

## WIC SECONDED PROJECT MANAGER

### HILL PARTNERSHIP CASE STUDY

#### Project Aims

To improve gender diversity in Cambridgeshire's Construction workforce.

The WiC Cambridgeshire programme aims to promote construction and the various roles available to women, many of whom have not considered a career in construction before due to the lack of role models, careers advice and parental encouragement of the sector to girls historically. The programme aims to support the recruitment, retention and progression of women within construction in Cambridgeshire. The project also aims to test a new way of working for WiC – namely the secondment of a project manager to an individual employer to set-up an operation in a new region.

With this dedicated resource in place, partnered with Hill's strong positive influence on its supply chain and local competitors as a leading homebuilder in the area, the potential to create real impactful change was high.

#### Project Objectives

A: To raise the awareness of careers in construction through events and talks to showcase the range of jobs, promote the sector and dispel the myth of gender-segregated roles.

B: To engage, inform and deliver advice to local women to enable them to make informed career choices and develop individual action plans to access employment in the construction sector.

C: To deliver flexible pre-employment support for women, including a mix of employability support, job-specific construction training, relevant work placements and 1-1 and group peer mentoring to produce site and work-ready candidates.

D: To support Hill Group UK and their supply chain to recruit women into sustainable employment in construction.



## Delivery

The seconded WiC project manager worked with Hill and local stakeholders in Cambridgeshire to;



### Raise Aspirations & Awareness

- Relationships were built with local job centres, schools, colleges and charities, promoting careers in construction to advisors and coaches to build a successful referral network to the programme.
- Worked on school engagement projects, empowering young women into the industry.
- Organised and hosted events, both online and face-to-face, to engage and inspire women into the industry, featuring those working at Hill as role models.
- Provided 1-2-1 advice and guidance to participants.

### Open up Opportunities



- Worked 1-2-1 with women registered onto the programme with employability support, including CV and interview advice.
- Worked with local learning providers to ensure relevant training options were in place for women to gain their CSCS cards and other construction-related training.
- Brokered bespoke practical work placements with Hill, Hill's supply chain and local industry and offer placement design support to participating employers.
- Recruited local industry 'remote mentors' to continue connecting women to the industry during lockdowns.



## Increase Gender Diversity

- Organised and hosted events, talks and meetings for Hill's supply chain to encourage them to offer opportunities and work with WiC.
- Supported job/trainee/graduate and apprenticeship applications.
- Delivered individual job brokerage for women on the programme.
- Provided in-job coaching and support.

## Support Business Growth



- Produced individual case studies to Hill for inclusion in bids and communications.
- Participated as a member of Hill's D&I working group to provide WiC expert advice, guidance and data points.
- Attended external stakeholder group meetings as a dual representative to discuss skills, employment and social value in Cambridgeshire. Promoting Hill as a trailblazer.
- Produced bespoke D&I training.
- Featured in media and publicity, promoting the partnership.



## Outcomes

The 18-month programme exceeded targets set by the CITB, Hill and WiC for a pilot programme in a new region.

Hundreds of women were reached via school events, Facebook Lives and in-person events with 75 women provided with one to one advice and over 40 registering for further support. 27 women went on to gain construction-related training, work placements, remote mentoring or job roles.

The successful project also won the award for “**Best Training or Recruitment Initiative**” for Hill at the 2020 Housebuilder awards.

Hill has been delighted with the results and has extended the partnership for a further 18-months.

“I have been so impressed with the success of our Women into Construction programme as well as the calibre of candidates we have been able to help into the industry. Construction has historically been very male-dominated and I’m proud Hill is strengthening its commitment to initiatives that move us towards a more gender-equal workforce. It is proven that greater equality in the workplace leads to increases in productivity and innovation, and for Hill, our involvement in Women into Construction is central to addressing the growing skills shortage.”

