



CONTACT

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Women make up around 14% of construction industry professionals and this number can only be set to rise with more and more women choosing construction jobs. Misconceptions about gender specific roles are gradually diminishing with the industry and a growing number of women choosing a career in construction.

Women in Construction are helping to challenge the diversity divide and reshape the industry. Each year they hold a summit at The London Build Expo and last year Natasha Bray was selected as a Woman in Construction Ambassador.

Natasha joined Rapleys in November 2017 and is the lead contact for Neighbourly Matters services in London. She specialises in Daylight & Sunlight and legal Rights to Light. Last year Natasha was selected as a Women in Construction Ambassador to help reshape the gender imbalance of the construction industry. Natasha has a strong background in Compulsory Purchase and s.203 Housing and Planning Act 2016 with Council related schemes. She also has experience in managing large scale developments and schemes with a large number of potentially affected neighbours.

We spoke to Natasha to find out more about her experiences as a woman in the construction industry and what that has meant for her since the start of her career and her role in here at Rapleys.

What does a typical day involve?

My day is always extremely varied, one day I could be meeting clients discussing the best strategy for their sites, the next I could be at the other end of the country taking measurements of a property. A lot of the work is heavily reliant on technology so you will always find me with a laptop in hand.

What makes you proud of your work?

Many of the clients I have worked with tend to find the Neighbourly Matters area particularly problematic. I am therefore always proud to be able to find a solution to a problem that seemed impossible to begin with.

What personal qualities help you succeed?

As a person I am very goal orientated, if I have a list of tasks to do for either the day or the week, I do not feel satisfied until they are complete. This really helps me keep on top of my work and allows me to provide the best service I can to my clients.

What was it about a career in the construction industry that appealed to you?

I have always like the idea of being part of creating something out of nothing. My role allows me to be part of solving the problems that come along with that.

How do you think the construction industry can attract more women?

This is a question that in my opinion has many different answers; however, for me personally I think that an active effort to celebrate the women in the construction industry currently is very important.

In order to open the field up to more women it makes sense to make the current women more visible. The sooner we can spread the message that the industry has plenty of jobs women would enjoy, the sooner young women will realise this industry is an option.





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What are the challenges, if any, that you face as a woman in a male-dominated field?

Aside from the occasional comment of “oh are you not feeling well” on the days where I have decided not to wear makeup. I luckily have not faced any substantial challenges as a result of being a woman in a male dominated field. I do however recognise that this is likely a result of my personality.

I have over the years called out any occasions where I have felt that actions or comments have occurred because I am a woman and that the same treatment would not have been received if I were a man. This has certainly reduced the number of similar comments I would have received than if I had just laughed them all off.

I think as a woman in this industry it really benefits you to be confident enough in yourself and your convictions to speak up in uncomfortable situations. Hopefully the more people that speak up, the easier it will be to reduce the amount of these situations.

How do you think women are leading the charge on improving diversity in the construction workplace?

Being one of the largest groups of underrepresented people in the industry I think a lot of women have made it their mission to improve access to the industry for those that would normally not look to construction as a viable career route. This is certainly something that I myself am keeping under constant review.

