



Passport to your future

# Lucy's Story

## Lucy is presently working at Lyme Park

### It has been a privilege to work with the National Trust for seven weeks.

After seven weeks with the National Trust, I can honestly say that I have been privileged to work with some of the most kind people I have ever met, and been made to feel welcome beyond expectation. The range of experience I have encountered in this time has been vast, and encapsulated a range of topics from housekeeping to computer use.

#### My Background

Before working at Lyme Park in Cheshire I studied for a degree in Textiles Retailing, went on to work for a number of retailers, and finally in a retail head office as a Buying Assistant. Six months in to this role, I became very unwell and suffered from a range of illnesses which eventually manifested themselves as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, which forced me to leave my job.

After a long rehabilitation period I was able to discuss going back to work with my doctor, where I was advised not to highlight my illness to any potential employers as they would see it as a deterrent to hiring me. The Passport to your Future role was therefore an opportunity to not only be truthful about my current health, but to work with an employer who would help me overcome any barriers to work. The role has made coming back to work easy and a joy.

#### What is involved in PTYF?

As well as on-the-job training at my property, I have attended three structured training events. One of these was at Heelis, the National Trust head office, where we were given an introduction to everything we were to embark upon over the course of the next year. Visiting Heelis was a learning curve in itself, and it was remarkable to see a company steeped in history embracing such a modern and sustainable way of working for the future.

The second training days we had were at Lyme Park where we were fortunate enough to meet and be trained by specialist Conservators about all the different aspects of housekeeping. It is an amazing opportunity to spend time with specialists and learn from their wide expanse of knowledge.

Greeting the other trainees to Lyme Park was also an opportunity for me to share my enthusiasm and recently gained knowledge of the property with them.

Most recently, I visited Sizergh Castle for 'mouldy book training', which taught us about mould identification and eradication. It's really important to know about mould recognition as it's difficult to spot, but can have devastating effects on a book collection if not found and treated. This training was also exciting because it was filmed for a new documentary airing in autumn 2013.

#### How has PTYF benefited me

Working at Lyme Park is a varied role, and I never forget the beautiful surroundings I'm in, both inside the house and the park. Far from an office job, working here is an active role with the chance to get involved in a range of opportunities throughout the property, and even the garden.

Overall, joining the Passport to your Future scheme has made a very positive impact on my life. Having something new and interesting to do each day has made a world of difference, and I'm so pleased to be back at work on a full time basis. This would not have been possible without the support and understanding of the National Trust.

*'The PTYF role was therefore an opportunity to work with an employer who would help me overcome any barriers to work.'*



#### What I have learnt:

1. I have attended three structured training events at Heelis.
2. I learnt 'mouldy book training', which taught us about mould identification and eradication. It's really important to know about mould recognition as it's difficult to spot, but can have devastating effects on a book collection if not found and treated.