

DYW

Developing the
Young Workforce

WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION

EXPLORING CAREERS WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

CAREER PROFILES PACK



NoWrongPath

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EXPLORING CAREERS WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

CAREER PROFILE ACTIVITIES

These tasks are suggestions of activities you can insert into the classroom using the Build Your Future Careers Profile Pack.



1

Task students to select a profile that they are interested in and identify the skills that the individual uses within their role.

2

Encourage students to choose a profile that they have not considered as a career path, ask them to identify something that surprises them about the information and feedback to the class.

3

Thinking about some of the advice these individuals share within their profiles, encourage young people to consider how they would use the advice to develop themselves in future.

4

Ask students to imagine that they have already begun to advance in their career and they have been asked to complete the profile. Encourage them to think creatively about what they would like to have achieved and the skills they wish to develop and write their own personal profile.

5

Ask students to select the individual they identify with most from their profile. Ask them to feedback why they feel drawn to this individual's profile. Is it because they are interested in similar subjects and pathways or is it something to do with the personality and characteristics portrayed through their profile?

BUILD YOUR FUTURE

Exploring careers within the Built Environment

DR RACHAEL PURSE



GRANTS & OUTREACH OFFICER,
STIRLING CITY HERITAGE TRUST

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

History, English and Art

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

A degree or post graduate degree in a relevant subject and experience in working with traditional buildings, budgets, other organisations and stakeholders, and the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

The scope I had to make the role my own.



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WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I loved history at school, so picked that to study at uni. As I studied for my undergrad I loved history more and more, and by my third year I had decided I wanted to work in the heritage/museum sector.

I am very aware that we spend most of our lives working, so I wanted to do something that I was passionate about, that paid well, and that made a difference somehow.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I studied Medieval and Early Modern History at the University of Glasgow, and followed that up by doing an MSc in Museum Studies and Dress & Textile Histories/Conservation. I chose my Master's as it was vocational and practical as well as academic and offered a graded internship for all students as part of the course.

My first job in the heritage industry, with Glasgow City Heritage Trust (GCHT). After two years with GCHT I applied for a PhD Scholarship at Glasgow School of Art where I was part of the team working on the restoration of the Mackintosh Building from 2016-2019. I passed my Viva in October 2020 and I have been working as the Grants & Outreach Officer for Stirling City Heritage Trust since January 2020.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I really enjoy the variety and creativity of my role. I'm always meeting new people and working on new projects. I enjoy site visits, and I will climb a scaffold at any available opportunity! I get to constantly educate myself through attending conferences and lectures, and I love conducting historical research. The pay and holidays are good, and the heritage industry offers a lot of scope for career development. I'm always working on something new, and I'm never bored, which is very important to me!

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

Right now, things are vastly different, all meetings are held on Zoom, and I'm not carrying-out site inspections, attending training days or conferences, or visiting schools. The whole SHT team is currently working from home so I usually have at least one Zoom meeting, but I can have anything up to three in a day. This could be with our team, or with my colleagues in other organisations like Historic Environment Scotland or Stirling Council, or they could be with a grant applicant.

I spend a fair amount of time working with figures and spreadsheets, as well as talking to contractors and applicants to ensure our projects are all running smoothly. I have to be very detail orientated.

I'm usually also working on a research or outreach project or two, at the moment I'm curating and researching an exhibition and I write blog posts for our website. I also work with partners like Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), as well as local schools and places like the Engine Shed and the Scottish Traditional Building Forum to organise/create outreach projects.

I usually check-in on our social media channels once a day and interact/post, and I always have a few emails to reply to! My day is very varied, and that's exactly how I like it, I prefer to work on lots of projects at once.



WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

- That loving history will lead to a fulfilling career.
- To stop worrying about what everyone else is doing, comparing yourself to others is never a good idea.
- That at 30 I still won't know 'what I want to be', and that's absolutely fine, don't let anyone pressure you into thinking otherwise.



