



Spotlight on...
women in construction

**CONSIDERATE
CONSTRUCTORS
SCHEME**

Case Study: Considerate Constructors Scheme

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1. WHAT FIRST ATTRACTED YOU TO WORKING IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY? HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE JOB AND WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DID YOU REQUIRE?

I wasn't attracted to working in the industry and I had never considered it. I wanted to leave retail and started applying for jobs, when I received no interviews a friend offered me a job at her company,

In the beginning I worked part-time completing PPQs, I wasn't asked for any qualifications, but I had worked with the director for 19 years at a previous company, so she knew my capabilities very well.

Within 18 months I had gradually started to take on more of the health and safety role, which felt very natural as I had a lot of safety responsibility in my previous 2 jobs. And as the company started to downsize, we all needed to take on additional roles and it was then that I became full time and took on the accounts role alongside my health and safety role.

2. TELL US ABOUT YOUR CURRENT ROLE. WHAT DOES A TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE? WHAT DO YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT THE JOB?

Working for the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS) as a monitor, I get to visit sites each day and talk to site managers about how they are developing within the CCS core framework, a typical day involves travelling into London, and visiting at least 2 sites (sometimes 3), walking around, talking with site managers, and coaching where needed on areas they could develop further.



When not on site visits, I'm writing reports and increasing my environmental knowledge by completing different courses on topics around net-zero in the construction industry. As with my role as a health and safety manager I like to engage and have conversations around how we are moving forward as an industry, especially through developing conversations with site managers around stress within the industry and how we can work towards net-zero.

3. WHAT QUALITIES ARE REQUIRED TO DO YOUR JOB?

Good communication skills, ability to listen and give space to allow others to ask questions and inspiration to bring others along with your journey which enable me to influence in a way that they want to achieve more and feel proud to tell you about the great work they are achieving to show they are a considerate constructor.

4. WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST SURPRISE YOU FOUND WHEN YOU STARTED WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION?

When I first started it very much felt like, you only get somewhere within the industry if you knew someone and were in the club and in the beginning my transferable skills were not seen as an asset, instead I was often told I would not understand as I don't know construction.

5. WHAT WERE/ARE YOUR FUTURE CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

I've never really had any aspirations, in my current role I want to strive to understand more about why we have such high suicide rates within the industry and try to influence change one visit at a time, through conversations on site and to really push my own knowledge with regards to carbon within the industry and how we can achieve net-zero, to help those I visit who have no knowledge of how to start with the journey

6. HAVE YOU ENCOUNTERED ANY OBSTACLES IN YOUR CAREER BECAUSE OF YOUR GENDER?

Not in my first two companies I worked for, my gender was never seen as something to even talk about, but since entering construction, I very much felt I have to work harder to be noticed and at times I felt quite isolated. It's a lot easier now, but has been a journey to get here.

7. WHY DO YOU THINK WOMEN REMAIN UNDERREPRESENTED IN THE INDUSTRY?

For a long time, I feel construction was seen as the men's club and women were not seen as having a place in the industry, this has seen generations growing up not seeing women working in the industry, and hence I don't think it crosses the minds of many that their skills would even be transferable.

8. WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THAT YOUNG WOMEN SEEK OUT CAREERS IN CONSTRUCTION?

Yes, I would firstly say don't listen to the stigma around working in construction, it is a very rewarding industry and is highly seeking better balance, which more women would bring them.

9. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANY WOMEN WISHING TO PURSUE A CAREER IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY?

You have the skills to work in construction, there really is a job for everyone, it's a unique industry whereby almost any type of work you can think of construction has a job for this. The industry is here for the long haul, there are many different opportunities for development and if you're passionate about leaving a better future for our children of tomorrow, we need you in construction, the industry will be the driving force behind the world working together to reach net-zero, there's never been a better time to come and put your skills to good use.

10. HOW DO YOU THINK A DIVERSE WORKFORCE BENEFITS THE INDUSTRY AS A WHOLE?

The benefits of a diverse workforce go beyond political correctness. Bringing in people with different backgrounds and perspectives can lead to better decision-making, greater innovation, and higher engagement in the workplace. It may also improve a company's reputation and make it easier to attract top talent.

11. WHAT DO YOU THINK THE INDUSTRY AND WIDER SOCIETY SHOULD BE DOING TO ENCOURAGE MORE WOMEN TO WORK IN CONSTRUCTION?

We need a marketing campaign, “a powerful one”, that shows why now is the time to join the industry. We need to look at transferable skills when CVs are submitted and rather than dismiss an application because they have no industry experience, look at what experience they do have, I’m pretty sure a lot of women have transferable skills they can bring to the industry

Approaching people at colleges is too late to engage our next generation to come and work within the industry, a marketing campaign should be on the platforms 12–15-year-olds are using, like TikTok rather than Facebook or LinkedIn, and we also need more interactive games for even younger children, that really talk about the achievements of working in construction

There is no marketing that draws you in about why we need more women in construction, instead we see occasional post on LinkedIn saying women are still underrepresented, we need to make our packages attractive,

Listen to points of views of the great women we already have in the industry without them having to jump through hoops to be heard, they will talk about how inclusive and valued they feel and will tell other women why construction is great place to work

We really need to sort our female site boots, do you know how hard it is still today to get PPE that is breathable, comfortable and doesn’t make you look like a sack of potatoes or, end up with blisters at the end of each day, “these are conversations women will have about their work, and if you have a young girl listening in, it will not inspire them to join the industry”.

12. DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS ON THE TOPIC OF WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION?

Construction is a great industry for any gender to work in and can be really rewarding, what we need to remember when we are striving towards diversity and inclusion, that diversity is not just being a different gender, having a different skin tone, it’s actually having different ideas on the output of work, and this is where the industry fails in many ways, it does not always listen to points of views that are not the norm, yet to be fully inclusive we need to encourage diversity through different ways of thinking.

Along with a marketing campaign for the industry, we need to stop adding to job adverts that “We welcome you to apply if you fall into one of these categories”, this can be off putting and makes people feel like you will get an interview or job just to tick a box or fill a quota.