

Women in Engineering Day takes place on June 23rd 2022, 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.



Agnes Auledas is a Senior Structural Engineer working for [Atkins](#).

How did you begin in the Engineering sector?

“In 2012 I completed a BEng and MEng in Building and Structural Engineering in Catalunya (North-East of Spain) where I am originally from. Late 2012, I came to Bristol to improve my spoken English for what was initially planned to be 8 months, but I loved the city so much that I decided to stay!

Since then, I had the opportunity to work for a small to medium size metrology engineering company, and in 2015, I joined my current employer Atkins as I had a keen interest in getting involved in projects that would help the UK government achieve their target to become net zero (reduce carbon emissions via designs) by 2050.”

Have you always felt supported being a female in the industry?

“I have been quite lucky with support from colleagues, the only time I have experienced some indirect discrimination was at University. Although my exam results were good – I felt I did not receive the same support as male students. But remember gender should make no difference, you are just as able as anyone else. Some projects require 1,000’s of engineers – *we need diversity* to make this happen. In fact, diversity and inclusion at work is very important to me. I think it is not only incredibly important for all individuals to feel welcome at work, but it is a must for companies as diversity and inclusion boosts results in innovation and productivity. It is for that reason that I have been part of the diversity and inclusion team in Atkins for a few years and I was the diversity and inclusion lead for one of our client organisations. I am also a STEM ambassador supporting schools and universities.”

Do you have any words of advice for young women?

"I believe *continuing professional development is very important* to develop a career and it is for that reason that in 2021 I completed an MBA with honours with the University of Manchester and I passed my professional review to become a chartered member with the Institute of Civil Engineers all while working full time.

Structural Engineering is not just about staring at a screen all day. It gives each person the possibility to develop their personal skills in a different way: taking a more technical path focusing on calculations and designing, managing communication between big teams in a project, engaging with clients and suppliers on a commercial level... *Do not be afraid of studying a technical degree as you will have the opportunity to shape your future and define how you want to get involved in projects."*

If you are interested in working at Atkins visit their careers site - [Apprenticeship 2022 intake at Atkins](#).



Becky is a Senior Engineer with DSTL.

Can you tell us how long you have been at [DSTL](#) and what your role entails?

"In my current role I have been with the company for 3 years, previous to that I was a teacher, but I started my career here as my electronics Degree was sponsored by the Ministry of Defence, which I undertook in Southampton. As a Senior Engineer I work within embedded electronics, essentially this means a whole computer system is embedded within one chip. As my role is specialist and in a very specific field, I join projects to support for around 6 months and then move onto the next project. This suits me as I like to work with different teams and different technologies."

What is your advice to young women who are entering the Engineering sector?

"There is most definitely a *skills gap that needs filling*, so I think the best route is to find an apprenticeship, lots of organisations (including DSTL) will pay for your education whether that is Level 3 or a degree! *You will earn whilst you learn*.

I have also worked as a teacher in southwest Wiltshire teaching; A- Level Maths, Electronics, Physics and Engineering, so you can share your knowledge and skills in lots of ways."

Find out more about [DSTL apprenticeship](#) scheme on the [Gov website](#). Vacancies are advertised between January – March each year for a September start, so plan ahead!



Carli van Niekerk is a Major Highway Projects Engineer at [Wiltshire Council](#).

What is your background in Engineering?

“I went to School in South Africa where I had careers advice, the aptitude test highlighted I had the skills to become an Engineer, I went to university and undertook a Civil Engineering degree. I have worked in the industry for 20 + years.”

What does your role consist of?

“My day-to-day role is mostly project management, making sure that projects are delivered on time and within budget. I manage a number of projects; the River Park, Station Forecourt and Fisherton Gateway in Salisbury are three of my projects. I work closely with consultants, contractors, various teams across the council and external stakeholders to deliver my projects. I also develop business cases for funding projects that are a priority for the council.”

What is your advice to young women considering engineering career?

“The *work is varied, interesting and challenging*, and there is a very wide range of specialisms that you can choose from. You will not be bored! It is also practical; you can see the results of your work in real life. The sector has changed over time; *there are now more women in the industry* and things are more balanced in terms of gender. If you are someone who wants to *make a difference in your community* and make the world a better place, engineering is a good way to do that.”



Cidalia Teixeira is a Principal Structural Engineer from [Cleggs Associates](#).