BUILD YOUR FUTURE

Exploring careers within the Built Environment

TYLER C LOTT



DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS, GRAND
BEQUEST LTD, BEFS TRUSTEE & FORMER
SCOTLAND OFFICER OF THE SOCIETY FOR
THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

History, Science, and Politics

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

Daily I leverage my knowledge in construction and building conservation to connect people and organisations with opportunities to save old buildings. The most beneficial experience I've found is being able to connect with people, listen to what they need, and help them find solutions. That takes curiosity, compassion, and problem-solving.



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WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

My love for buildings started at a very young age, but I didn't initially consider working in the Built Environment. I was training to be a fighter pilot, but when a disability diagnosis derailed those dreams, I had to start over. It wasn't until a chance encounter after university that I realised I could turn my passion into a career. It took a leap of faith and never looked back.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I went to university for Political Science and International Policy and was training to be a fighter pilot in the military.

Following my disability diagnosis, I completed my studies and moved to Los Angeles to work in politics but realised that wasn't where I wanted to be. In the meantime, I was helping a friend who worked at a large construction company and really enjoyed it.

The head of the company valued my knowledge and contributions and decided to bring me on the team. From there I studied on the job and after-hours; within a year was managing multiple projects, including the construction of a multi-billion-pound resort. A few years later, I combined my love of construction and history and moved into building conservation.

After eleven years in practice, I returned to university and obtained my MSc in Architectural Conservation where I have been working ever since.



DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

What I love most about my job is there is no 'typical' day. My role is well balanced between office and field work and it shifts based on whatever we're working on at the moment. I can do anything from meeting with members of parliament, hosting events in front of thousands of people, or even putting my wellies to good use in the field helping to develop a building's conservation plan.

No matter what projects are in the works, however, I am regularly working with organisations and people across the country and the world to help develop solutions for the challenges that old buildings face.

I am a mentor to young women and pupils interested in construction and often participate in the development of outreach and educational programmes to raise awareness and opportunities in the Built Environment.

Some days I'm in a suit and working to develop policies to influence national change, others I'm in a 4x4 studying the most interesting and beautiful buildings in the world amidst the most incredible scenery imaginable.

It doesn't hurt that I can do most things with my golden retriever at my side, either. I truly look forward to work every day.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

The one thing that surprised me the most about working in the Built Environment is how supportive the sector is. When I started fourteen years ago, I'll admit that imagined many more challenges due to my gender, however my experience has been such an overwhelmingly positive and supportive one.

WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

The advice that I would give my fifteen-year-old self is to be open to possibilities, know your value, and trust your instincts. You have to take chances to follow your passion and for me, those chances led to an incredibly rewarding career in an industry that I love.



WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

The best part of my job is absolutely loving what I do. It is a healthy balance of collaborating with others, site work, and creative thinking that is incredibly rewarding.

I am supported in my role in a way that allows me to work with a wide range of professionals and crafts, which ultimately leads to some incredible projects.

The pay is good, but the work environment and team support allow me to utilise my passions and talent to make a significant difference in our industry. The people are great, the buildings are beautiful, what more could you ask for?

TYLER C LOTT, DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS, GRAND BEQUEST LTD, BEFS TRUSTEE & FORMER
SCOTLAND OFFICER OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS



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Exploring careers within the Built Environment

CHRISTINA GAIGER



ARCHITECT, HELEN LUCAS ARCHITECTS LTD & PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL INCORPORATION OF ARCHITECTS IN SCOTLAND (RIAS).

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Art and Design & Technology by a long way!

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

To study architecture, it's helpful to have obtained Scottish Highers and Standard Level subjects which demonstrate a reasonable balance between arts and science.

A typical route involves five years study at university and a completion of minimum two years' practical experience.



WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

From an early age I knew I wanted to create things for a living. My school teachers encouraged me to look at architecture courses and I was enraptured by the creativity of the studio environment and the flexibility of the undergraduate degree. Through the course I became inspired by the socio-economics and challenges of the built environment and continued with my studies to become an Architect.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I followed a traditional career path at first, then took time to gain experience before finally becoming an architect.

