

MILLRACE MARKETING



Millrace is a creative marketing agency that is built on a passion for producing meaningful marketing. Based in Cardiff, the team of seven work closely within government and charity sectors, helping to deliver purposeful communication campaigns. The company champions working on projects that ultimately help towards better outcomes for either people or planet and have supported the communication messages of business growth in Wales, sustainability and the housing crisis.

What sets Millrace apart is that they have chosen to "do" business differently, not only choosing to support meaningful communication projects, but also by adapting their own business model and practices to become a Fair Work employer. Founder, Laura Aherne, launched Millrace with a triple bottom line structure, ensuring the agency is accountable for people, planet and pounds.

LIVING WAGE

Millrace chose to become a Real Living Wage employer from the moment it launched in 2019. As a start-up business, this was a financial risk, but director, Laura, wanted to ensure the brand of Millrace differentiated from other marketing agencies and attracted employees with a desire to learn, grow and stay.

Her experience of the sector witnessed internships being offered with no pay, expecting creative minds to work for free in the name of experience.

Laura explained: "Becoming a Real Living Wage employer was very important to me and the evolution of Millrace. Although at the time we only had two employees, I wanted them to know my intentions through action and feel secure in their roles as the business grew."

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CASE STUDY

EMPLOYEE VOICE & COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATION

Bi-monthly one-to-ones take place at Millrace. Each team member has a set day and time to sit with Laura and discuss their workloads, any training needs, the direction of their role, or anything else that they feel comfortable sharing.

Laura said: *"Our working week is split between a busy office space and remote working, so these one-to-one sessions allow my team to privately discuss anything they want to. I have had some wonderful discussions with team members about projects they are proud of or how they want their role to develop. I learn a lot about my teams' needs in these sessions."*

Millrace is also a member of Chwarae Teg's FairPlay Employer scheme and has adapted an open door approach for employees to talk to senior leadership

teams at any time, without having to wait for more structured one-to-ones every other month.



OPPORTUNITY FOR ACCESS, GROWTH AND PROGRESSION

Although a small team, 50% of employees have progressed into more senior roles within 18 months of starting at Millrace. A smaller team set-up has allowed Laura to informally train and nurture her employees through projects that she is still very much involved with. Under their B-Corp status, formal training is a key pillar requiring policies and updates, which means Millrace is committed to providing growth and training opportunities that will assist in the development of employees. Over the past 12 months, Millrace employees have completed a variety of formal training in line with their roles, ranging from certified proofreading courses through to press release training with a [CIPR](#) professional.

Employees involved in design and video production have also participated in more informal training, suited to their needs within an ever-changing creative landscape, for example, with online tutorial-based platform [Skillshare](#). Laura comments: *"Training is one area covered in one-to-ones and with a plethora of ways to learn, there is been a diverse and accessible approach to ensuring the team are always progressing and growing."*

CASE STUDY

SECURITY AND FLEXIBILITY

The team at Millrace have permanent contracts and within these states clearly their place of work, hours of work and what is expected from them as an employee.

To support their individual working needs, and also travel elements of their sustainability policy, employees work a set hybrid model. The days in the office space together are utilised to work collaboratively and meet, whereas homeworking days allow for no travel and quiet time to write, create and produce. Millrace uses a timesheet management programme to monitor the time spent on projects and to ensure the team are dedicating the appropriate amount of hours to projects as out-of-hours working is highly discouraged.

LEGAL RIGHTS RESPECTED

Following months of assessments, Millrace has become a B-Corp organisation which has a heavy focus on legal rights. From supply chains through to a legal update of their Articles of Association, the company has committed to respecting the legal rights of employees and the rights of suppliers and third parties involved with the company.

In addition, the company has 27 policies from flexible working through to anti-slavery, further ensuring the legal rights and wellbeing of employees and supply chains.

SAFE, HEALTHY AND INCLUSIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Millrace has a number of policies surrounding inclusion, diversity, equality and training. In addition, Millrace is committed to Chwarae Teg's FairPlay Employee accreditation and also holds the Disability Confident Committed accreditation.

Laura elaborated: *"I feel that inclusive work is about the culture you create. Although we have policies in place and more formal accreditations, it's about how you make people feel, not what is written into documents. I believe we have an accessible culture where everyone feels they can bring their whole selves to work."*



THE BENEFITS OF BEING A FAIR WORK EMPLOYER

A tangible benefit of adopting Fair Work principles for Millrace has been the retention of employees. Millrace's first two employees are in their fourth year of employment which is proving to be under the sector's high turnover rate. During this period, these employees have grown their skill base and experience, and as a consequence, been promoted into more senior roles. All other employees that have been recruited into Millrace and successfully passed the probation period have remained within the organisation too. Laura explains: *"I'd like to believe our retention rate is extremely high because Millrace has an open and honest culture that is offering people the opportunity to progress and learn. Focusing on the bottom line, having employees thrive is financially beneficial as we do not have to recruit and train, and our clients stay with us because they are not having to navigate disruptive change."*

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Millrace is continuing to grow at an organic rate and choosing to provide support where it matters most in communication and marketing fields. Employees will continue to be offered opportunities to grow with the company through training opportunities and career developments.

Millrace has just launched a corporate social responsibility programme, [The Green House](#), which endeavours to make their "people and planet" give back more accountable. Employees will be encouraged to get involved in these activities and schemes with clients.

CONTACT

Contact us to speak 1-2-1 with a specialist adviser about how your business can realise its Fair Work ambitions and take steps towards becoming a more equal, diverse, and inclusive employer.

Call Business Wales on **03000 6 03000** or visit [Fair Work | Business Wales Skills Gateway \(gov.wales\)](#) for further information, free advice and support.

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