

PLANNING

Planning shapes the way that society develops and as the physical and social environment around me constantly changes, I become attracted to planning as something that I would like to study further. The responsibilities to keep the environment sustainable are becoming more and more relevant in today's society and the way that the world is developing is an important issue that affects everyone, meaning planning will always be in constant demand. Geography, especially human geography is something that has always interested me throughout my time at school. Especially at A level where as part of geographical skills I conducted an investigation into the redevelopment of the SA1 site in Swansea. This helped me to gain skills in programmes such as GIS as well as learning about how areas are redeveloped and how planning and redevelopment affects the surrounding community.

Living in a grade II listed building in a conservation area in the Pembrokeshire National Park has showed me how important it is to protect our heritage for future generations. However I also understand that development is needed to meet the needs of local people and the local economy. Balancing these needs is of utter most importance and I believe that I have the skills to make sure that these needs are met without compromising on the environment or buildings of historical importance.

I carried out work experience in the planning department of Pembrokeshire County Council before I started my second year of sixth form. From the couple of days that I was based in the council I was able to gain a good understanding of all the different aspects of planning as I spent time in each department. I shadowed people from the conservation, environmental as well as planning officers and also how planning applications are processed and dealt with. From looking at a stable being converted into dwellings to finding evidence of bats in a house that was to be extended, I gained a vital understanding of what planning is all about.

After I had completed my GCSEs, at the age of 16 I had the opportunity to take a year out to complete a year of education in a bilingual school in Fribourg, Switzerland where I lived with a host family. This has allowed me to become almost fluent in French. I was able to be immersed in a very different culture, being able to meet Swiss French and Swiss Germans in school as well as socially. Following a completely different educational system as well as using a new language has made me very adaptable to situations that are completely out of my comfort zone. The experience has also shown me how working abroad in the future is something that I would love to do, and I believe planning is a subject that will allow me to travel the world. I have been part of Tenby Sailing Club since I was 8, sailing small dinghies. I have taken part in various events in the Club Youth Racing Circuit as well as inter-club competitions in both single handed and double handed boats. In 2010 I took part in a tall ships race across the North Sea from Hartlepool to Ijmuiden in the Netherlands. Being in such close quarters with 25 other people of varying ages for over a week with nothing but the sea around us allowed us to work together to overcome challenges that came before us. I also became good friends with the people I met which has allowed me to become confident in social situations and working together as a team to achieve the targets set.

I have no doubt that my motivation to improve the places where we live and work, my organisational skills and desire to go further in higher education are all elements that will help me to thrive in this course. The geographical and analytical skills that I have learnt and developed throughout my A level courses have given me a good basis to the skills that are expected of a planner.