

**Enfield  
Careers  
Service**

# **CAREER STORIES BOOKLET**



[www.enfield.gov.uk/careerservice](http://www.enfield.gov.uk/careerservice)

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Career Stories booklet. Here you will find out about the career journey of some of our staff. These stories demonstrate passion, resilience and the benefits of education and training.

Whether you have no formal qualifications, still trying to figure things out or are in education or training, these stories can offer you inspiration and direction.

# CHARLES MCCASKILL - ASSISTANT PROGRAMME MANAGER FOR MAJOR WORKS

I had no qualifications and limited work experience and had difficulties getting a job. To overcome this barrier, I trained as a computer engineer.



Later on, I trained as a construction manager and worked as a quantity surveyor in the Repairs Department. This involved validating contractors submitted costs against completed work, inspecting completed works and resolving cost disputes.

As an assistant programme manager I work on different building projects such as demolishing garages, fitting boilers, windows and doors. My other tasks include planning projects, writing reports for senior management and solving problems such as issues raised by tenants/residents where contractors may have damaged property or personal items.

## My advice to young people

“Stay in education, get qualifications or training in the field you are interested in.”

Here are the links to the jobs listed above.

Computer Engineer, visit:

<https://uk.indeed.com/hire/job-description/computer-engineer>

Construction, visit:

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/construction-manager>

Programme Management, visit:

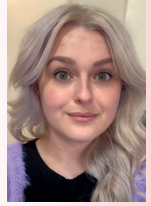
<https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/how-to-become-programme-manager>

Quantity Survey visit:

<https://www.rics.org/surveyor-careers/surveying/what-surveyors-do/what-is-a-quantity-surveyor>

# ELISE MERCHANT - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

We all have obstacles in our way, and it can be difficult to know what to do next, particularly when it comes to making big decisions about the future.



I didn't feel I had a lot of options when I was leaving school. My secondary school was definitely not the best in the neighbourhood. It felt that even the teachers had given up.

I had barriers in the way of going to university like my friends. My mum passed away when I was 12 and my dad was not around anymore at 16, so I was very concerned about what was next. How would I fund the course? How would I eat at university? I didn't know where I was going to live at 18. What I was going to do? I also wanted to stay in my hometown and be close to my support network.

I explored the degree apprenticeship route as it enabled me to work (because I needed cash, and fast), whilst getting my degree. The selection process was tough, I'll be honest about that. I am very thankful that I got a place with a vehicle manufacturer for a degree apprenticeship. I studied Business Management at Birmingham City University, whilst working full time and graduated in 2020 with honours.

You have to keep your chin up and persevere, get your cv sparkling (look online for inspiration and use free tools like Canva to design) and apply, apply, apply! My barrier for getting a degree apprenticeship was that I get very nervous for interviews, and I don't like rejection. If I could go back, I would tell myself to be confident that I can do it, and so can you! Always back yourself.

Don't listen to anyone who says you can't, even if that person is yourself! Every day, wake up and make yourself proud. You have survived 100% of your life so far, everything that has been thrown at you, you overcame, and you can overcome anything coming your way too.

## ELISE MERCHANT

Now, I'm a Commercial Development Manager at Enfield Council. Every day is different; I have projects to manage, anything from facility refurbishments to creating websites. I absolutely love my job, and I don't know many of my friends who say the same.

Doing a degree apprenticeship meant that I finished my degree with no debt, and with 3 years practical experience, it definitely gave me a huge head start. Without that I wouldn't have been a manager a year after graduating, nor would I have my own house, with my dogs.

I'm lucky enough that my hard work hasn't gone unnoticed; I am starting my Executive Master's degree in business next month, funded by the apprenticeship levy, with Enfield Council.

Two degrees and no student debt! Never stop pushing yourself and doing more education, you never know where it can lead you.

To find out about Business Management visit:

<https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/what-is-business-management>

To find out about the different roles in Business and Finance, visit:

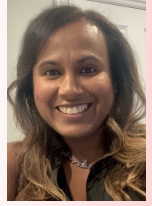
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-categories/business-and-finance>

To find out about Project Management visit:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/business-consulting-and-management/how-to-become-a-project-manager>

# JOYEETA DHAR - INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS AND TRANSFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

I always wanted to work in the media or communications but I didn't have any family members to guide or advise me about how I could get into the industry.



I was from a single parent family and my family had immigrated to the UK in the 1960's from India. My dad ran his own Indian restaurant in London, but sadly passed away when I was six. Despite all this, the one thing my parents instilled in me from a young age was the importance of education and how that will help me have a good career.

After completing my degree, I started writing to lots of television companies both in London and in Manchester where I was living at the time, hoping to get noticed. I must have written over 200 letters trying to get my first job in what felt at the time my dream industry and I received a lot of rejection letters in return! I didn't have the right experience or there wasn't a job available at that moment.

I persevered and didn't give up despite all the rejection letters! By writing all these letters to prospective employers, I wanted to get my foot in the door or create an opportunity to meet people in the media industry. By connecting with people and networking, it eventually got me noticed and I got my first lucky break and worked at the BBC in Manchester on TV programmes for Youth and Entertainment Department. Getting that first job at the BBC definitely helped me to land other jobs within the BBC and at Cabinet Office and wider central government.