- GCSE's & A-Levels
- BA(Hons) degree in Architecture – University of Sheffield (known as Part 1)
- Year in training in London & Newcastle
- Master of Architecture degree – University of Edinburgh (known as Part 2)

I graduated straight into a recession. There were no positions available for a trainee architect at the time. I made ends meet doing freelance graphic and web work whilst searching for a job. After about six months I somehow landed a job in Paris to join a French team on a French project, without speaking a word of French! This also opened the door to work in New York before returning to Edinburgh to study for my professional qualification, known as Part 3. I then became an Architect and have worked in Edinburgh ever since.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

My favourite part of the role is seeing the end users/clients enjoying a building and the difference it makes to their daily lives. The role of an architect is also quite varied, working on projects at different stages, and being out 'on-site' breaks things up. The opportunity to be creative and work as part of a team is also very rewarding.

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DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

Every day practising architecture I learn something new. Each project, design and client are different. A typical day would involve a stage of developing a client's brief to make it a reality. Working on smaller scale and residential projects this can involve many things:

- Meetings with clients, communities and people with an interest in the building.
- Drawings by hand, on the computer or in 3D to bring the idea to life.
- Working on planning applications and statutory consents to ensure the design complies with legislation.
- Being continually conscious of the impact of the built environment in terms of the climate emergency and how the design can have maximum architectural value with minimal environmental harm.
- Collaboration and coordination with other parties for example structural engineers, contractors, quantity surveyors and building services.
- Visiting projects which are on site to review the works as they progress and administer the building contract between the contractor and the client.
- Working as a team with the office to critique and test initial designs and collectively problem solve.



WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

A surprise early on in my career was understanding the day-to-day impact that the built environment has on society and the environment. For example, 50.7% of all waste in Scotland in 2018 was from the construction and demolition sector. Something we need to dramatically improve on!

My advice would be to follow your heart and do what you enjoy. Be true to yourself in identifying what you are good at and what kind of career you want. No job is perfect but if it's rooted in something you enjoy it will make a big difference.



CHRISTINA GAIGER, ARCHITECT, HELEN LUCAS ARCHITECTS LTD & PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL INCORPORATION OF ARCHITECTS IN SCOTLAND (RIAS).

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DOROTHY HOSKINS



TECHNICAL OUTREACH & EDUCATION
MANAGER
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

I was definitely better at English and languages than science and maths, but overall my favourite subject was geography - I loved learning about how our environment was shaped and getting out and about on field trips.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

That's a really tricky question as I think people from different backgrounds would bring a different focus to the role. A degree can open doors but I think project management skills and a creative outlook are the most useful tools to have.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I've always been slightly obsessed with the built environment, noticing buildings and architectural details even as a child. When I realised there was a role for me working with the built environment it really felt like I was following my passion.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

Information about careers was really limited when I was at school and, having discounted becoming an architect as I couldn't draw, I didn't know what other options there were to work with buildings so followed a different path.

I therefore studied for a degree in Psychology and a Masters in Marketing, working in marketing for a few years before becoming disillusioned with the industry I was in. Deciding upon a career change in my late twenties, I found a postgraduate course in Architectural Conservation, signed up and haven't looked back since! I volunteered with a building preservation trust while studying, going on to become a Project Officer with them, researching and writing feasibility studies, engagement plans and funding applications – my marketing skills came in handy!

I left there to move to Historic Environment Scotland, working in a business planning role before moving into Education and Outreach around nine years ago.



DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

One of the things I love about my job is that no two days are the same. Pre-Covid the team and I were based at the Engine Shed in Stirling where we created a programme of activity to help people learn about and be inspired by the buildings that surround them. This involved running events and exhibitions, welcoming visitors, community and school groups and running workshops to let people try some traditional skills like stonemasonry, earth building or sign writing. We also manage our social media and online content which involves a range of skills from video production to blog writing and editing.

