

My name is *redacted*.

I have lived in Lowestoft for five years and work as a self-employed bookkeeper. I also work with my partner in his kitchen and bathroom business. I have two adult children. My son lives with me in Lowestoft and my daughter lives in London and is training to be a solicitor.

In 2020 I graduated from the University of East Anglia with a First-class (Honours) Bachelor of Science degree in International Development and the Environment. The degree involved study of sustainable development and the effect of climate change and biodiversity loss on poverty in developing countries, also relevant to deprived areas in the UK. Modules studied included Climate Change including mitigation and adaptation measures, the UN sustainable development goals, international climate change agreements, renewable energy sources, food security, water security, soil microbiomes, agroforestry, anthropology, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. My final year dissertation was based on work experience carried out on the Bacton and Walcott sandscaping scheme in North Norfolk, a large scale beach nourishment project to protect the Bacton Gas terminal and the villages of Bacton and Walcott from coastal erosion. The dissertation focused in the effect the scheme had on the sand martin colonies in the Bacton cliffs and the need to consider the natural environment in all human infrastructure projects.

I am a passionate campaigner for the climate and biodiversity emergencies to be treated as emergencies by central and local government and feel that more could be done to mitigate the effects. I believe communicating to local residents in clear, concise, transparent ways and explaining mitigation strategies will galvanise the support required to follow through efforts such as allowing verges and common areas to grow to improve biodiversity. Also involving people in planting trees, wildflowers and growing food in common areas creates a sense of community and the development of resilience through food security. The town of Todmorden in West Yorkshire provides a good example of this (<https://www.incredibleedible.org.uk>). I also feel that preparations for future changes to the environment are now necessary and residents and businesses in flood prone areas require advice on how to adapt to the possibility of flooding in the future.

I am a keen advocate for a circular economy and am interested ways the council could promote a repair, reuse, recycle culture in the town. I have put this into practice in the kitchen and bathroom business I work in. Unwanted items which were previously disposed of in a skip are now placed outside the showroom with a 'Free' sign attached, to enable others to repurpose them. This has proved to be very successful.

I also believe that 'greening' towns and cities, as well as aiding biodiversity and mitigating climate change, promote positive mental health benefits for residents. I live in the Harbour ward in Lowestoft, one of the most deprived areas in England in 2019. (http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html) The area is devoid of trees and any form of plant life therefore birds (other than seagulls) are absent. This area would benefit from tree planting which, as well as reducing the detrimental physical effects of vehicle pollution, providing habitat for wildlife and mitigating climate change is sure to improve the mental health and wellbeing of local residents (<https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2016/11/09/green-space-mental-wellbeing-and-sustainable-communities/>).

I would welcome the opportunity to assist with developing Lowestoft into a leading centre for action on climate change and biodiversity loss to develop resilience in the local community for the future.