

PLACE FOR ALL

EQUALITY

DIVERSITY

INCLUSION

“ My journey in the highways industry.”

Amy Durrant, Senior Asset Management Technician



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Sharing personal stories and perspectives to foster inclusivity in the workplace

I'd like to share the journey that brought me into the highways industry and to shed light on the challenges and triumphs I encountered along the way.

As a young woman stepping into a traditionally male-dominated field, I found myself facing biases and stereotypes that initially questioned my capabilities, particularly with me coming from an administrative background. But my determination and expertise eventually earned me the respect of my peers, proving the value of my contribution to the industry.

Mentors played a crucial role in my journey. My then line manager encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and pursue roles as a highway inspector. This support was pivotal in shaping my career. Additionally, my current line manager provided invaluable guidance, emphasising the importance of having mentors who recognise potential and offer direction.

For young women aspiring to join the highways industry, I recommend considering apprenticeships as a solid entry point. Apprenticeships provide hands-on experience and training, allowing individuals to gain practical skills while also receiving guidance and mentorship from experienced professionals.

It is important for aspiring women in the highways industry to focus on specific job roles rather than being deterred by the industry's male-dominated nature. By identifying and pursuing roles that align with their interests and strengths, young women can carve out their niche within the industry. It's worth noting that job roles in highways can vary significantly, even within the same industry or company. Each role has its own set of responsibilities, required skills, and career paths.

Addressing perceptions about the industry is key to attracting diverse talent. Highlighting success stories of women excelling in various roles and improving visibility can demonstrate that this field is open to everyone, as it really is an exciting industry to work for.

Encouraging gender diversity is vital. In my department, there was a point where female inspectors outnumbered males, showcasing the impact of encouragement and support. The industry needs to continue this trend to achieve gender equality.

One significant misconception I encountered is the belief that technical knowledge, like fixing potholes, is a prerequisite for leadership roles. Instead, a robust skill set, and a foundation of knowledge gained through training are essential.



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This journey underscores the importance of breaking gender barriers and fostering inclusivity in the highways industry. To attract and retain more female talent, the industry needs to highlight its diverse opportunities and create an environment where everyone can thrive, irrespective of gender. Gender diversity in this sector is not just a vision but a tangible possibility, as demonstrated by the experiences I've shared.

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