Since moving into lockdown we've moved much of our activity online, developing new teaching resources on traditional materials and developing online courses and exhibitions.

We always have a lot going on, so much of my time is spent discussing these projects with the team, helping to develop ideas, shaping projects as they evolve finally agreeing the output; signing off a blog or exhibition, or agreeing a programme of events and workshops which we will deliver.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I like having the opportunity to think strategically about our work and how we engage people with the built environment. I love researching and developing projects and even if I'm not leading on an area, enjoy being involved in the creative process working through options and assessing the best way forward for a project.

I'm also lucky that working at the Engine Shed I can try my hand at the workshops we run (I'm really rubbish at stonemasonry!) and attend many of the events we deliver. There is always something new to learn about our built environment, so I'm never bored!



WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

I'm always amazed by the passion of people working in this sector.

Although it covers a huge range of interests from stonemasonry to conservation science, town centre regeneration to the rural economy, generally people share a common goal of maintaining and promoting our built heritage and that creates a really positive working environment.

WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

Follow your dreams! I think it's important to work in an area you are passionate about and believe in. I believe our work makes a difference to the built environment and how it is viewed by others, which in turn will ensure many of our cherished buildings, streets, towns and cities are here for future generations to enjoy and be inspired by.

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JOSEPHINE CROSSLAND



STONE CARVER,
FREELANCE AT HUTTON STONE

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Art and History

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

I don't think there are any specific qualifications needed to become a stone carver but studying art and history to degree level has definitely helped.

It is important to be able to draw well and most importantly...have patience!

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I studied Fine Art and Art History at Aberystwyth University. My dissertation focussed on the relocation and restoration of a medieval church to an open air museum in Wales and it was during this project that I realised the built environment was something I wanted to be involved in.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

After studying a degree at Aberystwyth I went on to do a foundation degree at Weymouth College in Stone Conservation. This led me to work as a stone conservator for a private company in Edinburgh for 4 years. This job took me to so many fascinating historic places but eventually I missed being creative and was lucky enough to gain funding from Historic Environment Scotland to become an apprentice to Michelle de Bruin at Hutton Stone. This was for two years and I've never left! I now work alongside Michelle in our purpose built workshop at Hutton Stone.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

There's not really such a thing as a 'typical day' as a stone carver at Hutton Stone! Everyday and project is always so different which is one of the things I really love about my job. Our work varies from sculpture, lettering, memorials and architectural masonry/carving in both the studio and on site so one day I could be carving a puffin and the next, up a scaffold measuring medieval gargoyles!

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WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I love that everyday is different and that I have so much creative freedom within my work. I also love the fact that I am part of a team at Hutton and work alongside Michelle who is great company and support.



WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

The community that I have found myself in has really surprise me. There aren't too many stone carvers around but everyone I have met has always been so helpful and enthusiastic about their craft and willing to help and support each other.



WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

- Keep drawing! It really is the best way to improve and explore creative ideas.
- Be patient. It takes a lot of practice and repetition to get to a professional standard in stone carving...but it's worth it!
- Don't be afraid to experiment with ideas, materials and tools..even if it doesn't turn out how you expected it - it doesn't matter- it's just as important to find out what doesn't work as what does!



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ASHLEY STEWART



FRAMEWORK MANAGER/DEVELOPMENT
LEAD, MORRISON CONSTRUCTION

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Graphic Communication, Art and English.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I like the variety, no two projects are ever the same, they are always different in terms of size, scale, cost, client, location and project teams, so I don't ever get bored.

I work with people from lots of different backgrounds – designers, financial, lawyers and even teachers and pupils.

Construction is one of the better paying industries and there is more and more women moving into it, which is something I like to champion and encourage. The spectrum of people it takes to deliver a single building is so vast that there is something for everyone.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I always enjoyed the drawing subjects so had been interested in Architecture, but was too impatient for the 7 year university course so stumbled on Construction Project Management in the prospectus. I'd like to say it was more researched than that, but it really was not!

