

CHARLENE, TRELOAR'S TRUST

INFORMATION ABOUT MYSELF

I am Charlène, I come from France. I was 24 years when I started the project. I studied in Fashion and I worked as a product technician in a garment company during few years. I wanted to improve my English level, mainly for work and travelling and also to give of my time for others, so I decided to do an EVS. I didn't regret at all this decision, it was an amazing year.

I am interested by textiles, arts and craft, hiking and discovering new places.

MY PROJECT

My project is called Treloar's Trust situated in Holybourne, Hampshire. I was a volunteer in the college. It's a school for students with learning and physical disabilities. The aim of Treloar's is to prepare young people for adult life, giving them confidence and skills to achieve their full potential and an independent lifestyle.

MY ROLE IN (PROJECT).

My role was to support the students during the classtime. I was a volunteer in the photography classroom. There were 5 students from 16 to 24 years old. I helped the students during the different lessons for the tasks they weren't able to do on their own, but it doesn't mean doing work for them but doing with them. They had to explain their needs and to guide me, so they learnt to become more independent.

A TYPICAL DAY FOR ME...

I was living at my workplace, so I didn't wake up early because in 2 minutes I was in the classroom. I used to work 9.00 to 11.45, then 13.00 to 14.15 and finally 15.00 to 16.00 every weekday. I supported students to do their work, mainly in one-to-one basis. They worked in Maths or English skills during the first hour. After that, the teacher gave instructions at each students for their next work. They worked on different activities : photography of course but also cooking and employability. My work was very various : I typed for them, set up the camera to be ready, developed the pictures in the darkroom...

Each Monday, when college finished, I helped in the French club at the school.

After work, I liked to have a cup of tea and spend few hours in my room. I also liked going to the gym and spend time with my roommates, who was volunteers as well.

WHAT I GOT UP TO WHEN I WASN'T VOLUNTEERING

I had plenty of free time because I finished school early (at 16.00) and I had the academic holidays. During the week, I did ordinary stuff : food shopping by walk, spend time with my roommates, watch movies, read and practise sport.

Each Wednesday evening I went to English lesson with 3 others volunteers.

During the weekend and the holidays my favourite activity was travelling through the UK, to discover and visit new places.

THE MOST INTERESTING THING ABOUT LIVING & VOLUNTEERING IN UK IS

It's hard to answer because living in the UK was such an amazing and interesting experience.

I think, the most interesting was about the language. Before to arrive in the UK, I didn't have a very good English level. Living almost one year in England, I improved it. I still doing mistakes but now I can have a discussion in English without any problem.

In Treloar's we were 10 volunteers who came from different countries. It was really interesting to discover different cultures and lifestyles and to compare them to my own culture.

FROM MY VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT I LEARNT/GAINED

I knew I will learn a lot of things and gain new skills, but I didn't expect at that point ! This is just few examples.

By working with the students I learnt a lot about photography and I really enjoyed it. I also learnt patient and adaptability.

By living in a foreign country and dealing with new situations I am more confident and less shy.

Living in the UK and with people from different nationalities, I learnt about others culture and also about mine. I see world differently and more appreciate and know my own culture.

My volunteering in Treloar's changed a lot for me because I didn't want to work as a product technician anymore. Now, I am working with adults with disabilities, in France.

