

SAM BALY (OC 2003 – 2009)

I left Caterham in 2009 and went straight to the University of West of England to study 'Sports Business Management'. I decided after 2 years on the course that it wasn't for me and therefore left with a 'Certificate of Higher Education'.

Soon after leaving the University I thought the police may be the way forward, so I completed a Saturday course at Brooklands College doing 'Police Law and Community'. Despite passing, I decided again that it wasn't for me!

During my police course I was working at Coral (bookies) and stayed there for a year in order to save up enough money to go travelling. I then travelled for 5 months around Australia and New Zealand and returned to England looking for work.

I managed to secure work experience at SHW in June 2014 and I have stayed here ever since. I have topped up my degree through the job (long-distance learning) and I have recently handed in my final dissertation for a BSc Honours Degree in Real Estate Management. I should get the results in April.

Assuming a pass, I have one year left on my Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) which would make me an RICS Chartered Surveyor.

Since leaving Caterham I have had little interaction with my former friends, teachers etc. and I feel as though the OCA network is one that is definitely worth keeping in touch with. Having seen the numerous emails and OMNIA magazines come round, I have read about former friends and what they're up to now and it inspired me to get in touch.

Being on the committee would also give me the opportunity to input any ideas I have about OCA and hopefully contribute towards making it a further success and bringing together the community. In doing so, hopefully more young Old Cats will see the benefits of joining. I am keen to attend OCA meetings and listen to what events are planned and suggest any that I feel would be worthwhile, especially on the sport side of things!

Within my job, networking is crucial with clients and other property professionals and I can appreciate how important this also is for OCA. Also, I feel as though my personal network through work is one that can help current pupils at Caterham and I have spoken with Clare Brown about careers evenings and potential work experience opportunities.

Finally, I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Caterham and I feel as though this would be a great way to return the favour!