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I started as Trainee Site Manager, aged 18, through an under-graduate programme with Balfour Beatty at the end of 1st year of University. I worked with them for 5 years, then spent a year in Australia working 'Client-side' on really interesting projects (one putting a wind farm on top of a sky-scraper!). I came home in the middle of 2009 recession and tirelessly tried to get into the Commonwealth Games Construction Department. I did two major sporting events, in Glasgow 2014 and then Toronto, Canada in 2015, before moving to Morrison's in 2015 where I wanted to get back to traditional construction.

I have been with Morrison for over 5 years now and work with clients and designers to develop large scale projects, mostly in education. I really enjoy being part of a team that moves school pupils of all ages into new, modern education facilities which they want to spend time in.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

A background in construction with an associated degree or work experience. Good communication and organisation skills are essential as there are so many people and tasks involved before a project can get anywhere near starting on-site.

DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

Most of my days involve a lot of talking! My role is to know where everything is across a project, from design development, to budgets, programmes and overall progress.

I work Tuesday to Friday as I have a 3-year old, so Tuesdays are very busy. I catch up on emails in the morning, then have a series of meetings. Firstly with Design Teams to update and review key areas of design for technical and budget perspective. Then with the project client to review any specific areas which require their input and/or agreement. I also have separate catch ups with client teams to update on progress and any key issues which need to be resolved to allow the project to progress.

Most often the rest of my day will be chasing up information, setting out next tasks, completing reports and generally organising.

Pre-covid, I would usually spend a day at a client's office, a day in a designer's office and 2 days in my employer's office, so there is always variety and no two days are ever the same.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

That no one is an expert in everything, it is impossible in this industry and most especially now as building technology is advancing so quickly. You must be able to know when to recognise that someone knows more about something than you do, or you set up to fail.



WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

Work hard, stay interested and keep going – no one expects you to know everything, because they don't either! It can be an intimidating environment to walk into, but attitudes have changed a lot in the 15 years I have been in construction and are continuing to change.

The best is yet to come.



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SHAKIRA CAIRD

ASSISTANT QUANTITY SURVEYOR,
ISG CONSTRUCTION SCOTLAND

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

Maths, Biology, Geography

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

Most employers look for a Quantity Surveying degree or similar and experience working in the industry. Most students manage to gain experience through summer jobs with construction companies. Good communication and team-work skills are crucial, as well as being organised with workload.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I decided when I was about 14 that careers in the built environment was something that I would be interested in learning more about. My dad is also a Quantity Surveyor, so I was lucky enough to visit some of the sites he was working on. Those visits plus my love of maths and numbers further fuelled my intrigue in the industry.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I went to Heriot-Watt University straight from my last year of high school to study Quantity Surveying. I chose Heriot-Watt as their built environment school has a great reputation with employers and having a course directly related to the job role I wanted was key. My first job when leaving university was with Robertson Civil Engineering, which gave me a good understanding of civil works.

I then worked for Allenbuild under Places for People, working on private and affordable housing units. I joined ISG in January 2020 and am enjoying being able to experience a variety of projects for a main contractor.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

One thing that really pulled me towards being in the industry was the variety that it provided. Projects tend to be around 2 years, some less, like the project I am on just now being a 16-week office fit-out. Every time a new project starts there's a new client team, design team and internal team which keeps things exciting and I learn something new every time.

I love feeling part of a team as well as having the support of others. I also enjoy the flexibility of working on site, in the office and now at home too.



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DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

At the moment, due to the pandemic, working life consists of being at home a lot. Being a surveyor, a lot of the work we do can be done from home or discussed over the phone or Teams video calls. Day-to-day can vary, I could have no meetings scheduled or meetings that take up most of the day. This could be internal team meetings or external meetings with clients or contractors.

The mixed days and weeks mean having to be very organised with workload and prioritising urgent or important work. Most of my days are spent working on spreadsheets, preparing documents for orders and processing contractor payments.

