

Call for more women to work in the construction industry

An Assistant Site Manager with Dandara East Scotland is urging more women to consider a career in the construction industry.

As well as International Women's Day on 8 March it is also Women in Construction Week (5-11 March), and Edyta MorozGronek has said that it is important to address the gender imbalance in an industry where only 15% of workers are female according to the Office of National Statistics.

She said: "The industry has still some way to go when it comes to training and recruiting female employees but change is definitely happening and my own experience, especially with Dandara, has been very positive.

"It is important that schools, colleges, universities, trade bodies and construction companies work together to create a more balanced and diverse workforce and showcase the incredible opportunities out there for everyone regardless of gender."

Edyta, is an Assistant Site Manager in Edinburgh, and made the decision to swap her desk job for a career in construction when she was in her thirties. She says she has never looked back.

She said: "I was working in the office of a care home and one day in 2017 I suddenly realised I wasn't happy and that the 9 to 5 work environment just wasn't for me. I needed to challenge myself and do something completely different.

“My husband worked in construction and I knew there were a lot of opportunities but it was a big leap of faith as my youngest daughter was only five and at that point I hardly knew the difference between a nail and a screw.”

Undeterred, Edyta, who is originally from Poland, signed up for a course in Built Environment at Fife College before going on to do a HNC in Construction and Management.

While at college she went on placement for a week and ended up with a nine month contract working on the restoration of Adam House, a B-listed building owned by Edinburgh University. From there she started working in the commercial construction sector before applying for her dream job with Dandara where she made an instant impression with her future employers, thanks to her warm personality and can-do approach.

She said: “I had worked on public buildings and large steel frame high rise apartment blocks but that is very different from building houses from traditional timber kits. I think it is important to keep testing yourself and trying new things,” she said.

Edyta is currently working on Dandara East Scotland’s new apartment development Pinkhill Gate, across the main road from Edinburgh Zoo. Her long term ambition is to become a Project Manager and she is currently studying for a BSc in Construction Management at Glasgow Caledonian University.

She said: “Of course it can be difficult working full-time, studying and looking after a family but I am very lucky – everyone in Dandara is very supportive and they allow me to attend classes and are very flexible about my shifts when I need to sit my exams. I tend to get the books out and study at 10 o’clock at night when the house is quiet but it will be worth all the work when I reach my goal.”

Edyta has no regrets about changing career – and says it was the best decision she has ever made. “I love my job, no two

days are ever the same and there is nothing more fulfilling than driving past a big hospital or new apartment building and knowing I played a role in making it a reality.”

One of the organisations that Edyta recommends women join is the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) which has provided her with a great deal of information about opportunities in the sector. She previously served as Chair of CIOB Novus, which aims to encourage future construction management talent.

Edyta said: “There is something for everyone in the construction industry, there are so many interesting positions to choose from, giving people a chance to work anywhere in the world and there are so many paths to entry – mine was through education, but others might prefer to do apprenticeships.”

Dandara currently has developments in Ashgrove in Straiton, Eskbank near Dalkeith, Foxhall Gait in Kirkliston and Pinkhill Gate in Edinburgh with new developments in Wallyford and Dunblane coming soon.

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