



# Women into Home Building Programme

Impact Report 2023



Women  into  
Construction





## Women into Home Building

Women into Construction (WiC) are thrilled to have partnered with the Home Builders Federation – Skills Partnership (HBSP) and nine major home builders to create an innovative programme to recruit more women into the home building industry.

Year one of the programme commenced in January 2023 and this report provides an overview of the activities and impact created to date.



**Victoria Anthony**

*Chair of the Women into Home Building Programme  
Group Human Resources Director  
at The Hill Group*

“ I am pleased to introduce the Impact Report for our Women into Home Building Programme launched in 2023. With the industry facing a significant skills shortage, and only 4% of women accounting for existing site managers, there has been a definite need for us to address gender imbalance in the workforce and open more career routes for women. I am proud to work with HBF, WiC and our home building collaborators in this programme as Chair and to share Hill's knowledge and experience to bring more inclusive opportunities to our industry.

There are still challenges that we need to address if we want to change the face of home building to become more diverse as well as address skills shortages. This impact report captures the great work our team and collaborators have been doing to increase the opportunities for women to work onsite. I hope you enjoy reading about the programmes journey and I look forward to increasing awareness of the programme and opportunities to develop rewarding careers in home building as we move into 2024!

”

## About the Programme Partners



### Women into Construction

Women into Construction is an independent, not-for-profit, organisation that promotes gender equality in construction. Its mission is to Change the Face of Construction. Women into Construction provides bespoke support to women wishing to work in the construction industry and assists contractors in recruiting, retaining, and progressing female talent, helping to reduce skills gaps and create a more gender-equal workforce.



### The Home Builders Federation (HBF) - Home Building Skills Partnership

The Home Building Skills Partnership (HBSP) was set up by HBF in 2016 and is a collaboration of home builders and supply chain organisations working together to attract and develop the workforce of the future. This includes addressing the gender imbalance in the home building workforce and in doing so change the culture of the home building industry.



# Participating Employers

This pioneering programme would not have been possible without the collaboration of nine major home builders from across the UK. These businesses offered exciting and career driven insights into the industry. They opened their doors to women for inspiring work placements at their sites throughout England.



# The Programme

## A new and innovative, collaborative, partnership approach

This programme provides a unique opportunity for home builders to come together with a common purpose. The programme has been co-designed and co-delivered to inspire and engage more women, nationwide, into trainee site management roles within the home building industry.

With this employer-led design approach, the women learn about home building and site management in the industry from the employers and females currently in the role and how to prepare and apply for site management entry roles. Delivered as a hybrid model of online and face to face interaction, this programme engages women nationwide, connecting them with each other and employers across the country.

