



Awards for Planning Excellence Case Study

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800 word submission

Having worked in Local Government (Policy, Development Management and Enforcement) before joining the private sector, Jojo's understanding of the planning system is broad. Working across a range of LPAs means she is exposed to different Local Plans and her successes with Certificates of Lawfulness and Prior Approvals as well as planning applications means she has experience and understanding of many aspects of our planning system.

Jojo has developed her own client base with Tetra Tech and works on a wide range of projects for a variety of clients. Current projects Jojo is managing include strategy and legal research, Class Q barn conversions, solar installations, farm diversification and renovation and conversion of a Grade II listed former fun farm. Jojo also plays an important assisting role in the team's larger scale projects, mostly residential but also some minerals and waste projects. This variety of work has allowed her to develop knowledge across different sectors within planning and her legal background means she is confident when it comes to understanding and interpreting legislation and formulating strong legal arguments. A recent example was a Certificate of Lawfulness to evidence the lawful commencement of a dwelling in the 1980s despite pre-commencement conditions not being discharged. Jojo successfully demonstrated that these conditions did not go to the heart of the permission and the CLEUD was granted, This was a complex case and argument, but the personal circumstances of the client made the permission particularly rewarding. It meant the client could successfully apply for permission (using the CLEUD as a fallback position) for an accessible, multi-generational family home that met the family's needs and allowed them to live together, having been apart in substandard accommodation. Other recent successes include securing planning permission for a detached garage building with space for home working, an Appeal for a detached store on the edge of an AONB, positive pre-application advice for an 18 dwelling scheme adjacent to an urban extension, CLEUDs for student accommodation HMOs which culminated in a successful appeal that went to an Inquiry and a variety of permissions for a water company to install solar panels to become a more sustainable company.

Jojo's natural enthusiasm carries through strongly into her work and her approach to planning is founded on communication and breaking down the perceived barrier between the private and public sector. She understands that planning is a people business and everyone's experience of the planning system can be more positive when communication is forthcoming and effective, something built on the foundations of strong relationships.

Jojo is a very good communicator and is confident in liaising with all manner of stakeholders. Her friendly and positive nature combined with her composed approach to work makes her very personable and means she is liked by colleagues, clients, other consultants and public sector counterparts alike. Forging these positive relationships has enabled Jojo to unpick complex issues for clients and find solutions by opening pathways of communication between the private and public sector which has been beneficial for all. As part of a small team of six planners, teamwork is vitally important and Jojo epitomises a team player. She is supportive of all members of the team by assisting with project work as well as on a personal level and her positive outlook and optimism is always welcomed by the team.

Jojo is the current Chair of the Devon, Cornwall and Somerset Young Planners Steering Group and is currently organising a study tour of St Sidwells Point, a new Passivhaus leisure centre in Exeter, as well as a CPD event on 'Planning for Deliverability' and is in talks with Plymouth University about organising an APC event later in the year. As part of promoting the RTPI and the Young Planners Steering Group, Jojo has talked to students at Plymouth University, providing an insight into working in both the public and private sectors. Having become an RTPI Ambassador, Jojo is looking to visit schools to promote

planning as a profession and encourage youngsters to think about how we experience the built environment.

After becoming chartered, Jojo wanted to formalise an APC support programme within the business and has joined the internal Professional Development Working Group to take this forward. She is currently applying this experience in her work with the RTPI's Mentoring Group.

As a role model for young professionals, Jojo is very keen to support fellow junior colleagues. She quickly builds a positive rapport and position of trust with new, internal colleagues and often becomes a 'go to' contact for queries and support. She is currently assisting a work experience student in the office environment and, as a current APC mentor, has close working relationships with a variety of young professionals. Her positive, proactive and professional approach make her a great person for young professionals to look up to.

Please note that this case study has been taken from their entry form and so RTPI does not take responsibility for accuracy of contents. Readers are encouraged to undertake further research into the project which is likely to have developed since the time that this entry was written.