GEMMA:

I’m the Communications Officer at the SPAB. On a day-to-day basis, I look after our social media channels, so that’s Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and also three WordPress blogs. I’m also Assistant Editor on the members’ magazine that we have. I liaise with the press, so I send press releases, drum up publicity for our courses, our events, things like that.

I was training to be a librarian, and I worked with the historic collection quite a lot. And I found more and more that I was enjoying working with incredibly old materials, working with books that have been hand crafted and handed down. And I got the opportunity to go to the London Library with my work, and I was shown around by an incredibly enthusiastic communications officer. And I just put two and two together, and thought I can work with old things, and work in communications, and enthuse other people about historic artefacts.

I saw the job advertised on a website, and I just had to work for an organisation called the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. It just sounded wonderful.

In my job, I communicate with a huge range of different people. It’s obviously our membership, which is very diverse, anyway. So it can be homeowners, general building enthusiasts, to architects, surveyors, things like that.

Our different audiences respond differently to various types of communication. I find that a lot of our members are general enthusiasts, really respond to what we write in the magazine. They take away our magazine, and sit with a cup of tea, and things like that. Then we have maybe architects, or surveyors, or building professionals who are more on the go, and they quite like e-communications and things like that, something that’s quite fast and quite accessible from mobile or tablet.

My top tips for anyone working with social media would be to join CharityComms. It’s a fantastic network of people that really encourage you to do the best for your organisation through communications. I would also say that, whether it’s through Facebook, or Twitter, or LinkedIn, always try to be utterly genuine.

The best thing about my job, I think, is the people that I work with. Everybody has such enthusiasm for their particular part of it. I cross people on a regular basis who love nothing more than working on a timber frame building or architects that work on magnificent buildings, and they always bring the same level of enthusiasm to their work.