## Project Aims:

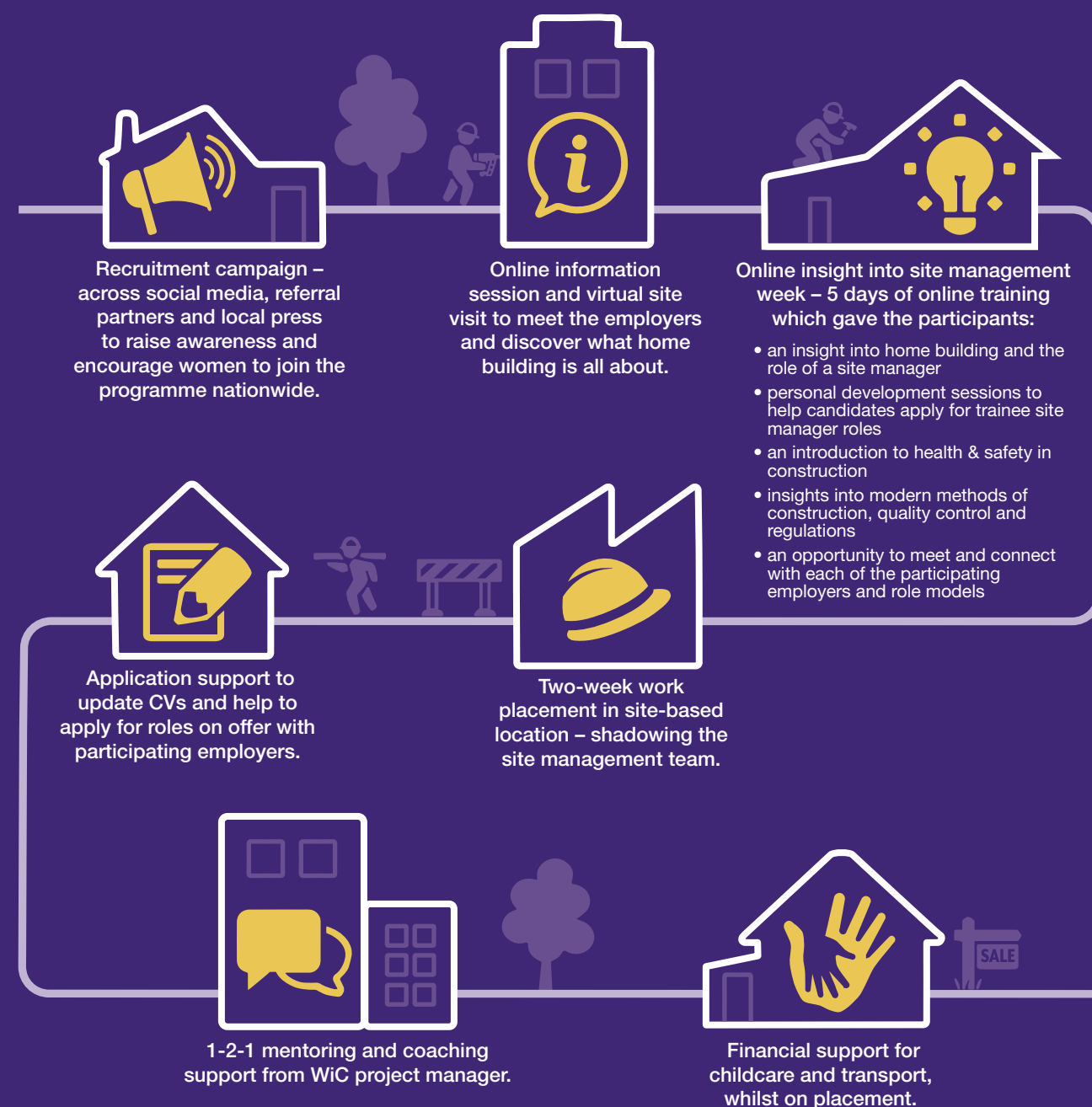
- 🏠 To raise aspirations and awareness – engagement, information, and advice to encourage women to consider careers in the home building industry.
- 🏠 To open up opportunities – tailored training to provide women with the right skills to access job opportunities in home building site management coupled with work experience aimed at challenging the perceptions of both the women and potential supervisors and creating opportunities for employment.
- 🏠 To diversify the workforce – helping to change perceptions of employers to become more inclusive and supporting women to apply for, gain and thrive in trainee site management roles including apprenticeships and construction management opportunities.

In year one, the project ambition was to engage 90 women and support 45 through the programme, leading to 24 women gaining employment in the industry.





Three programmes ran during 2023 – in February, May and November comprising of the following activities.



## Placement Locations







## Achievements

As of January 2024, the project has achieved the following:

**160**   
women informed about  
careers in home building

**69**   
women received one to  
one advice and guidance

**47**   
women completed  
Insight Week training

**47**   
women completed work  
placements

### Outcomes:

**9**   
women gained employment  
or an apprenticeship

**4**   
with participating employers  
as trainee site managers

**7**   
7 women have sustained  
employment for 26 weeks  
(to date)

**5**   
within construction in  
other roles

## Case Study - Aline

**Aline is originally from Brazil where she trained as a civil engineer.** In the UK she had been working as a labourer for a local construction site. Aline lacked confidence after many rejections from job applications. She was having trouble transferring her skills from Brazil to the United Kingdom. Although she had knowledge of the construction industry she was keen to learn more about UK construction processes.

The programme gave Aline the all-important connections and confidence to engage with the home building industry in the UK. She was matched with The Hill Group for her work placement and spent time with the design, commercial and production department at their site in Hounslow, London. She fitted in well with the team and was an immense help with her theoretical knowledge. She asked lots of questions and was keen to learn and left a great impression on the team at Hill. Following the placement, **Aline was offered a role with The Hill Group as a technical assistant which she gladly accepted and started in July 23.**



“Throughout the two-week placement Aline asked many good questions, exhibited leadership qualities out on site, and approached all situations with a logical head and ‘can do’ attitude. She was keen to develop her knowledge and willing to put in the effort to progress into a site management career.”

