

Before moving to Dorset, Llywelyn Davies lived in Enfield, North London. Here, the family lived first in Loders and then Bridport, above Bella's in Buckydoo Square which he says 'was great and which does gluten free cake which was wonderful for me [Llywelyn is coeliac]. Didn't get a discount which I'm kind of sad about, which is mainly my gluttony talking. My 15-year old dream of cake for breakfast never came true.' The family then moved to Orchards in Whitchurch Canonorum in 2015.

*What do you like about living here?*

I suppose I like that everybody knows each other which is quite nice after the experience of living in a place where that is definitely not true.

*What about what you miss here in the country?*

What I really really like about London and cities and which I'm quite nostalgic about is the diversity of people. Thinking about in primary school, there were only five white British people in my class of 30 in my school. And in Colfox I can only think of 6 black or ethnic minority people in the whole of the school of 800.

*In 2019 Llywelyn visited Africa with Camps International. Why Tanzania?*

The fundraising [here in UK] prepared me for some of the work I did there, the grunt /manual labour as it turned out to be ... Tanzania was the option that the school gave us ... I would have preferred Costa Rica if I'm honest ... perhaps I watch too much Extreme Dreams. Talking to some of the people who went on both it was a lot harder in Costa Rica because there was 7 hours jet lag and it was rain-forestry, so more difficult for various reasons.

*Llywelyn raised over £4,000 for the trip. How?*

I worked at the pub (The Five Bells) consistently. I painted Dave Green's shed and all of the surrounding fences and the roof bit twice. That was good. And I did some car cleaning. Never again. Procedure is not my strong point. A fact about the Universe that I have discovered is everybody has very exacting ideas of how you should clean cars, which is exactly true and accurate and correct but not the same idea as another person's idea of how to clean a car. And you can't win, so I decided not to do it any more! I did car cleaning once and then lots of gardening for other people. Gardening I can do.

*Had his experience of working in Tanzania changed how he saw the developing world?*

What I think I most took away from it was that the people who populate third world countries have a lot more drive to progress themselves, which I hadn't really appreciated fully before. I think a lot of the culture is about the grind of living there and not the drive. In Moshi (which is a city basically and it's unusual for campus groups to visit cities because of the logistical challenges) there were a lot of things 'off brand'. Self-moulded Crocs you could buy that were clearly rip offs and super illegal. There were a lot of things that people were selling, just to get money on the side, hustle and gain, which I thought was interesting. You see WaterAid adverts with like 15 people living in a hovel and

that's the only kind of aspect that you see. You know that they travel 15 miles to get to school each day and back but what do they do with their time other than these things? They have jobs and interesting things that they do ... there might be 5 hard hours a day but there are others when they can do things with their day that don't make the cut in the WaterAid adverts.

*What did you learn about yourself when you were away?*

I developed my basic understanding of Swahili which I have kind of kept up with. It's good for a dyslexic because it's completely phonetic so each letter is only pronounced one way, which is brilliant. Learning self-improvement and teams of people are nice where you've got a goal to work towards and everybody contributes. With a programme like Camps which I went with if you have to contribute for a year and a half to raise money to go. That does select out people who are going to take the piss out of the whole experience and so you do get this really nice, almost like family, atmosphere which is very supportive and lovely when you get out there. The bar is quite high. If you work hard enough at stuff the people who've also got there will have a high chance to be lovely. Which is nice and I still have a Group Tanzania group chat thing going which is nice and wholesome.

*Would you recommend it to other young people?*

Yes, in all aspects. Be aware it will be really weird and occasionally super awkward and unlike anything else. It's also indescribable. It's very hard to explain why it's good but once you've done it you understand exactly the vagaries and the hand waving of people who've been in it and who try to explain why it's so good. It's also a good CV thing.

*You are going to Falmouth study photography.*

Yes. At A Level I was studying photography, Geography and Drama and also an EPQ [Extended Project Qualification] which is a big essay about whatever you like. And I got Bs in all of them after the government's sort of algorithm fiasco.

