



 Class of 2020

EAST OF ENGLAND
APPRENTICESHIPS

■ INTRODUCING MORGAN LINGLEY

Back in 2018, Morgan started his Level 4 apprenticeship in Housing Policy and Practice with Flagship. He came straight in to the role from sixth form knowing that university wasn't an option he was interested in pursuing. Having debated a part-time job as an option for gaining 'real-world' experience, Morgan began to research apprenticeships and how they could mould his future career prospects.

From the companies offering vacancies, Flagship Homes stood out by a mile. Having been invited to interview, Morgan was really impressed by the office and working environment and upon being offered the job, was delighted to accept. The vibrant office is colourful and plastered with company slogans supporting their values as a business - which really stood out as a key motivator when Morgan decided to make the leap. He found the interview process enlightening too, stating that he didn't expect such a friendly welcome from the team. The recruitment process as a whole was extremely smooth, and having been given a tour of the building and introduced to key staff members, he was ready to get started.

JOB ROLE

Housing Policy and Practice Apprentice

COMPANY

Flagship Homes

COMPANY SIZE

Large Business

APPRENTICESHIP

Housing / Property Management Senior Officer Higher Apprenticeship





He has no issue admitting that he had little to no understanding on how housing associations went about their business, so he was understandably keen to understand his role within the company and what that would entail. Although nervous to join the team initially, Morgan was welcomed in to his new role and found the transition from college to working full-time was made all the more smooth and enjoyable by his colleagues.

■ GETTING STARTED WITH THE PROGRAMME

Without a doubt, Morgan says, the biggest perk to his chosen career path is the ability to complete a degree without the implications of student debt. He has had the opportunity to work within a full-time role that not only gives him a fantastic amount of 'on-the-job' experience, but provided him with the educational backing to achieve a degree qualification alongside this. He loves to learn new skills and credits the staff members for their patience when guiding him along the way. He feels extremely supported by the team and with a recent goal of working towards a management role in his sights, couldn't ask for a better group of people to aid his development.

In terms of key skills, Morgan feels like his ability to communicate has come on leaps and bounds since joining the company. He's also got used to working in a professional environment on a daily basis, and understands how to adapt depending on which members of the team he is dealing with. He's now far more relaxed in an office setting and appreciates his ability to work with people from a wide range of backgrounds. Rather than feeling daunted by a switch in department or a new task, Morgan is excited by the prospects of understanding a new area of the business.

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■ **INTRODUCING
PHOEBE ALLEN SMITH**

Phoebe hadn't considered a career within the housing industry prior to seeing the apprenticeship vacancy with Flagship Homes. Initially, she had applied to study Psychology at university, and had her heart set on doing a doctorate. However, she didn't feel that she was entirely devoted to the subject and given the implications of large student loans and additional years of study, decided to explore other options.

Having come across the vacancy with Flagship Homes on the Apprenticeships website, she considered a change of direction. Phoebe's dad had worked with the company, and only had positive things to say about them - it was this great recommendation that ultimately gave Phoebe the confidence to go ahead with the programme.





■ GETTING STARTED WITH THE PROGRAMME

The programme itself, made up mostly of written pieces with a single exam, aligned education and practical work closely to ensure Phoebe was supported throughout every step of the process. There were educational modules on housing, human resources, and governance - along with each, Phoebe moved to a different segment of the business to apply her knowledge in a working environment. Thankful for the companies ability to provide workplace learning to align with her learning, she is currently part of a project focussed on antisocial behaviour - an area she really enjoys learning more about.

Phoebe had no problem admitting that picking up knowledge about an industry she had never worked in was initially a daunting prospect. However, as an important member of a small team, she always received tremendous support from frontline staff through to senior management.

The programme has also done wonders for her personal development, helping her to build in confidence and be sure of her position within the team. Where she might have previously felt anxious meeting new people, she says this is no longer a problem whilst grinning back at me (notable that this was my first interaction with Phoebe). The move from school to a professional environment is understandably a huge switch to make for every student, but Phoebe is delighted to say that her apprenticeship allowed her to make that transition smoothly. She has also gained experience in managing deadlines, having to handle the pressure of both working life and completing assignments on time. She she struggled with a 'perfectionist' mentality in the past, and credits the programme for helping her overcome this.

■ WORKING WITH FLAGSHIP HOMES

Project work has been a large part of the course, allowing both Morgan and Phoebe to get involved from a range of aspects. As part of a housing placement, they helped develop a voucher scheme that allowed struggling tenants the opportunity to receive discounted or free furniture. Moreover, they worked on a piece about the impacts of hoarding and developed a guide to help combat lower level cases. This involved meeting and speaking with individuals from a range of backgrounds, and contributed to a great “hands-on” learning experience. On reflection, both were proud to have seen the real world impact of the work they played a part in producing.

Both apprentices commented on Flagship’s flexible approach to work, allowing them to feel like a trusted and valued member of the team. Able to work from home, utilise flexible working hours, or take additional study time when needed - Flagship go above and beyond to ensure their staff members provide the support necessary to succeed.

Having recently employed a full-time member of staff to manage the Apprenticeship programme within the business, it’s clear to see that the efforts of the company are paying dividend. Within Flagship, apprentices have the opportunity to work with the varying department’s within the company, so both Morgan and Phoebe had the option to work across Human Resources, Development, Procurement and Governance, Legal and Customer Insights to name a few. Tomas (Apprenticeship Delivery Manager) has been really effective in managing these transitions between teams.



■ TODAY

In the short term, Morgan plans to continue moving between departments in the business and further understand which areas suit him best. Longer term, Morgan wants to use the skills he has learned to continue to work his way up the ladder at Flagship, and is delighted to have found a position that helps him to thrive as an employee.

Morgan would highly recommend the apprenticeship programme to anybody considering a role within the housing industry, as he only has positive things to say about it. “The best option is to find an apprenticeship in an area that you’re passionate about and go for it!”

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■ TODAY

Having achieved a distinction and recently enrolling in a Level 5 Chartered Management Degree/Apprenticeship, Phoebe is continuing her studies through an external company. Having found a passion within her projects around homelessness, continue to develop her career within the housing industry.

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For anybody considering an apprenticeship, Phoebe says the best thing you can do is research different companies and find ones that will align with your core values. She also says the best attitude is to ‘throw yourself in to the opportunity - that’s the best way to build your confidence!’

Morgan and Phoebe both achieved a distinction grade from the apprenticeship programme