“The programme helped me to be more confident and believe more in my potential. I really enjoyed getting to know more about the construction methods and working with the team. I have no words to describe how grateful I am for the programme.”

**Aline**

**The Hill Group**



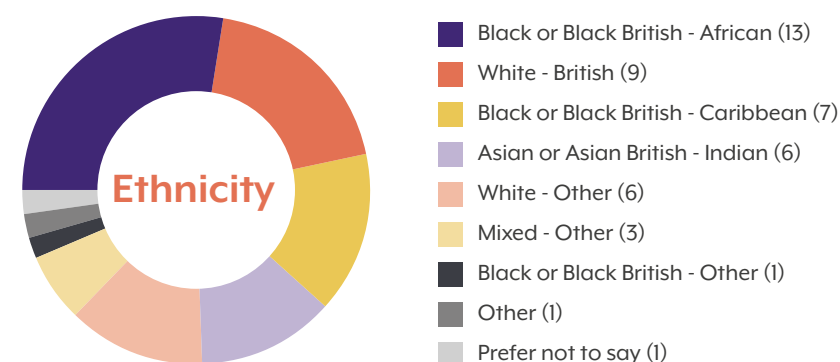
## Who We Supported

47 women were supported with in depth training and placements in year one.  
The following charts present the demographic data of the women participants:

### Age Range



### Disability



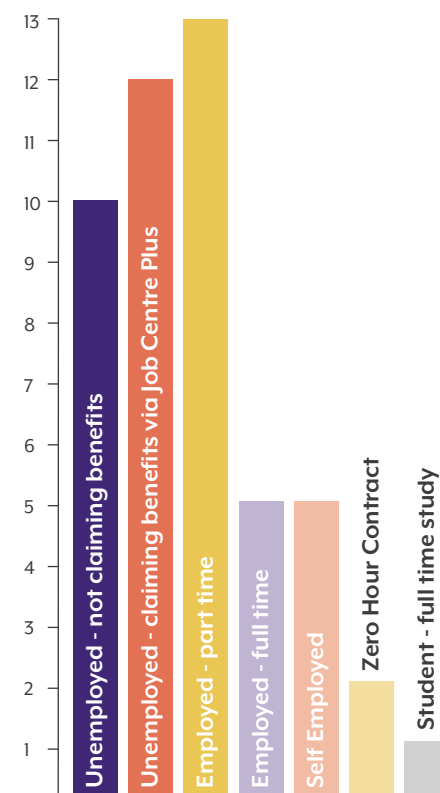
## Women's Previous Experience

The programme attracted a high calibre of women applicants, all of whom engaged in the programme with a wide variety of transferrable skills, training, and experience.

These included:

- Those with relevant qualifications such as degrees in architecture, civil engineering, and construction management.
- Over 70% of the participants had a previous degree qualification** and were changing careers from other sectors such as Education, Healthcare, Law, Art & Design and Commerce.
- Those with lower qualifications and none or some previous experience in construction looking for entry positions in the sector – **43% of participants had no experience of construction at all.**

### Employment status



### Highest attainment level at point of entry





## Positive Destinations and Future Aspirations

Nine women have gained employment to date; four were self-employed, two were employed part time and three were unemployed – claiming benefits. These women progressed into the following roles:



Trainee site manager



Quality engineer



Assignment agent



Technical assistant



Construction graduate programme



Construction apprenticeship

During 2023, the home building industry faced significant challenges and a subsequent downturn that impacted on the ability to build the number of homes the country so desperately needs. Had the industry been in a different place home builders would have offered the highly employable women coming through the programme more job opportunities. Women into Construction continue to work with all women from the programme to support them into roles in the sector.

## Case Study – Shelly

**Shelly had spent the last 5 years raising her family at home.** Prior to this she had been in customer service and accounting roles. After being out of the job market for several years Shelly felt that she needed assistance with updating her CV and general employability skills - she was interested in a career within construction and wanted to explore what careers would suit her best.

The Insight Week helped Shelly explore the home building industry and understand what site management roles involve. The 1-2-1 support from WiC helped her update her CV as well as looked at how to overcoming personal barriers including arranging childcare and building her confidence to return to the workplace after several years.

