



## KEVIN HAYWARD

### Rigging Trainee

**A 54-year-old from Newport has gained invaluable film industry experience and was able to utilise transferrable skills from his 30 year long career in engineering thanks to a programme from Ffilm Cymru' dedicated to opening up the film industry to everyone.**

Kevin Hayward secured a placement with local rigging and stuntwork company, Extreme Rigging, thanks to Ffilm Cymru's Foot In The Door (FITD) programme. The scheme is dedicated to advancing and sustaining a strong film industry for Wales by providing funding, training, and future career paths to anyone interested in a career in film.

Kevin's employment with the Caldicot based company, that worked on the upcoming Disney+ production, *Willow*, gave the ex-software engineer the opportunity to utilise transferrable skills from his previous career into essential experience, taking him one step closer to following his lifelong passion for film.

**“Working with Foot In The Door opened my eyes to just how many transferrable skills I had, and gave me the access I had always been looking for,”** he said.

Since spring 2022, 300 places have been available in Newport for training and employment opportunities in the screen sector through Foot in the Door thanks to a collaboration between Ffilm Cymru Wales and Newport City Council which has secured funding from the UK Community Renewal Fund. Resources and support to help with things like childcare, transport and equipment is available to help widen access to the most diverse group of participants as possible.

Kevin had always wanted to work in film since he was young but didn't know where to start. He said: **“I always felt it was one of those industries that you had to know someone who knows someone; it never felt like it was within my reach as a kid growing up on a council estate in the eighties.”**

Putting his passion aside, Kevin pursued a 30-year career in engineering, which took him to Arizona, United States, where he worked writing software testing jet engines.

Kevin got involved with Foot in The Door through DWP's restart scheme. Talking of his experience, Kevin said: **“It felt like the perfect fit - as an older man with a career in a completely different industry, I wasn't confident I would ever be able to get myself into the industry and around the right people, and I was worried I might've missed the boat, but Foot In The Door proved to me that it's never too late to make the jump.”**

After Kevin's introduction session, he completed a Fire Marshall course, delivered by Screen Alliance Wales, and a First Aid course with FITD to further extend his skillset, alongside set etiquette training before pursuing a placement. Due to his experience with engineering, Kevin jumped at the opportunity to carry out a placement with Extreme Rigging as an AutoCAD draughtsman.

**“It was great, because I was able to apply my knowledge from my career in software engineering to an industry I had always dreamed of being in. There was a group of us working together, of similar age and background, from completely different industries, but all with a love for film. We would all work together, listen to the same music and discuss films. As much as I loved the job, developing those relationships with likeminded people was one of the best things to come from it. I think I've made some lifelong friends there,”** Kevin said.

As Kevin continues to pursue his career in film, he is grateful for the experience and accessibility FITD has given him, that he doesn't believe he would've had without them.

Talking on his experience with FITD, Kevin said: **"I can't explain how eternally grateful I am to have been given these opportunities with Foot In The Door, from the experiences I've had to the wonderfully supportive people I've met. The film industry can be difficult to get into if you don't know where to look, and if you don't have access to the right opportunities from a young age, like university and specialist media courses.**

**"Those weren't available to me when I was a kid, but Foot in The Door has proven to me that it really is never too late to pursue something you love. Many opportunities in life are luck and comes down to the right time and right place. Foot In The Door gives you the right place, and it's your chance to make it the right time."**

**Kevin is a perfect example of how Foot In The Door can provide opportunities into the screen sector in Wales, and that it's never too late to go for something you're passionate about.**

**"We see the importance of transferrable skills like Kevin's, and we know how greatly these are valued on film sets and in the wider industry.**

**We're so pleased to have helped Kevin gain the essential experience he needs to begin to develop his career."**



**Faye Hannah**

Head of Skills and Training  
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[www.footinthedoorwales.com](http://www.footinthedoorwales.com)