

## **RTPI SW Internship Support Programme**

In a challenging jobs market, undertaking an internship can be a useful means of gaining practical planning experience and, in doing so, help secure permanent employment.

Planning internships can also assist those looking to return to work to explore new aspects of the profession, reacquaint or maintain current practice, and / or develop a network of contacts.

RTPI SW does not pre-suppose that internships will be right for everyone, but we are keen to support those members wishing to take up the opportunity. We are therefore working with universities and employers to offer a programme of practical support, albeit it will still essentially be for individuals and employers to reach agreement.

RTPI SW is aware that the cost of travel to and from a workplace can be a barrier to some looking to take up an internship, particularly given the rural nature of much of the South West. RTPI SW is working with universities to provide financial assistance towards the cost of travel to and from such work placements\*. If you would like to find out more about the support on offer and eligibility, please contact Helen Clarke on 07974531405.

\*subject to terms and conditions

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## **Planning graduate benefits from RTPI SW's Internship Support Programme**

RTPI SW is working with Universities, including Plymouth and UWE, to provide support to graduates who wish to undertake internships to gain valuable experience and hopefully gain permanent employment.

Our first recipient was Felicity Crawford, a UWE Planning and Architecture graduate. Having completed her degree, Felicity sought to pursue her interest in planning for new waste and energy infrastructure. She proactively identified and approached established organisations within the sector to gain valuable experience through a series of placements. We asked Felicity to tell us more:

*"In September last year I managed to obtain a work experience placement at Dorset County Council in the Minerals and Waste Policy Team, which is an area I am particularly interested in. This short placement enabled me to gain a better understanding of policy issues in this area and also how planning policy is a key driver in addressing and achieving sustainable environments for Dorset in the future.*

*From this placement, I was lucky enough to undertake a further placement in the Planning Team at New Earth Solutions, a Waste Treatment and Renewable Energy Specialist. I was able to contribute to live projects and gained a strong appreciation of waste and energy issues which was enhanced by site visits to different facilities.*

*On behalf of the RTPI SW, the University of the West of England helped to support my placement at New Earth Solutions by providing a contribution towards the cost of travel to and from the workplace. This support was a key factor in enabling me to*

*undertake the placement, particularly given the rural nature of the area and dispersed nature of employment opportunities.*

*Both these work placements have increased my knowledge and experience within the planning sector and I believe these were a positive factor in helping me to gain a graduate position at Savills.”*

We would like to congratulate Felicity on joining Savills Wimborne Office. We look forward to hearing more from Felicity in the future.

If you would like to find out more about the support on offer and eligibility, please contact Helen Clarke on 07974531405.

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### **The value of internships: December Workshops**

On 6<sup>th</sup> December, RTPI SW held two workshops in Bristol to explore the value of internships.

Nick Smith, RTPI SW Chairman introduced the morning workshop, which attempted to navigate through some of the challenges facing those wishing to gain experience or explore new aspects of planning. Potential interns heard from Sophie Hockin on how to go about approaching employers, and Sophie should know having successfully secured an internship with the Landmark Practice she now has a permanent position with the company. Brett Spiller of New Earth Solutions Group and Bernice Roberts of the Landmark Practice outlined what employers are looking for and able to provide. Wayne Dyer of Arups explained how its partnership business model has shaped company culture and the company's graduate recruitment programme. Chris Sheridan, RTPI Careers Support Manager was on hand to explain what the RTPI is doing to support those looking to gain experience.

*“Since the first recession back in 2009 we’ve been calling all employers, large and small, to ensure they offer work opportunities to graduates. We’ve also invested in online advice and practical support in job hunting, and held careers support workshops across the UK and Ireland to support those who need it’.*

The lunchtime workshop invited employers to explore the issues around internships, as well as graduate programmes. Representatives from the private, public and the voluntary sector attended. It provided a useful opportunity to discuss and understand the challenges and opportunities faced by employers when considering, setting up programmes and taking on an intern or graduate. It was very much a case of learning from each other's experience. However it was evident that there is more that can be done to encourage and support potential employers and sole practitioners.

*Learning Partners Arup recently ran a successful work placement scheme. Feedback from the placement student was impressive “the experience exceeded my expectations, I would recommend Arup to others, and I will be applying for the graduate scheme”*

*Employers of planners, who are committed to supporting their staff's learning and development - including offering internships - can become RTPI Learning Partners. RTPI Learning Partner status is a mark of excellence of learning and development practices. Find out more about becoming a Learning Partner, or working for a Learning Partner, at*

<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/education-and-careers/information-for-employers/learningpartnerships/>  
or speak to Cat Goumal, Lifelong Learning Officer on 07815296095.

RTPI SW would like to thank all those who attended the workshops and our speakers. The feedback was exceptionally positive, with 100% of attendees rating the event as useful or very useful.

RTPI SW would also like to thank Arups for providing such a superb venue for the day.



### **Another opportunity for potential interns, employers and sole practitioners**

Given the success of the first workshops in Bristol, RTPI SW is looking to organise a second event elsewhere in the region in early summer.

To register your interest, please contact Helen Clarke on 07974531405.

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### **Let us know what you are doing on RTPI SW Linked In**

I have noticed that RTPI SW's Linked In page is being used by those wishing to explore and publicise opportunities for internships and graduate employments. Whilst RTPI SW cannot endorse any posts, we do welcome discussion and comments. Why not let us know what you are doing?

A number of RTPI Regions are exploring different ways of supporting graduates, including setting up a meeting place for graduates and local employers. Here in the South West there is already a lot of innovative work being undertaken by a range of different organisations.

[http://www.linkedin.com/groups/RTPI-South-West-4440373?gid=4440373&trk=hb\\_side\\_g](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/RTPI-South-West-4440373?gid=4440373&trk=hb_side_g)