



INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN INTO CONSTRUCTION

CASE STUDY



LEADING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN INTO CONSTRUCTION

We're proud of the women who make up our workforce at Redrow.

According to the ONS Women in Construction figures, the second half of 2023 saw a UK record for the highest number of women employed in the industry (340,000).

And we are determined to help that figure to increase further.

In fact, our latest research* revealed half (66%) of young women have considered or are open to working in the construction sector.

The survey of 1,000 young adults found that it's not just the potential high salary young women find appealing (39%), but also the opportunity to have a long-term career (26%) and the ability to set up their own business later down the line (26%).

The increase in women entering the sector could be attributed to a rise in female role models. In fact, over two fifths (42%) of women surveyed want to work for a company that has female or LGBTQ leaders.

We've also teamed up with the Home Builders Federation (HBF) and Women into Construction as part of a nationwide employment programme to encourage women into site management, helping to address the gender imbalance in the sector, which currently sees just 4% of site manager roles taken by women.



Our Group HR director, Karen Jones, joined Redrow in 1997 and, has recently, celebrated her 25th anniversary. She also won a Lifetime Achievement Award at last year's Women in Construction Awards. For Karen, the biggest issue she's faced as a recruiter of new talent is the enduring perception that the construction industry is focussed on trade and site-based roles.

Karen said: "Addressing the gender imbalances within the industry has been one of my key priorities.

"I have enjoyed breaking down myths around what a career in construction looks like and encouraging colleagues to find a work life balance which, as a mum of twins, I know is so important.

"As part of this, we are constantly looking for ways to make our workplace more inclusive, whether that's on-site or with office-based roles.

"With such positive opportunities from this career choice, it's no wonder that in this societal climate, women are bravely challenging the norm and exploring new industries altogether. The construction industry is such an exciting one to be in and there needs to be more women coming into the industry."



Dawn Lee is a project systems analyst in our Group IT team. After completing a degree at York University in Biology, Dawn worked in a fashion role and this is where she was introduced to data analysis. Enjoying that part of her job, she left fashion behind and joined Redrow on the two-year graduate scheme as a graduate data analyst.

Dawn said: “Switching from my career in the fashion industry to a graduate role at Redrow was a really good career shift for me. IT within housebuilding is quite a male dominated area however, we are seeing more females come in for interviews which is really positive, but we’ve still got as long way to go.”

For the last two years Dawn has also been a representative on the ED&I team.

“I think we can focus so much on our daily work functions but it’s so important to have diversity in businesses and opportunities for people of different backgrounds to come together to learn about different cultures and build a rapport with people we work with. My background is Chinese and so for Chinese New Year I’ve recently shared some traditional recipes for people to try, to share a little bit of my culture,” Dawn added.

Redrow’s Mentoring Programme for Women pairs women in senior roles throughout the business with those at an earlier stage of their career. All women who join the business are encouraged to take part.



In addition, Redrow’s Empower movement, was launched last year. It was set up by four women from across the business, including two graduate trainees, who wanted to create a supportive network for other women at Redrow.

Its aim is to help give women within the business a voice and be a place where information and support can be accessed, while providing inspiration to others considering a career in construction with reassurance that there are other women backing them.



Sales Director Anna Evans-Kerr, started with Redrow 10 years ago coming from the car industry. She started off as a sales consultant and has worked her way up to Sales Director for our NW division, a role she was promoted to in 2022.

“The construction industry is such an exciting one to be in. It’s not just about jobs on site physically building the homes, there’s the land and planning side, technical and commercial, marketing and customer service roles all available. As sales director, I liaise with all departments and really enjoy how varied my job is.

There are so many options and opportunities and there needs to be more women coming through in a range of roles. The old way of thinking of construction being a man’s world needs to be shifted and this is something parents need to be aware of too so they can encourage their children to follow their dreams and have the knowledge of all the roles available to women too.”

Sonal Haja is content manager and has been at Redrow since 2018, after graduating from Sheffield Hallam University with a degree in Marketing. Sonal joined as a communications graduate on the bespoke graduate trainee scheme. Since being at Redrow she has also completed a PR certificate.

As part of her varied role, Sonal does lots to promote the business across multiple social media platforms, such as her work around promoting apprenticeships. As well as launching TikTok, she also pioneered the award-winning Recreate Redrow competition which got even younger people engaged with Redrow and the industry. She is also Group’s ED&I lead rep, championing equality, diversity and inclusion at Redrow.



Sonal said: “I think it’s really important for businesses to highlight women working in a wide range of roles to inspire the next generation. Before I joined Redrow, I wasn’t aware my role existed within the sector, so providing as much knowledge as possible on roles available is definitely a positive.”

Tashai Simms is an apprentice in our South Midlands division. She wanted to choose a career path that women were not necessarily “known for” and starting her carpentry apprenticeship was the route she decided on. She believes breaking down barriers now will help women in the future as the stigma of construction being a male orientated industry will be diminished.

Tashai said: “I didn’t want to conform to society’s set rules of what women should or shouldn’t do, that’s clearly reflected in my choice of apprenticeship. What really drives me is that I am breaking down barriers, helping women succeed in a male dominant industry, and proving people wrong. My advice? Take the jump and go for it.”



Emily Shaw is a commercial apprentice in our Midlands division. After studying a Law degree, she fell out of love with law and decided to change paths. Her whole family is in construction, so it seemed like the logical next step:

“I wanted to get paid and learn – so an apprenticeship was far more suited to my lifestyle. Working in construction doesn’t mean that you’re out on site in boots and a hard hat, there are lots of career options. My short-term goal is to be fully qualified and long-term I want to work my way up to be a senior quantity surveyor.”



Group construction director Zara Barrow joined us in 2013 as an assistant site manager. Now part of our Group's senior management team, Zara is pleased to be inspiring the next generation of women into the industry.

Zara said: "I think that girls of a school age need to understand that a career in construction is a possibility. The stigma of it being just for men it out of date. There needs to be more education to promote that it doesn't just mean being a bricklayer or out on site, there are so many opportunities for women to succeed, do well and make a difference to communities."



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