

Amy Walsh

Degree: BSc Geography

Year: Graduate of 2013



Why sustainability?

Having a very active, outdoor childhood has meant that the environment has always been close to my heart. However, studying Geography at A-level and University has increased my awareness of environmental issues and the urgent need for a transition to a low carbon society. In 2010, I undertook an expedition in Morocco which involved volunteering in a remote village in the Atlas Mountains; this experience brought home the reality of international development and climate issues, inspiring me to pursue a career in sustainability in a bid to create positive change.

What experience have you gained at University?

I have volunteered a lot at the University and I also work part-time in the Career Zone as an SCP. After being introduced to the Green Impact project as a volunteer auditor in 2012, I proposed to launch the scheme in the Career Zone alongside my internship. I had to pitch the project to the Head of Employability and Graduate Development and then deliver a presentation to the Career Zone staff. After recruiting the three original Green Team members in July 2012, the team has now expanded to twelve members and we have completed the bronze and silver awards in our first year. We are consistently striving to change staff attitudes towards environmental issues and increasing sustainable practices throughout the department.



What skills have you gained?

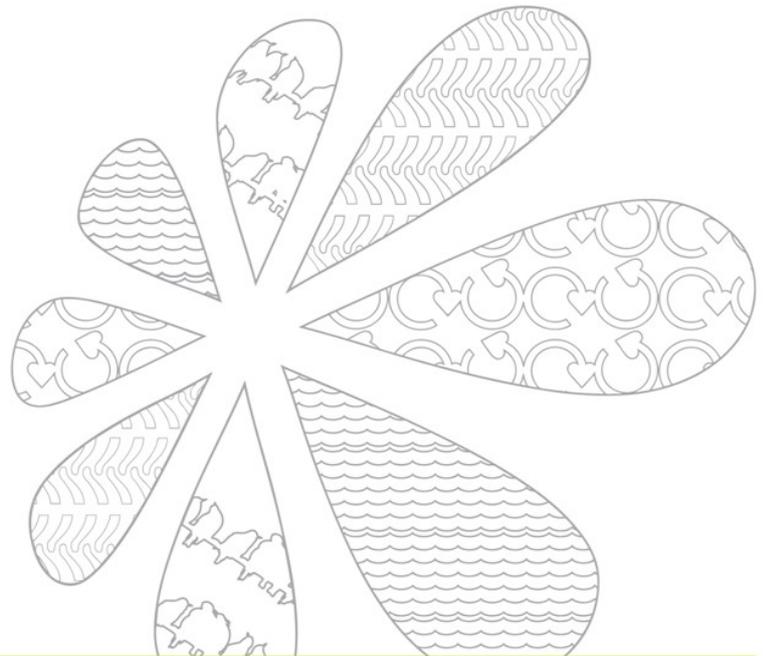
Leading on the Green Impact project in the Career Zone as a student intern has been a unique experience. I have learnt how to project manage and lead a team of staff with varying levels of seniority; I have also gained negotiation and diplomacy skills which are vital in the sustainability sector as you are constantly trying to change people's attitudes and behaviours towards the environment. As well as this, I developed a range of engaging marketing materials for Green Impact, including: posters, monthly bulletins and information packs; this was completely new to me and required a lot of creativity and initiative.

What are you going to do next?

I'm spending a few weeks in the Sustainability Department before graduation, where I am gaining more voluntary experience by assisting with the delivery of ecological events in association with Devon Wildlife Trust and the Festival of Ecology. After graduation I'm heading off on an Aussie adventure (via Asia) to gain a better understanding of different cultures and their attitudes towards the environment, I'm hoping to gain some long-term work experience in Australia within sustainability. Eventually, I plan to return to the UK and gain a graduate position where I can create real change.

What is one thing that everyone can do to make a difference?

Spread the word! Attitude and behaviour are the primary barriers to sustainable change, but inspirational people like you can alter the status quo and make a real difference. Reassess your lifestyle and lead by example – walk or cycle short journeys; take the train rather than the car; reduce, reuse and recycle; and most importantly **talk about environmental issues** with your friends and family!



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