- Tom Hill, the Hill group’s regional and main board Director

“I am absolutely delighted that Hill will be continuing our award-winning collaboration with Women into Construction. This is already having tangible outcomes with women going through the programme and securing permanent roles, in an industry they may not have previously considered.” - Clare Smithson, Head of HR for Hill

## Internal Training

WiC worked with Hill to create tailored online Diversity and Inclusion training which is now being rolled out as mandatory training to all Hill staff of almost 700 people. This work allows WiC to not only deliver on attracting a more diverse talent pool but to work with the industry to create more respectful, inclusive cultures.

## Success Stories

The programme has demonstrated the need for better pathways and opportunities for career changers, as highlighted by the following success stories. Pathways which are easier for companies to create by using WiC’s dedicated seconded Project Managers to build a diverse talent pool.

## Siobhann - Trainee Site Manager, Hill

After attending a WiC information event, Siobhann registered onto the programme to gain further support. With her CSCS card already in place and prior administration experience, Siobhann expressed an interest in wanting to be more hands-on within a site environment and to build a career in the industry.



We were determined to find an opportunity that would value Siobhann's existing site experience, her enthusiasm, willingness to learn and positive attitude so that she could transition from site admin to site management, but most trainee programmes were aimed at those coming out of A-Level education or at graduates, which proved to be barriers of entry for Siobhann.

Hill decided to interview Siobhann, and she was offered a unique opportunity to join Hill as a Trainee Site Manager outside of their existing Management Trainee Programme. This pathway gives value to Siobhann's prior experience, breaks down past barriers of entry and allows her to progress from site administration to site management with professional training, in full-time employment.

Siobhann has now started her role on Hill's Ironworks site in the centre of Cambridge with the Cambridge Investment Partnership team. She will be working five days a week whilst completing her NVQ in Construction Management via NHBC assessment and evidence-based assignments.



## Emma - Slinger/Signaller

Emma was working as a teacher but decided to change careers during lockdown to move away from online learning delivery and the restraints of working continuously on a laptop to be outdoors and more active. Emma wanted to pursue construction as she felt it was an industry that would prevail during these times of uncertainty, offering stability, longevity and roles that were more practical and varied.

Emma contacted Women into Construction via our website and was introduced to Shelley Lawrence, having already booked herself onto her training to gain her CSCS card. Shelley worked with Emma to create a tailored personal statement to start approaching employers and gave further advice and guidance. Upon completing her CSCS training, Emma decided to put herself through her Slinger/Signaller qualification, of which she passed.

Emma went on to undertake a practical, hands-on work placement on Hill's Marleigh site in Cambridge – working with the Slinger/Signaller supervisor to put her training into practice and gain site experience. The placement was a success with Project Manager for the site, Kris Garratt, commenting how brilliantly Emma had fitted into the team, commending her progress and communication skills. Emma was offered a role on the Hill site following her experience, via ProLifting, which she accepted. Emma started as a Slinger/Signaller Operative less than eight weeks after registering with WiC.



## How WiC can support your business with a Seconded Project Manager

WIC expert embedded in your organisation. The seconded project manager will support your diversity programmes on-site, whilst benefitting from central WIC team expertise and support.

### Suited for

- Construction Industry Clients
- Contractors
- Housing Associations
- Housebuilders

### We can deliver

- A bespoke programme tailored to your company requirements
- Subcontractor engagement
- Women supported through careers advice, work placements
- Women gaining employment or apprenticeships
- Women achieving sustained employment and progression

### Location

Nationwide

### Benefits to your organisation

- Demonstrable commitment to increasing diversity in your organisation.
- Low risk, fixed cost for your organisation.
- Direct benefit from WIC's UK-wide expertise to your organisation.

### Cost

From £50,000 (+VAT) per annum for a full-time Project Manager seconded into your organisation. We also offer part-time secondments, with exact price dependant on the package of support agreed.

### Contact

Email [info@women-into-construction.org](mailto:info@women-into-construction.org) to arrange a call to discuss your requirements further.

