



[Women in Engineering Day](#) takes place on June 23rd, 2021, it is an international awareness campaign which raises the profile of women in Engineering and focuses attention on the amazing career opportunities available to women and girls in this exciting industry.

Wiltshire Council Employment and Skills team have been speaking to some inspiring women working in Wiltshire about their roles, we hope these case studies will inspire you to follow your career into Engineering or other Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) roles.

ATKINS

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group



Victoria Lauder is an Assistant Engineer on the Graduate Scheme at [Atkins](#). We spoke to Victoria about her role and journey.

Tell us how you started in Engineering?

"I undertook a Civil Engineering degree at the University of Surrey, during the course I had a year in industry placement at Atkins and I also went back for summer work experience. I really enjoyed my time working here so I joined the graduate scheme when I came home to Wiltshire, I am now in my third year."

What does your day to day look like?

"As I work in Major Projects on Highways schemes my day has lots of variety, I take part in client meetings, undertake feasibility studies for new schemes, work on AutoCAD designing road geometry, undertake site visits for measuring up schemes and also supervision of construction when schemes go to site. Sometimes you can feel out of your comfort zone, but I think that is when you learn the most. People tend to think when you work in Civil Engineering that you are 'getting your hands dirty' but actually there is a lot that goes on behind the scenes before a scheme goes to site. There are so many amazing opportunities and a range of exciting local, regional, national and international projects you can be involved in with Atkins / SNC Lavalin, for example Hinkley Point C, Britain's largest nuclear power station and High Speed 2, a high-speed railway which will link up eight of Britain's biggest cities."



Ryan Beale – Civil Engineering Technician added -

“We need more diversity in the workplace. Our office, for example, has a higher than the national average of women in engineering roles. We need a more diverse workforce, to bring the greatest talent to our project teams. The more varied the team working on a project the better!”

Victoria and Ryan are part of a team working as [STEM ambassadors](#) - inspiring young people in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. If students have any STEM related questions they can contact the team at Atkins - WiltshireSTEM@atkinsglobal.com

If you are interested in an apprenticeship at Atkins Trowbridge visit their [website](#) for more information – new opportunities will be added soon.



Sam Bunyan co-founder of Cecence in Salisbury spoke to us about her journey into Engineering and how she is proud to be a part of [Women in Innovation](#).

What is your background and how did you end up in this role?

“I actually started my career as an actor and illustrator so very much art based. But as I joined my business partner and husband first at Futuremech and then at Cecence, over the last 20 years I have learnt a lot about composites, we have worked to make an ecologically, friendly materials and developed a sustainable company. I have been lucky enough to be in an environment which encourages research and development and have gained knowledge in materials, design for manufacture and engineering whilst developing the business’s brand, philosophy and engagement with industry.”

What advice would you give to young women who are looking to enter the STEM sector?

“I think it’s important to know there doesn’t need to be a set path, career paths used to be largely set and limited and now that has totally flipped, and whilst that brings with it negatives as well as positives it also offers opportunities. Don’t restrict yourself, life doesn’t have to be mapped out from the age of 16. I hope other employers will recognise that employees can be multi-disciplinary and take an interdisciplinary STEAM approach not only STEM. By combining arts based disciplines with STEM subjects and taking a more holistic approach to innovation new ideas and their subsequent products are more likely to serve a wider community.”



Sam is one of 40 women who has been awarded innovator status to scale up their innovations to help the UK recover from COVID-19 and tackle global challenges. She is decarbonising the aerospace industry by providing eco-friendly alternatives to the current interior products of UK aeroplanes. Cecence will put the funding towards their continued development of a range of furniture for economy and business class aerospace interiors – all of which will be made with sustainable composite materials, including recycled materials and natural fibres. To find out about the project visit the [Gov website](#).



[Ringway](#) operates highway maintenance contracts, on behalf of local authorities throughout the UK and locally here in Wiltshire. We spoke to Philippa who is undertaking her year in industry. She is studying for her Civil Engineering Degree and is gaining vital work experience to underpin her studies; she has been in the team for 9 months with another 3 to go. We spoke to her about what her job involves and why it is important for young women to join Engineering.