Shelly completed her two-week work placement with Bellway at their site in Peterborough. She excelled during her placement, completing tasks such as managing labourers, dealing with inductions and health and safety paperwork, and was placed in charge of site wide signage and location. She fitted in very well with her team who were full of praise. Shelly was given a guaranteed interview following the placement and was delighted to be offered a role on Bellway's Trainee Assistant Site Manager programme, starting in April 2023. She continues to thrive and is happy with the change in her life because of the programme.



“The entire programme was amazing & incredibly beneficial it was an amazing opportunity that I thoroughly enjoyed. I really wasn't sure that I was going to gain a lot because of having no experience in construction - but I got the job!”

**Shelly**





## What Changed for Women

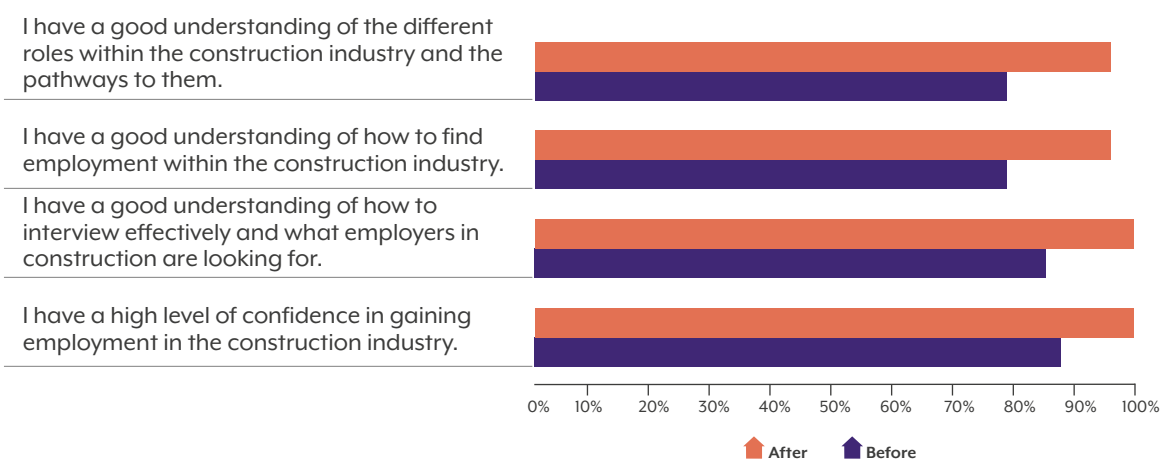
To measure the overall impact of the programme we ask the women a series of questions at the point of entry and exit to understand what has changed for them as a result of the support we have provided. This includes utilising the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Health and Wellbeing Scale (WEMHWS).

### Improved Awareness and Understanding

The programme increased participant's knowledge and understanding of careers in home building and how they can access careers in the sector.

**96%**   
of participants believe the WiC programme increased their chances of successfully gaining employment within the home building industry


### Awareness and Understanding



### Improved wellbeing

Overall, the women felt that the programme increased their wellbeing. Here is a selection of the quotes captured on the post evaluation:

*“ I have become more confident, I have a greater network to communicate with and my interview techniques have improved. ”*

**77%**   
of participants felt their wellbeing increased as a result of the programme

*“ Since becoming involved with Women into Construction, my life has undergone significant positive transformations. On the professional front, I have acquired a diverse set of skills through the programmes' workshops, training sessions, and networking opportunities. These newfound skills have not only boosted my confidence in my role but have also made me a more versatile and resourceful professional in the construction industry. ”*

*“ I feel more confident and capable. I feel enthusiastic about the future. I have, despite my fears, had an experience in the construction industry I feel is going to open doors I once believed were locked to me. ”*







“ I feel more certain of the direction I want to go regarding my career. It's helped me see my future more clearly. ”

“ I began to think optimistically, and the biggest thing that changed in my life was that I had the confidence to approach people and ask questions. ”



“ I was able to be more confident and able to get out of my comfort zone. ”

