

## Angharad Jones - My amazing year as a Hitch Rep

In our second guest blog about being a Hitch Rep, Angharad Jones talks about her three-year involvement with the Hitch, culminating in a memorable year as a Hitch Rep at Swansea University. [Click here](#) to read the previous blog from former Liverpool Hitch Rep Lotte Kendall.

One of the first emails I noticed in my first few days of University three years ago was titled "Would you like to hitch-hike to Morocco or Prague for charity?". I immediately knew that this was going to be a huge part of my university experience...

It only took a few meetings for me to realise that I would love to take the place of my Hitch Reps the following year due to my sheer enthusiasm for the event and the fact that I was already telling anyone who would listen about the Hitch - I wanted to **get as involved as I could!**

Unfortunately, due to a surprise attack of mumps, I couldn't go ahead with my adventure as planned and instead joined my two Hitch partners virtually through Link's brilliant tracking system. Needless to say I was devastated to be missing out and at the realisation that I could no longer be Hitch Rep the next year.

One year on and I had completed my Hitch and was even more inspired to be a Rep in my final year, looking forward to being part of future Hitchers' adventures and sharing their familiar excitement. The process was exciting and the application was **a pleasure rather than a chore** since I had such enthusiasm and passion already for the Hitch and Link!

When I got the call from Mike informing me of my success I was delighted and called my relatives who were all eager to hear if I'd got the position I'd been hoping for so long. In honesty, I think I was **more nervous about this phone call** than opening the envelope containing my second year exam results.

As my year as a Hitch Rep at Swansea progressed, I didn't regret my decision for a moment. It truly was a pleasure and a lot of fun. One of the key aspects in being a successful Rep is maintaining excitement among potential Hitchers, and with a group that were as enthusiastic about Link and the Hitch as me and my co-Hitch Reps were, it was never a burden.

**Was it what I expected? Better.** As the year went on the Hitch became widely recognised within the Students' Union, most people knew someone who was doing the Hitch - and we couldn't help but feeling proud that all our hard work had paid off. The most challenging aspect is the disappointment which hits you as your dropout rates increase, or when new region Exeter/Plymouth overtake you on the leader board (not that I'm bitter).

The best part of my Hitch Rep experience? The abundance of overjoyed Hitchers bursting with the same excitement and enthusiasm about the Hitch which is responsible for my three year involvement with this incredible event. Also the great feeling as you observe the climbing fundraising total and the difference you know this is going to make to Link's work.

Reps get a great amount of support from Link and it's a rewarding procedure as you learn how valuable the Reps are to the charity. During the Rep training weekends we saw presentations from Link's project staff and video footage of their active projects, which brings you even closer to the charity behind the event which we have all put so much effort and time into making a success.

Not only has my involvement with Link been extremely enjoyable, but it has also enlightened me into **the world beyond participating in exciting events**, sponsoring your friend to do a skydive or giving up chocolate. Having seen the work that goes into the charity, and in particular the results and success of their projects, I look forward to working with other charities in future and hope to someday follow a career and dedicate even more of my time to helping people who aren't as privileged as we all are.

I'm sad to be leaving the Hitch behind as I graduate, it really has made my university experience. But no fear, Link won't be getting rid of me that easily. I'll stay involved with the charity as best as I can in whichever ways possible...some might say **I'm staying Linked!**