



After dropping out of University in 2018, I'd already found my way into a Planning Admin job at a neighbouring Council. Despite enjoying thoroughly what I was doing, I knew that I wanted to explore this new found passion more deeply and the opportunity at Ipswich Borough Council to become an Apprentice Planning Technician seemed to the perfect next step to take in order to further my career. Knowing that the route I wanted to take would be incredibly difficult to achieve without having a degree, this seemed like the best fitting option for me.

After successfully interviewing for the position, I began working at Ipswich Borough Council in early September 2019 alongside Charlie, another Apprentice Planning Technician. Together we have learnt the intricate laws and regulations surrounding the planning system and exactly how the applications are dealt with behind the scenes. It cannot be said that the job role I hold has always been a plain sailing one, as would be expected with any new job, there are times you perhaps make mistakes; but one of the best things about being an apprentice is that in some ways this is expected to happen. Not a single day goes past where I couldn't at least name five new things I'd learnt, even if it's only through overhearing other conversations around the office.

Another huge benefit of this specific apprenticeship is the college course provided by Chichester College. To begin I expected a simple course where the work could be glossed over in a matter of hours. I am happy to say that I was pleasantly surprised with the level of difficulty presented to us in each block. The work is carefully managed by the tutors who are incredibly knowledgeable on planning, thus meaning there is ample support required if you ever get stuck.

The support also received from Ipswich Borough Council is unfaultable, with specific time allocated for College work meaning I never have to sacrifice my own time to meet the deadlines.

If I was to be asked by anyone what I truly thought about working for the Local Authority and if I thought it was a good employer to work for, I would reassure them without hesitation that this was quite possibly the best idea I made to choose this career path.

Despite the pre-existing assumptions some may have on Local Authorities, these could not be further from the truth. Every single person I have come across has been both kind and welcoming, with no issue ever being too much trouble for them to assist with. Due to this friendly working environment, I truly believe that in the future I will still be working for a Local Authority, hopefully as a Planning Officer. By becoming a valuable and well-rounded member of the team, I can help to give back to the company that has so far supported me unconditionally.