

Press Release**May 5, 2016****Day trip memories will help map future for Victorian resort**

A University of Derby Tourism student is drawing on her childhood to give one of Britain's most picturesque Victorian resorts a new image.

Ainsleigh McArdle has won a £2,000 grant to work on creating a marketing plan for Matlock Bath, her family's favourite spot for days out when she was little.

She is part of a team of students who are working in partnership with Matlock Bath Parish Council to produce a fresh vision for the town's future as a tourist destination by developing a plan to help the famous Derbyshire resort refresh its image and boost its economy.

"I love this destination because I have been going there since I was a little child," said Ainsleigh, who comes from Stoke-on-Trent.

"I'm really quite passionate about it – and this is a great opportunity to help."

Ainsleigh, an International Tourism Management BA (Hons) undergraduate, has been awarded the grant under Derby's Undergraduate Research Scholarship Scheme to fund her work on the University's destination audit and management plan for the future of tourism in the resort.

She will be using the money to develop a plan to bring together all the different aspects of Matlock Bath's tourism attractions – which include The Heights of Abraham's famous cable cars, an aquarium, show caves and amusement arcades - into one identity for maximum marketing impact.

"If all the businesses pull together it will be a great destination," said Ainsleigh.

The students have already spoken to business focus groups, local residents, visitors and community leaders, and Ainsleigh will present her research at a Learning in Teaching Conference at Derby in July, as well as at the Atlas Postgraduate Research Conference at Canterbury Christ Church University in September.

Matlock Bath's setting on the River Derwent between limestone cliffs led it to be known as Little Switzerland in its Victorian hey-day, and now the cable cars which soar above the gorge to The Heights of Abraham are a major regional tourist attraction.

But changing leisure and travel trends have left the village with an identity problem which the University can help to change, says Parish Council Chairman Peter Baranek.

To contact Ainsleigh with ideas, or for more details about the project, contact Peter on intothefuture@matlockbathparishcouncil.gov.uk

To study tourism at Derby, go to www.derby.ac.uk/tourism

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