

PG Trust Finance Report from Dylan Collingham.

I'm a self-employed horticulturalist from Devon and I applied for a Professional Gardeners Trust award to cover the cost of the NPTC Chainsaw - Crosscutting and maintenance course. PG Trust awarded me £489 to cover the cost of the course. I successfully completed the course at Bridgewater College and I can't speak highly enough of the excellent trainer Lee Kimber and assessor Steve Hasell.

The course consisted of three parts, chainsaw maintenance, crosscutting and then the assessment. The maintenance covered the best part of the day and I learnt a lot about the safety features of a chainsaw as well as chainsaw and environmental safety checks. Day one also covered a range of techniques to keep the chainsaw well maintained and operating safely. There was a wealth of added knowledge thrown in by the tutor and I learnt some great tips for the future.

Day two was the fun day, crosscutting. It involved learning various techniques such as the bore cut; where you bore into the wood from the middle, this is useful for cutting up logs on the ground where you can't get your saw underneath. Day two also covered tension and compression which is extremely important in preventing the saw getting stuck and most importantly day two covered how to use the chainsaw safely.

Day three was assessment day, I was slightly nervous but the assessor Steve done a great job of keeping everyone relaxed and I sailed through the assessment without any problems.

The PG Trust grant has helped me in many ways. First of all it's allowed me to gain more hours at a place of work which in turn has really helped my financial stability. I'm now responsible for dealing with fallen trees on a large estate as well as processing and curing wood. This is great experience and I can build upon the skills I learnt at Bridgewater College. In the future I wish to take the addition course's small tree felling as well large tree felling and processing.

Secondly the having the NPTC award in crosscutting and maintenance makes me more employable if in the future I decide to get an employed position, especially if I choose to take the addition courses.

Lastly the course has helped me gain confidence as a self-employed horticulturist and add another skill to my growing skill-set. I am extremely grateful to The Professional Gardeners Trust for all there support, they have been extremely timely in their communication and everything went exceptionally smooth. Many Thanks.