs first and foremost is a geographical spread. In order to achieve this, the FBHVC is appealing to *Classic Car Buyer* readers and requesting that they inform its team of any colleges that are currently running a light vehicle technical apprentice course (which deals with modern cars) and which have run City and Guilds apprenticeship schemes before. That said, any college in the country can run this course (assuming they, as we've previously mentioned, have the necessary facilities and staff) and the funding is automatic.

The slight caveat to that last remark is that at the moment government funding is currently only available for 16- to 18-year olds and not for mature students. Karl has found that when speaking to a number of restoration firms there is a shared concern that at this age, apprentices will not have 'settled down' yet, and they would ideally like to see mature students (those over 18 years old) also

considered for funding – this is in spite of the fact that employers taking on apprentices are obliged to pay students during their placements the age-related rate prescribed by the government.

Crucially, in order to be awarded a place on this apprenticeship scheme in the first place, regardless of age, a student has to demonstrate an interest in, and a familiarity with, classic cars.

The cost to put an unfunded mature student through this apprenticeship has been estimated by Karl to be around £14,000. With over a quarter of a million combined members within the 529 member clubs of the FBHVC, Karl put forward the notion that if every member were to put forward £1 that would fund 15 or so mature students through their apprenticeships – the suggestion being that a number of clubs could possibly group together to offer an apprenticeship place for someone who they felt warranted such generosity. It's certainly food for thought... **CCB**

#### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should the government reconsider its position on funding apprenticeships? Do you know of any colleges that might be interesting in running the FBHVC's Apprentice Scheme? Whatever your views, drop us a line via: [ccb.ed@kelsey.pb.co.uk](mailto:ccb.ed@kelsey.pb.co.uk) or write to us at the usual Peterborough address. You can join the debate online too at: [www.facebook.com/ClassicCarBuyer](http://www.facebook.com/ClassicCarBuyer) and: [@ClassicBuyer](https://twitter.com/ClassicBuyer) on Twitter!

## BRIEFS

### AMONG THE VETERANS

Five-time consecutive Olympic gold medalist rower Sir Steve Redgrave CBE will be joining the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run on Sunday, November 2 – in a 1904 Thornycroft belonging to the Heritage Motor Centre. An excited Sir Steve said: "I am really looking forward to doing the Run for the first time. Although I know it is not a race, the competitor in me will spur me on to the finish in Brighton," he confirmed. More at: [www.veterancarrun.com](http://www.veterancarrun.com)

### CLASSIC HONDA SHOW



Saturday, October 11 and Sunday, October 12 – the final round of the Dunlop British Touring Car Championship at Brands Hatch, and a strong contingent of classic Hondas supported their modern brethren out on track. Arranged in collaboration with the 1stGenCivic forum, star drivers Gordon Shedden and Matt Neal tried several iconic models for size. The cars on display included a Z600, a variety of S800s (hard-top and roadster), a pair of Mk1 Prelude and several early Accords. Among the Mk1 Civics on show was an early example belonging to Hannah Carpenter, featured in the latest issue of *Classics Monthly*.

### INNOCENTI MINI AT 40

The Innocenti Mini, a rebodied hatchback variant of the Issigonis classic, is celebrating its 40th birthday. Unveiled at the Turin Motor Show in 1974, the 90L and 120L models used the Mini's A Series engine, together with its dry cone suspension. Plans to sell the Innocenti in Britain were shelved due to British Leyland's cashflow problems in 1976; by then Innocenti had been sold to De Tomaso, which replaced the British engines with Daihatsu three-cylinder units under license in 1982.

### FORD GT TO MAKE COMEBACK

In 2016 it will be 50 years since Ford's legendary GT40 supercar was introduced. Designed expressly to beat Ferrari at Le Mans, the GT40 had four consecutive wins between 1966 and 1969. A modern reincarnation, named the Ford GT, was built in 2005/2006. Now there are rumours that the Blue Oval will mark the 50th anniversary of the original GT40 with another recreation. Ford executives have been present at meetings about the 2016 GTE class racing rules – the class that includes the Ferrari 458, the Corvette and the Porsche 911.

### CLASSIC HIT & MISS

**HIT:** A recent Freedom of Information request revealed that over 50 per cent of parking ticket appeals made in 2012 were successful. 69,921 tickets were appealed.

**MISS:** New Zealand classic enthusiast Barry Baker lost nine old cars and ten motorbikes after a wiring fault sent his workshop up in smoke. He had been collecting vehicles since 1969.



Karl Carter, the FBHVC's skills and trade director, reveals to members at its AGM how the Apprenticeship Scheme was made possible.



Jaguar Land Rover vehicle mechanic Claire Serrell explains what a positive affect her apprenticeship has had on her career – and how university should not be the only option for school leavers.