I also have to have good communication with the site team and the commercial team as it's crucial to all be on the same page with projects.

Right now I am finishing up with one project and a new project is just starting. It's a lot of work to juggle but I love being busy and it gives me a varied workload.

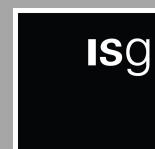
WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

No two days are the same, probably sounds pretty obvious when it comes to this industry but it really keeps me engaged.



WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

- Don't worry about other people's grades and subject choices at school
- Choose a course or job that you think you would enjoy and find fulfilling – don't chase money or fancy titles
- Be open to learning new skills



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SHAKIRA CAIRD, ASSISTANT QUANTITY SURVEYOR, ISG CONSTRUCTION SCOTLAND

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MHAIRI TURNBULL



OPERATIONS MANAGER,
ROBERTSON GROUP

FAVOURITE SUBJECTS AT SCHOOL?

History and Graphic Communications.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE ARE NECESSARY FOR YOUR ROLE?

A relevant degree in the built environment would be beneficial. It is also useful to have experience in construction project contracts and operational requirements of public sector projects. I had limited experience when I started my role and have had guidance from my line manager and colleagues to gain experience.

WHEN DID YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WANTED TO WORK WITHIN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT INFLUENCED THAT DECISION?

I had a part time position with Robertson whilst studying at university. It was through this role that I learnt more about the Built Environment and the job opportunities available. I had the opportunity to complete a summer internship with Robertson which allowed me to experience what a role in the Built Environment would entail. My mum also worked in the Built Environment sector which inspired me to pursue a career in this area.

WHAT DID YOUR CAREER PATH LOOK LIKE?

I left school unsure about what I wanted to do but I was accepted for a place at university to study Events Management. However, the location and course were not right for me, so I moved back home following first year and reapplied to do History at a local university. During my time studying I had various part time jobs which gave me confidence and work experience. One of those roles was with Robertson whom on completion of my degree I carried out their summer internship programme. Following the internship, Robertson asked me to stay with them and allowed me to study for a construction related degree part time. For the next 2 years I worked as an Assistant Project Manager and studied a Master's in Construction Project Management. Prior to finishing my MSc I moved in to my current role as Operations Manager which I thoroughly enjoy.

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS SURPRISED YOU ABOUT YOUR JOB IN PARTICULAR?

The variety of roles in the Built Environment is huge and every job role is key to the success of a project and to achieve client aspirations.



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DESCRIBE A TYPICAL DAY IN YOUR WORKING LIFE...

I do not tend to have a typical day, but my main role is to monitor the projects contracts which has a monthly cyclical nature. In the first week of the month I receive all our reports which are to be reviewed over the next week before issuing to clients. This involves contract requirements to be met, documents to be reviewed and often correspondence back and forth until the reports are ready to be submitted. In the final two weeks of the month we have our client meetings which are all currently conducted via Microsoft Teams. In these meetings we discuss the monthly report, financial penalties and any other project issues or areas of concern. There is often action required following these meetings which can involve contacting the building contractor or finding out contractual information. Out with these monthly tasks there is general contract administration, internal meetings and auditing of documents which requires to take place.

WHAT ARE THE BEST PARTS OF YOUR ROLE?

I enjoy how each month there are certain aspects of my role that happen repetitively e.g. monthly reports and client meetings. This allows you to prepare and ensure the reports or minute actions are conducted to your best ability.

However, I also enjoy when an unexpected contractual issue arises on a project and you must consult contracts and legal documents to establish the resolution. This keeps my role varied as well as my confidence and experience evolving in my current position.



WHAT ADVICE IN GENERAL WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR 15-YEAR-OLD SELF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?

I would tell myself to absorb all the information you hear around you as those more experienced can provide vital learning. I would also tell myself to seize the opportunities that are given to you as you never know where they will lead!



DYW

FORTH VALLEY
Developing the
Young Workforce

MHAIRI TURNBULL, OPERATIONS MANAGER AT ROBERTSON GROUP