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**Providing the  
Vital Connection**[jdrcables.com](http://jdrcables.com)**Elli Paddon, Design Engineering  
Apprentice**

My name is Elli Peill, and I'm 22 years old. I'm currently a Design Engineering Apprentice at JDR's Hartlepool Offices (Maritime), while studying at Hartlepool FE College. I've completed my Level 3 Mechanical Engineering and Level 3 Business qualifications and I'm now in my final year of studying for an HNC in Mechanical Engineering with JDR. My apprenticeship lasts four years, and the HNC takes two years to complete along side doing a level 2 mechanical engineering course which lasted 1 year. Once I finish, I'll be awarded a HNC in Mechanical Engineering and level 2 mechanical engineering certificate, and I'm considering progressing into an HND and hopefully a degree to see where that takes me.

When deciding between university and an apprenticeship, apprenticeships allow education and experience within the industry whilst university only offers education with little work experience. You can still learn in college whilst having a job and develop relationships in between. I like applying knowledge which I learn directly to JDR's work, making the knowledge much more meaningful and relevant.

My journey with JDR started in September 2023 and at JDR they offered to put me through my HNC and level 2 engineering. They were the only company in my area to offer a design apprenticeship which was the position I wanted to advance in, they helped me expand my learning and personal development whilst learning each day about subsea umbilicals and what JDR do.

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Experiencing STEM events and NOF have been a highlight of working at JDR. This allows us to build relationships and spread awareness to others as well as inspire younger children. JDR has also given me the opportunity to become a STEM ambassador. Rotations within the company have also been a highlight and beneficial to all apprentices as you get to experience hands on the different jobs that require a business to operate, this also give you a good opportunity to make bonds with people who you work with but may not speak to everyday or at all (even for other staff, this would be beneficial for).

Looking ahead, in five years, I see myself to still be working at JDR developing knowledge of subsea cables and umbilical's whilst helping others.