Can you tell us about your career to date?

"I have worked all over the world, I began training in Portugal, my home country, where I studied for 7 years at university to complete my master's in Civil Engineering – Structures.

I was moved from our Portuguese office to Angola in Africa, I have also worked in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. I now work in Wiltshire at our Trowbridge office; I have been in the UK for 7 years."

What does your role entail?

"I am *involved in the design of structures*, technical meetings with clients and architects, understanding and meeting the clients' expectations. When we are involved in refurbishments I will undertake site visits, providing technical expertise."

What is your advice to young women?

"As a woman in the industry I have always felt very respected, *male colleagues have been inclusive* and collaborative. It is a very interesting job, and sometimes it is not as difficult as people think. For example, the software we use is very good and supports our work."



Jacy is an Engineering Apprentice from [Adcutech](#).

As your apprenticeship has just started what have you learnt so far and found most interesting?

"I have *learnt so much in quite a short space of time*, specifically different tooling and its purpose. Who knew there were so many variations of a drill, tap, etc. I have also learnt how to operate a manual & CNC lathe. Learning about programming, understanding how G&M code equates to the machine tool location.

I have been surprised by the amount of planning and the number of tools required to manufacture the smallest of parts. You do not really think about the various stages until you are involved in the manufacture of a component."

Wiltshire Council Traffic Engineering Team

We spoke to four members of the team who are at different stages of their career, an Apprentice, Senior Engineer, and Principal Engineer.



Hannah is an apprentice in the team on a Level 6 Civil Engineering apprenticeship.

“I undertook a Level 3 Civil Engineering at Wiltshire College when that ended, I applied for apprenticeships, I knew I could get *work experience and education at the same time*.

In my role I am allocated smaller jobs including dropped kerbs, signage works, cost estimates, design work, and creating reports. I was inspired to get into Engineering after attending Wiltshire College Women in Engineering event, it was interesting to see different roles. My advice is it is a good industry to get into. If you are *creative and into problem solving*, go for it! There is *so much variety*.”



Sarah is a Senior Engineer she has been working at the Wiltshire Council for 27 years.

“I started in an Admin role with the highways team on a 1-month contract! I secured a permanent technician role for 1 year and then worked my way up, through the years I have attended UWE to undertake my Civil Engineering HNC, I have also done my Level 4 in Sustainable Transport. I have been learning all the way along, there are many changes to keep up with in this sector.

I represent two Local Highway Improvement groups in Wiltshire working with colleagues in transport planning, rights of way, Town and Parish Councils and Cllrs. The group has grown over the 12 years and now there is power for the communities they can speak up about the places they live and what needs addressing on their highways.

My advice to young women is there is *always work to be done in this area*, it is a secure job, every day will be different and there are different areas to explore in Civil Engineering. I think an *apprenticeship is a great way to go*, you can't beat the on the ground experience you will gain. I really like my job, I never get bored!



Kate is a Senior Engineer she has been working at Wiltshire Council for 15 years.

“I worked my way up through the Highways team, I did my HNC and HND at Swindon College about 10 years ago. In 2019 I started my Degree Apprenticeships to finish the educational side of things. I am doing my Level 6 at UWE in Bristol.

My role revolves around new improvement traffic management schemes, refurb crossings, signals, active travel, and walking/cycling improvement. There are local highway and footway groups (a subgroup of the area board) I represent 2 groups. I also mentor apprentices within the council.

My advice to young women is *Engineering is a good career path*, it has lots of potential and there is *long term career progression and training opportunities.*”



Kirsty is a Principal Engineer who has been working in the industry for 21 years.

“I do feel responsible to get more young people into the sector, *Civil Engineering is very broad* there are many avenues to go down. There is something for everyone, as a traffic Engineer we know a bit about everything, there is variety, and we are always learning. *Every day is different* and if that interests you it is a good route to go down.

We are recruiting for 2 Apprentice Highways Asset Management Engineers in our team if you are interested visit - [Jobs at Wiltshire](#)

Successful candidates will be matched to either a Level 3 Civil Engineering Technician or Level 6 Civil Engineering degree apprenticeship, depending on previous qualifications and experience.
Closing 26th June 2022.”

Website – www.workwiltshire.co.uk/young

Instagram – @young_workwiltshire

Twitter - @WorkWiltshire