



### Aaron Pritty, Planning Officer Post Graduate, Broadland District and South Norfolk Councils



Hello, I'm Aaron and I joined South Norfolk and Broadland Council in October 2021 as a Graduate Apprentice Planning Officer.

#### What made you apply for an apprenticeship role?

After studying my undergraduate degree in economics, I took a break from structured work and decided to work on my personal projects and businesses. My future in terms of formal work was quite unclear, I wasn't sure what to pursue. I knew I wanted to experience a 'graduate level' job, but also didn't want to feel too restricted or controlled by an office job. I wanted to enjoy my work and not resent it like so many do. My degree left me with an interest in working within the public sector and with an aim to contribute to positive change and continue my learning. Thus, when I stumbled upon the chance to study towards my master's degree whilst also gaining practical experience in an area of interest within my local government, it seemed a perfect fit.

#### How have you found the experience of being an apprentice in local government?

The experience so far has been a positive one. My team has been very welcoming and willing to share their knowledge and experience within planning. Starting a new job can always be daunting at first, but I quickly settled in and felt confident within my role. If further particular training is needed, it is there. Similarly, if I am stuck or need an opinion or advice, everyone is willing to help. The job also offers a good degree of flexibility to ensure a healthy work/life balance. The chance to build on-the-job experience whilst expanding my level of education is what makes the apprenticeship route a great place to start a career, and I would encourage others to explore this route as an option.

#### Do you have any advice to offer anyone considering an apprenticeship role in local government?

I would always advise a young person to explore their options fully, try new things and reach out to organisations or people of interest. Don't apply to everything that is available to you if you are not truly interested – instead focus on the quality of application or portfolio for something that you are interested in, don't just think about the money and don't be discouraged if you are unsure about what you want to become. In my case, I see this as an opportunity to become a Chartered Town Planner - one that can reimagine our built environment.