

NHBC supports Professions Week

Professions Week gives young people the opportunity to understand what a variety of professions have to offer them. During November, a number of events were held across the country to help promote the professions and provide insight into what is involved.

NHBC was invited to attend an event at Lord Grey in Bletchley, for year 12 sixth form students. Lee Bidaudville, Luke Gibbons and Hazel Scrutton participated with the aim of encouraging students to not only learn about the exciting and diverse opportunities NHBC has to offer them, but to recognise the ability to work while gaining qualifications.

The event was well received by the students and feedback from their teachers showed a genuine interest was taken in the various roles discussed and how inspiring it was to speak to experienced professionals. We will look forward to receiving many applications for roles in the future.



Left to right: Lee Bidaudville (Trainee Building Surveyor), Luke Gibbons (Building Inspector Role 2) and Hazel Scrutton (Building Inspector Role 2).

Action Man!

NHBC has it's very own 'action man' in its ranks!

A man with his own mention on Wikipedia, Mike Laird, Solvency II Risk Analyst in the Risk and Compliance team, has a very varied résumé when it comes to adventurous activities, and will shortly be undertaking a world first attempt in arctic conditions!

His list of physical challenges so far includes being a war photographer in Afghanistan, walking to the magnetic north pole, cycling solo across Australia, and a Channel swimming attempt. Not a collection for the faint of heart by any means! He also runs a charity that has carried out a series of projects in southern Iraq.

Now, Mike is attempting a world first, leading an expedition in Spring 2016 to be the first people in the world to cross the Bering Sea from Russia to the USA and back again, by walking and swimming.

To set the picture in terms of how difficult and dangerous this will be - about 4,000 people have climbed Everest, several hundred have walked to each pole and more than 2,000 have swum the Channel.

In comparison, only eight people have done this crossing one-way, and no-one in the world has done it two ways. A good day will be -40 degrees centigrade, and not meeting a polar bear!

Mike will be preparing this year by going to the region in February to test equipment that has specifically been made for him to do the trip. He's also taken on an interesting way of getting to work:

"In preparation for my planned traverse of the

Bering Sea I am now commuting to work by kayaking up the Grand Union Canal. I walk 1.5kms, kayak about 7kms, and then walk another 1.5kms to the office. Then on the way home I do it again. It's eerily interesting being on the canal before 6am in the morning, seeing the mist lift and the sun come up. It was -3C this morning but I'm happy to do it, see the wildlife, and be carbon neutral."

Mike also spent a year on reality TV - well before money, agents and the audience were involved.

'Castaway 2000' - the program that launched Ben Fogle's TV career - followed a year-long effort by thirty-six men, women and children to build a community on Taransay, a remote Scottish island in the Outer Hebrides. The Castaways built a sustainable self-sufficient community largely from scratch. They grew their own vegetables, killed their own meat and became a community for the year.

You can find out more about Mike's adventure at www.thedeadliestjourney.com and www.jockandthebeanstalk.com.



Mike is no stranger to adventure!

