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Megan Blyth

Local and Community Empowerment Project Worker

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**Royal
Geographical
Society**

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Advancing geography
and geographical learning



Job title: Local and Community Empowerment
Project Worker

Organisation: Centre for Sustainable Energy

Location: Bristol, UK

How did you get to where you are now?

I've always been interested in looking at the world from a scientific, humanities and artistic perspective and thought that geography would be the best degree to take that into account.

At university in Edinburgh, I started my degree being more interested in physical geography and mostly took modules on topics such as natural hazards, volcanology, and earth systems. But I quickly realised that was not enough for me, and that I wanted to explore our systems through a societal and cultural lens. This eventually led to my interests focusing on climate and environmental change as this involves looking at both physical systems and human's relationship to our planet.

After university, I took an internship with the Centre for Sustainable Energy's (CSE) communities' team. I had a background in energy through my final year dissertation on people's relationship to renewables (which had won the

RGS-IBG "Rural Geography" dissertation prize) and so the role was perfect as it married together my technical knowledge on energy systems with my keen interest in how we as a society relate to energy and how we can transition into a low carbon energy system. My internship then led to a permanent Project Worker role which is where I am today.

Was there anything particularly useful that helped you get into this role?

Throughout my academic life from GCSE's onwards, I had part time jobs mostly in hospitality and administration. Although not directly relevant for the environmental sector, the fact that I had kept a part time job along my studies showed that I am driven and had good time-management skills, which are desirable qualities when applying for any role.

When I started my role, I had to undertake some training and I received a City and Guilds qualification in Energy Awareness.

What do you do as part of your role?

My role in the Local and Community Empowerment team is extremely varied so there is no such thing as a "typical" day. At the moment a lot of my work is in supporting community energy groups. This can range from pointing groups to where they can access funding to run projects and finance new renewable energy generation assets, to helping run workshops to engage their local communities to cut down their energy usage. I've also been heavily involved in marking applications for grants for energy efficiency improvements in community buildings and fuel poverty advice projects.

As quite a separate project, I also mentor young people who have joined our youth environmental leadership programme – Bright Green Future. This involves organising training events, helping them develop a local project and organise a work placement with an environmental organisation.

W: www.rgs.org/iamageographer

