

**My name is Leah Jarvis and I am an Engineering Technician at Hoare Lea, where I have worked for 12 years. I joined the company upon leaving school as an Admin Assistant and progressed to a more technical role over the years. My current role is primarily Public Health design and I am also an accredited BREEAM Assessor.**



## **WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEER AND WHAT PATH DID YOU TAKE TO ACHIEVE THIS?**

To be honest, when I was younger I actually wanted to be a Police Officer! It was only after joining Hoare Lea that I discovered building services engineering. My career is important to me, particularly the personal satisfaction of having one that I'm proud of. I enjoy my place of work, the company and the people. So I have always made the most of the professional development available to me. I enrolled on a 2 year engineering course at Bath College and in October 2014, I gained a BTEC Level 4 HNC in Building Services.

During this time I became more involved with engineering in the office, assisting other engineers with Mechanical design and I was trained up in Public Health engineering, which has led me to my role today.

## **WHAT IS THE MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?**

It's very rewarding knowing that you contributed to the design of a building. Seeing that building in its built form and thinking "I designed that system, I was responsible for that". It's a good feeling being an important member of the team.

Even as a BREEAM Assessor, it's my job to provide advice to the project team and guide

them throughout the design and construction process to deliver a sustainable and energy efficient building. At present, I have had the pleasure of assessing over 20 completed and certified buildings.

## **WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT TO DATE?**

Completing my BTEC Level 4 HNC was a huge achievement for me. Prior to starting the course, I had no previous or relevant qualifications in the industry. I did well in my GCSEs achieving mainly A-C grades but I didn't excel in Maths and Science, the subjects most related to engineering. I travelled to Bath College from Plymouth one day every week to attend the course and managed to juggle the additional study time and assignments, whilst working full time. I was extremely pleased to have been awarded the HNC with Merit.

## **WHAT ONE PIECE OF ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEER?**

Do your research, plan your route, select the most appropriate courses for your chosen discipline, understand what is required of you and stick at it. The hard work is worth it in the end.

I would also like to encourage women to consider a career in this industry. Engineering has always been dominated by the opposite sex but more women are cropping up these days. Get on board ladies!

## **WHY DID YOU BECOME LCIBSE ENGTECH?**

At Hoare Lea, all engineers follow a structured professional



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development programme and achieving CIBSE status is the ultimate goal. I do not currently have a degree and my route to become an engineer has been quite unique in comparison to others. I guess I feel like I have more to prove! I see Licentiate membership and EngTech registration as recognition in my path to becoming a respected and competent engineer.

records of your project work e.g. design stage drawings, reports and calculations, as this forms evidence of your experience as it develops. Attend as many CPD seminars as you can, it all helps to build your knowledge of the systems we work with.

When you feel you have a few projects under your belt, you can start working on your application. On writing your Work Experience Report, don't be afraid to exceed the word count slightly... nothing is insignificant when proving your ability!

#### **WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE BENEFITS OF CIBSE MEMBERSHIP? AND WHY?**

CIBSE is recognised globally and obtaining membership means I am part of a network of professional people within the industry, around the world. CIBSE will continue to play a big part in my ongoing development as a building services engineer. Achieving LCIBSE EngTech was a major milestone in my career and the next step for me is to seek ACIBSE IEng status with CIBSE.

#### **BUILDING SERVICES IS GREAT BECAUSE..?**

It's certainly not boring. It can be challenging at times and heavily involved but the outcome is very rewarding. You have a say in how the future is built! As I said, for me it's a career that I am proud of. When somebody asks me what I do for a living, I smile when saying "I'm an engineer". ■



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#### **HOW DID YOU FIND THE APPLICATION PROCESS TO BECOME LCIBSE AND WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHERS CONSIDERING THIS GRADE?**

At first glance, the competency criteria can be a little overwhelming and you can be forgiven for thinking there is 'a lot' to demonstrate. But actually upon further review, I personally found that I already had experience in a number of fields. I wrote my Work Experience Report and found the application process to be quite straight forward overall.

My advice to others would be to understand the requirements and the competencies you need to demonstrate early on. Keep