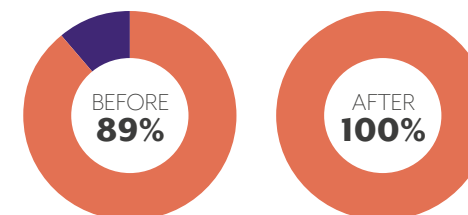
“ More positive. Someone has my back. Confidence that there is a gathering of people all on the same path for equality and vision to do a good job. ”

## What Changed for Employers

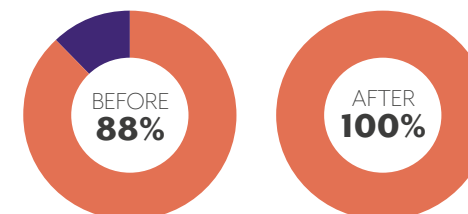
The Women into Home Building programme has helped support home building employers to understand the challenges and barriers facing many women applicants when applying for site management roles. It has also helped them to understand what support can be put in place in future to help increase diversity within the home building industry.

The programme improved employers' understanding of the challenges and barriers faced by female applicants when recruiting into their companies.

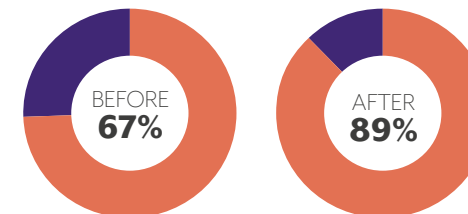
I have a good understanding of the challenges women face in accessing and sustaining careers in construction.



I have a good understanding of what my company needs to do to promote gender diversity in site-based roles.



I know where and how to find, attract, and recruit women into my company.



Employers got involved in the programme for a variety of reasons:

- 🏠 To highlight the industry to women and to recruit potential employees from the programme.
- 🏠 To contribute to ambitious diversity and inclusion goals and support a great organisation.
- 🏠 To enhance site manager diversity.
- 🏠 To support the promotion of site management as a career option and recruit more female trainee assistant site managers.
- 🏠 To develop stronger pipelines for bringing women into the industry, supporting our strategic goals around diversity and inclusion.
- 🏠 To increase awareness among divisions of the need to get more women into construction roles.



## Reflections

2023 has been a challenging year for the home building industry. The rising costs of building materials and the decrease of new homes being built has meant less roles are available. However, the demand for skilled staff is still needed and this programme will support this need as we enter 2024. The Women into Home Building programme will continue to work with home builders and welcome more women into the programme. For the women we support through the programme, it offers them an opportunity to find out about careers in home building, gives them practical experience about the realities of site management roles and connects them with potential employers who value diversity.

For employers, the programme offers a way of jointly tackling the skills shortage in construction and engaging with a more diverse pool of potential recruits. They highlighted their experiences in the following feedback:

“The promotion of careers was achieved but the market downturn reduced job prospects which we have to manage in future programmes.”

“We fully support the work of WiC and the need to increase diversity within our workforce. However, the timing was unfortunate and hasn't delivered the types of outcomes it could have provided in a more buoyant job market.”



Despite these challenges, the employers felt they had benefited from the programme in the following ways.

“We have recruited two great candidates through the programme.”

“We were able to demonstrate that our business is committed to creating opportunities for women seeking access to careers within housebuilding.”

“Internally it is helping the business highlight bringing women into construction and helping to bring women in via a different route.”

“It's provided great exposure to a wider audience and an opportunity to show support for a worthwhile industry intervention.”

By improving the diversity of their workforce, these companies will create more productive, inclusive, and innovative teams to meet the challenges of the UK home building industry in the coming years.



“We have had successful placements and employment outcomes, and it has increased our brand awareness with potential recruits.”

100%

of participating employers would recommend working with WiC to support increasing gender diversity in their organisations







## Next Steps

There were many great learnings from our first year which have informed the plans for the future. We are delighted that the programme will continue into 2024-25 and we welcome new employers, both large and small to the partnership. The next programme will launch in Spring 2024 with further cohorts in Autumn 2024 and Spring 2025. For further information, please visit:

<https://women-into-construction.org/women-into-home-building-programme/>



“The work of WiC continues to be vital in supporting the industry to be a more attractive proposition and offering potential entry routes for women wanting to be part of this industry.”



All percentages and data were gained through survey's conducted with the relevant audiences throughout the 2023 programme which ran from February-November.

Thank you to everyone that supported the 2023 programme.



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