Can you tell us what you do day to day?

"I am mainly in charge of monitoring work on sites, this means preparing documents before building starts creating the method statement, Health and Safety documents then when the job starts, I visit site, do some surveying, attend site meetings. I meet the designer and client to ensure everyone is happy and raise any issues if they occur. Once the job is finished, I complete the relevant paperwork, it's great I am now able to work on projects from start to finish. Most of my work is based around bridges and retaining walls, but each job is different."



Do you feel there is a stigma in Engineering sector and what advice do you have?

"I do feel there is a stigma as there are a lot of males in the sector but don't let that put you off, I was the only girl in my GCSE Engineering class but I'm glad I did it. As you get older and attend University and start work it doesn't matter as much, you will come out of the bubble and mix with different people. My friend and I have started a Women in Engineering group at Ringway, we spend half the meeting talking about a relevant topic or something which has been in the news (Engineering related) and then the other half to socialise and build contacts. Ringway allows us that and want to promote women in the sector."

Divisional Manager Mick Buckler said –

"We need variety in the workforce and it's great to have a female perspective, there are great women in Engineering coming with purpose and passion and not because it's a tick box exercise, they are putting in the work and want to be here."



Wiltshire Council

Suzanne Gough, Construction Project Manager, has worked at Wiltshire Council for 4 years she works on construction projects which are over £1 million. These include office spaces such as the Corsham Mansion House TEN Centre, Schools and most recently Melksham Community Campus which is a large Leisure Centre, Library and community space.

Can you tell us about your journey into project management?

"I am an Architect by background, I studied for an Art foundation in London but soon decided I wanted a job which was more practical whilst being creative as well. I studied Architecture at The University of Bath. Once qualified I worked on a variety of large new build projects and smaller conservation work on historic buildings in London. When I moved to Bristol, I found I wanted to work in a role which was more focussed on contracts and organisation so moved into a Project Management Consultancy Role. I worked on a range of projects for various clients including local Authorities and the NHS but mostly for the University of Bristol delivering projects on their Veterinary campus as well as the refurbishment of their Students Union Building."



How does a Project Manager work with Engineering and what skills do you need?

"I manage the design team and co-ordinate a lot of disciplines. We work with Mechanical, Electrical, Structural, and Civil Engineers mostly, but we bring in additional specialist advice depending on the specific project. Whilst I am not an Engineer by trade, I need to understand the language used and have a general knowledge of each area. Communication is the biggest skill needed, to talk to people and understand what needs to be done and by when, not one person builds a building! Teamwork and working together to find solutions is vital to the success of a project."

What advice do you have for young women looking at STEM roles?

"There are many women in technical roles. I feel really strongly that there is no reason a woman can't do the same job as a man. All sites have to be clean and inclusive for all. For example, no-one on site does 'heavy lifting' anymore - health and safety regulations dictate how the job is done safely regardless of gender. Manual handling regulations require the use of machinery and equipment to limit the physical impact on anyone undertaking manual work on a building site. I would challenge anyone to give me a good reason why a woman can't drive a forklift, lay bricks, set out a building or design a steelwork connection."

I highly recommend the construction industry and Engineering to young women considering a career in STEM roles. Just do it! Don't let concerns about gender be a barrier as it really isn't one. I absolutely love my job. The sense of achievement is immense when a building opens and you know all the challenges that have been overcome and the public or school pupils or client team is using a fantastic new facility."



NATIONWIDE ENGINEERING

Justyna Wsol is a site agent at Nationwide Engineering we spoke about what her day to day is and what to expect when joining the industry.



“When I am in the office, I check my emails in the morning to see if there are any urgent actions to be taken care of on site. I conduct planning for the weeks ahead this includes preparing paperwork for upcoming works. When I visit site, it is my role to check nothing has been missed from the design.

It can be a stressful job, there are a lot of meetings and deadlines to meet, you must pay attention to detail for example making sure things are correct according to the design and specification and keeping within budget. But there is a lot of opportunities and progression and you get to work on iconic projects in the UK or around the world!”



Contact us

If have any career and education related questions visit our Chat Bot – [Wilfred Bot](#) - he is available 24/7!

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