

# THE POWER TO DIVERSIFY THE INDUSTRY



## CASE STUDY – SAM JONES

Sam Jones is part way through a four year apprenticeship with Melvin John Electrical in Gloucestershire. She chose to become an electrician after deciding she was happier taking on practical work.

“ When I left school I started work in the caring industry. Although I enjoyed social care I felt I needed more of a challenge.

I don't like working in an office and I always had an interest in electrics as it was something my dad did and I had followed him around various sites as a child.

I was lucky that dad had a family friend who was prepared to give me an opportunity and I have never looked back.

When I turn up at a job the first reaction is usually one of surprise but it quickly turns into a question of 'So what made you want to become an electrician?' or 'How long have you been doing this?'

It's usually a good ice breaker and I have never had negative feedback or bad vibe from any of the jobs I go to.

All of the clients and customers I go to have been positive and have given me good advice.

Guys are guys and I just think if you can show that you have the skills you are accepted as one of the team.

I want to be treated on merit. I don't want any special treatment and I have a lot of fun with the guys. I am one of the team.



I want to get as many skills as I can. I can travel abroad with a trade and that is what I would like to do in the future.

**I see my role as being an example to others. I go in to schools and show girls that the industry is not solely for guys. Girls have a lot to offer. ”**

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## CASE STUDY – SHELLIE O'CONNOR

Shellie O Conner is hoping to follow in her father's footsteps and become an electrician. She combines studying at Motherwell College with on the job work experience at her employer Amey.

“ From my perspective most customers are happy to see a female in this trade but there is still a small minority who are shocked to see a woman turn up.

I am a determined person though and people will just have to accept me as I am. I am here to stay and want to succeed. I want to get my qualifications, and use my trade to travel the world.

I am lucky that I have great support behind me. From my family, friends and colleagues at work. I really want to make them proud of me.

I am just starting out but have already learned so much and have got involved with all types of domestic installation from full rewires, kitchen and bathroom work to central heating installs.

I think more could be done to show females there are other options available. I was always told that if I didn't go to university I wouldn't be able to get a job. That was the level of advice I was getting.

However, whilst it would definitely be better if careers advisors or schools could talk about trades I do think it is down to the individual as well. If you know what you want you just have to go out there and find what it takes.



At first I think some of my male colleagues were sceptical and they watched what they said around me. But I think it would be the same for any new person joining a group.

**There is certainly no issue now and I am just accepted as one of the lads. It's a great environment to work in and I couldn't ask to work with a nicer bunch of people.”**

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## CASE STUDY – SHAUNA WIGGLESWORTH

Shauna is in the first year of her apprenticeship with housing provider The Guinness Partnership in Sheffield.

The 25-year-old recently completed her Level 3 qualification at The Sheffield College where she was the only female on the course.

“**“** Being the only female was never a concern for me.” said Shauna.

*My main worries at the start were am I good enough and will I enjoy it. Well I am definitely enjoying it and I think I have proved I can do it.*

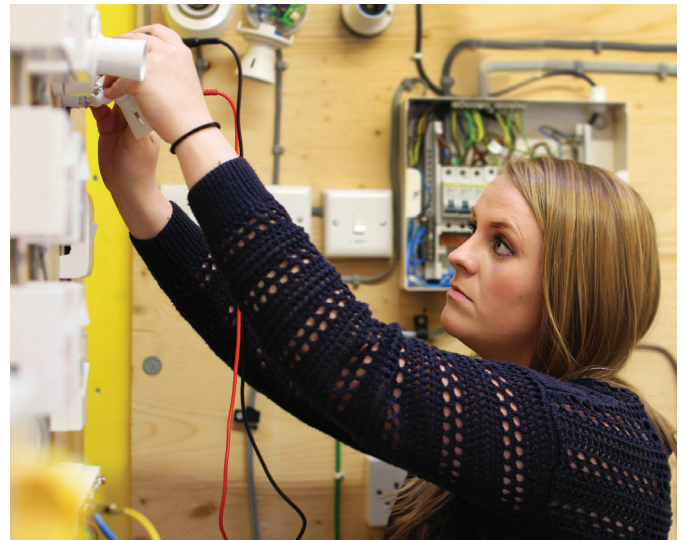
*At first my mum and dad were a bit unsure. They thought it was only for men and because of that I wouldn't enjoy it.*

*But now they have seen me do it and how much I enjoy it, they are right behind me. They see it as a skill for life and have been really encouraging.”*

Shauna's career has benefitted from help by NICEIC. She was one of three female students to receive a bursary from NICEIC which helped fund her studies.

After successfully completing the two year course at The Sheffield College NICEIC also helped her find work with local employer The Guinness Partnership.

*“The support from NICEIC has been great. Without that I wouldn't have been able to get the work experience I needed. It has proved invaluable and now I have been taken on as a full time apprentice with the Guinness Partnership.*



*I just want to learn as much as I can. I want to work towards my level 3 NVQ, get my testing and inspection qualification and learn new things.*

***My ultimate aim is to gain experience in installation work. Eventually I think I would like to see myself working with architects and builders carrying out electrical designs from scratch for large projects.”***