I now work as an Internal Stakeholders and Communications Manager at Enfield Council. This involves developing communications campaigns which provide staff with updates and information, and also giving staff the platform to voice their views. I enjoy my work because it gives me the chance to support staff in their work for the local community and make a difference to the lives of residents.

## My advice to young people

“Get as much experience as you can, even if it’s non-paid for a short while. You never know what opportunities they may open up for you and it’s something to put on your CV. Don’t take rejection to heart and don’t dwell on things that don’t work out - just learn from these experiences about how you can improve or enhance your career or yourself.”

To find out more about the Media Communication sector, visit:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/media-and-internet>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/media-and-internet/overview-of-the-uks-media-sector>

# KATE VAGGERS - APPRENTICE TOWN PLANNER

It took me months to get my first job. I didn't have a degree or work experience so I struggled to find somewhere to work.



I started volunteering, and then started at an entry level job. Later, I applied for an apprenticeship and worked hard to move up positions. I then applied for my second apprenticeship in order to gain my degree in Chartered Town Planning.

I chose the apprenticeship route because it gives me the opportunity to work full time, get paid a liveable wage and gain my university degree in an area that I am passionate about.

I enjoy my job because there are so many opportunities on offer. If I want to gain experience in something, I just need to ask and I can shadow that team.

My job currently involves assessing and deciding planning applications for development on houses and commercial properties, organising a varied workload with strict deadlines, writing reports referring to council and government policy and communicating with a wide variety of internal and external stakeholders. I rotate between three departments within the Planning Team over a 5 year period; around 8 months in each team. I also attend lectures in the London Southbank university once a week.

## **My advice to young people**

"Don't be afraid to try something different. A lifelong career is not for everyone, and there's always new opportunities out there for you. If school wasn't your thing, try an apprenticeship if you can. The format of working and learning as an apprentice changed my perspective on studying."

To find out about Town Planning visit.

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/town-planner>.



# MELANIE WOOD - TEAM MANAGER

I started as a Support Worker 22 years ago and I am now a Team Manager. I am lucky to be with Enfield Council who has invested in my training and qualifications to get me to where I am today.



My team delivers care and support services to adults within the borough and I enjoy seeing that we have made a difference to the lives of those we support.

As a CQC (Care Quality Commission) registered manager, I am responsible for ensuring that the care and support service meet the essential Care standards. To achieve this, I audit, monitor, lead, mentor, manage staff and budgets. I love auditing, and putting in improvement plans to improve areas we are not compliant with.

## Advice to young people

“Continue training and learning. Be open minded and flexible. Have a positive can do attitude, review and evaluate what’s gone wrong and learn from mistakes. Don’t take things personal, be open and transparent.”

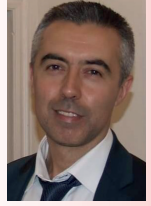
To find out about careers in Adult Social Care visit:

<https://www.adultsocialcare.co.uk/home.aspx>

<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/working-health/working-social-care/working-social-care>

# **NISHAN DZHINGOZYAN - GYPSY, ROMA, TRAVELLER, BOATER, SHOWMAN (GRTBS) OUTREACH OFFICER**

The start of my career journey was not easy at all. I practically had no English skills when I moved to London from Bulgaria.



Although I had an MSc in Environmental Management from Bulgaria, the language barrier, cultural differences, and a lack of information about career opportunities were my biggest challenges. I applied for many vacancies but was unsuccessful.

I quickly realised that the only way forward for me would be to improve my language skills as soon as possible and to gain another degree. I applied and was offered a conditional place at Kingston University in London with the condition that I demonstrate significant improvement in my language skills.

Learning a foreign language is a long process, and both motivation and determination are the two most important prerequisites to succeed. I put all my efforts into learning the language and completing my degree at Kingston University. This opened the door to so many opportunities for me and it helped me progressed with my career in the UK.

Since then, I have been working in the field of Community Engagement and Equality and Diversity on behalf of numerous local authorities, the NHS and the voluntary sector. I have managed a couple of large-scale community engagement projects delivered by local authorities and Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) in and around London, supporting groups identified as hard-to-reach and underrepresented.

Currently, I work on the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, Boater, Showman (GRTBS) programme of Enfield Council as an outreach officer. My role is to engage with the GRTBS community, offer them advice, information and guidance on employment matters, facilitate dialogue, break down barriers and build bridges to this community. The role involves supporting local residents who experience multiple challenges and barriers.

# NISHAN DZHINGOZYAN

The most important skill required for this role is to be compassionate, a good listener, and to be aware of the challenges and cultural differences experienced by the GRTBS communities.

## **My advice to young people**

“Believe in themselves and proactively seek career opportunities. London is an amazing city, full of opportunities, and motivation and determination will get them to places and possibilities which might seem very distant at the moment for them. Based on my personal experience, pursuing further education is the best investment one could make.”

To find out more about Community Engagement and related careers visit:

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/environmental-manager>

<https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/community-engagement-officer>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/community-development-worker>

# FINALLY

The above career stories illustrate the different routes to a fulfilling career and that everyone experience barriers at some point in their career journey.

Our careers advisers are here to help you discover the best route for you based on your skills, abilities, aspiration and life circumstance.

To find out how we can support you to overcome barriers and continue with your education or training, submit a self-referral form today.

<https://new.enfield.gov.uk/forms/enfield-youth-hub-referral-form/>

or email [youthhub@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:youthhub@enfield.gov.uk)

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