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GCHQ PRAISES CENTURY OF ACHIEVEMENTS BY PRINCE'S TRUST

When a GCHQ employee recently took part in the Prince's Trust Volunteers programme she got an extra bonus – the honour of being presented to Prince Charles as a member of the 100th team in Gloucestershire to participate in the scheme.

The Prince of Wales visited Gloucester on 5 April to pay tribute to young people from all over the county who have taken part in the Prince's Trust Volunteers programme since it started in 1990. Among the hundreds of volunteers present was a group of GCHQ employees, some of whom have received prestigious awards from The Prince's Trust or the Civil Service for their contributions to the scheme.

The main focus of the event was the presentation of certificates of achievement by the Prince to the 100th team to take part in the scheme. Sarah, one of the volunteers in the 100th team, said: "I've got so much out of this programme, but I didn't think it would include speaking in front of such a big audience including Prince Charles!"

GCHQ first became involved with the 12-week personal development programme in 1996, and since then has provided over 40 employees either as team leaders or volunteers. The programme, which is run in conjunction with Young Gloucestershire, enables 16-25 year olds – from diverse backgrounds – to build confidence and motivation, as well as to develop skills and gain qualifications. Activities include teambuilding, community projects, caring for others, work for the National Trust and a final team presentation to celebrate the programme.

A GCHQ spokesman commented: "We are involved in a wide range of local community initiatives such as the Hesters Way project, Education & Business in Partnership as well as Business in The Community. Together with the Prince's Trust this forms an extremely valuable personal development programme for our staff. We warmly congratulate the Prince's Trust and Young Gloucestershire on the success of reaching the 100 team milestone."

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