*What is your view of the algorithm fiasco?*

It's irrelevant whether this is true or not. In my head, I'm quite a politically aware person and I tried to look at the results and what the Government's options were quite analytically and I found myself scrolling through very polarised social media comments. Then the Government rolled back and I think it was the right way to go with the teachers' grades. And any system the Government created in 5 months is not going to be more accurate than 11 months' worth of teaching by people who actually know the students. It's like the Government machine god gives us this number. It says, 'We are aware that you have had As and Bs all year but here is a D because the machine god decrees it!. How is that supposed to work, please don't look at Nicola [Sturgeon]. Don't look at Scotland. This is how it is supposed to work!' There shouldn't be a cap on the number of people who can go to uni but it's a bad way to incentivise people to do apprenticeships. Just make apprenticeships better.

*What was the subject of your EPQ?*

Brace yourself: The Impact of Emergent Technologies on Humans' Expansion into Space. I'm a massive Sci-fi nerd so all of those words in that order make sense but it did I did have to trawl the pot of the hyper nerds to write it. The good thing about EPQs is you can either write a 4000 word essay on something or create an artefact and a shorter essay of 1500 words. And what I did because writing in a very specific style and way is a little bit like washing cars is not something I'm good at in that sort of procedural way. So what I did to get around this was that my artefact was a short story which incorporated a lot of the elements I had researched. I broke down the writing process and the science behind it in my essay and I think it worked really well.

*What influenced your choice of University and the course?*

I wasn't intending to go to uni really. I hadn't envisioned what else I would do but after school I'd gone: I don't really like super academic learning any more. I have done 12-13 years of it and now I'm fed up. I would like to go to more interesting things not like 'Please read book now. Tell me about book even though I have read book and could buy book if I wanted but I'm in Examiner so this is my job. You must tell me about this thing that I already know.'

I had this idea before I found the Falmouth course that maybe I'd find a photography apprenticeship, which would be good but which don't exist. But I wanted something along those lines that wasn't very academic which involved photography. I came to the conclusion that out of the three things I was studying, I could probably be an actor on the side; I don't want to be a geographer because I could just find out about it on YouTube, and I find it intellectually interesting but not in an exam format. And then photography is really really fun and something I enjoy and I found Marine and Natural History Photography at Falmouth University. The little part of me that is still seven and watching into *The Abyss* [from the first Blue Planet series] on repeat inside my head went 'YES!' immediately. I got interviewed and an unconditional offer and I'm off.

*Do you have a favourite photographer, someone whose work you admire?*

I like Matty Smith who is a British underwater photographer living in Australia and does these very cinematic style things. I like Thandiwe Muriu but who is an African photographer [Kenyan]. She does saturated, very bright colourful things.

*What are your plans for the future, after uni?*

I have a vague idea I'd like to study in Wales because I really, really like the area and my second choice before Falmouth was to do Documentary Photography at University of South Wales in Cardiff, which they also run as a Masters. So if I still haven't decided what I'll do after uni I'll do that.

*What did you do during lockdown?*

I don't feel I did anything particularly interesting ... though I did my podcast stuff. I am a National Citizen Service leader [for Dorset] and they send random opportunities that they think would be cool and interesting and worthwhile to their leaders. One of them was NCS working with a production company called Somethin' Else. They were going to make a youth led, youth run, young person organised pod cast called Youth Rising. And I applied to be on that to be a reporter interviewing people and saying stuff and that was good. I got in after an interview process which was interesting

and we're just getting running on stories. And then Covid happened and I ended up interviewing one person over a call which didn't work particularly well! But I'm still involved so, I will continue to contribute to it in some form in the future.

*Currently, Llywelyn is happily ensconced in a seven-person flat, with a shared kitchen but his own 'en suite' room. Due to Covid he has a room to himself, furnished with two 'study beds'. To explain: this is a desk that flips up at night and turns into a bed. This means clearing your desk before you can go to sleep - no-one is quite sure how practical that is! He's taken his cello, skates and gaming computer and has found time to text home. He's not in a Marine and Natural History Photography 'bubble' but is mixing with students on other courses including some from Exeter University. Lectures, now all online, started after a Welcome Week and although their usual field trip to Dartmoor has been cancelled he hopes there will be other opportunities to get out with his camera.*