



CASE STUDY

Louise Sanders - Robertson Construction



About Louise:

Louise is a Senior Quantity Surveyor, working for Robertson Construction North West Ltd for the past 7 years but has been in the industry for over 12 years, her early career started out in estimating at a small construction company before moving on to Quantity Surveying at Robertson. Louise has worked on a variety of projects from small works to large schemes and loves the dynamics working on a construction site brings. She juggles her career with a busy homelife with her Husband Neal , 3 children Jack (15), Noah (9) and Lottie (4) and 2 dogs, Dougie & Tommy. Not one to shy away from a challenge, Louise has recently completed a climb up Snowdon and last year a coast-to-coast cycle from Morecombe to Bridlington.

Why Louise wanted to get involved with this initiative:



I feel very privileged to have been asked to be part of the Women In Leadership Groups student initiative. I work with many smart and successful women and watching their careers grow during my time at Robertson has been such a highlight, as well as my own progression so being able to be a part of something that may encourage female students to pursue a career in construction is an exciting and important opportunity.

Louise Sanders – From Uncertain Beginnings to Senior Quantity Surveyor

Introduction

For many young people, choosing a career path can feel overwhelming—especially when the route forward isn't obvious. For Louise Sanders, now a Senior Quantity Surveyor at Robertson, a career in construction wasn't something she ever imagined for herself. Yet with support, resilience, and the right workplace culture, she built a thriving career that continues to inspire others navigating their own professional journeys.

Falling Into Construction—By Following a New Path

Construction was never on Louise's radar. With GCSEs and A-Levels geared towards a future in graphic design, she felt lost when she realised the field no longer inspired her.

At the same time, her brother was thriving in a degree apprenticeship as an Estimator. Seeing Louise unsure of her next steps, her mum encouraged her to explore the same route. That gentle nudge changed everything.

"I am forever grateful to her for it," Louise says. "She really is a great mum."

A leap of faith became the foundation of a now highly successful career in quantity surveying.

Persevering Through the Tough Moments

Louise's journey wasn't without its challenges. While working as a trainee estimator in her first company, she came close to leaving construction altogether.

But she had already invested four years completing her degree—continuing even after taking a year out at age 21 to have her first child. She refused to let that commitment go to waste. Instead, she set herself a new goal: change jobs and give construction another chance.

Joining Robertson proved to be a turning point.

"Their support is what has got me to where I am," she explains. "When you have the right support, even when things are tough, it makes you want to succeed."

The Impact of the Wrong—and Right—Workplace Culture

Before arriving at Robertson, Louise spent five years at a company where she remained stuck at trainee level. While juggling the demands of young children—including having her second baby—she convinced herself that career stagnation was simply part of the compromise.

But the experience took a toll.

"It knocked my confidence. I didn't realise how badly at the time," she reflects.

The decision to move on became life-changing. At Robertson, she found a culture that valued her contribution, supported her development, and championed her ambitions. She even welcomed her third child while there—without any impact on her career progression.

"Finding a new workplace was the best decision I ever made, not only for myself but for my family—they now get a better version of me."

Advice for Young People Choosing the Right Company Culture

Louise believes strongly in trusting your instincts:

“If you go for an interview and don’t get the right feeling, it’s probably not right—and that’s okay.” When she walked into Robertson for the first time, she felt something different: smiling faces, supportive women, and an interview that began with “What can we do for you?”

Her advice:

- Ask questions.
- Share your aspirations.
- Look for a company ready to invest in you.

“The right company will want to support you in achieving your goals.”

Life as a Senior Quantity Surveyor

Louise enjoys the variety and challenge of her role. No two projects are the same, even when the tasks are familiar. Her day-to-day responsibilities include:

- Placing orders with subcontractors
- Managing valuations and payments
- Costing variations
- Internal and external cost reporting
- Ensuring contract compliance

This variety keeps her engaged and continually learning.

Juggling Family Life and Career

Managing a demanding career and a busy family isn’t always easy. For Louise, self-care has become a crucial part of staying balanced.

She’s always loved the gym, and recently took up running—something that has boosted her energy and wellbeing. Enjoying her work also plays a huge role.

“Luckily for me, I love my job and being a mum!”

Challenging Myths About Women in Construction

Louise has seen firsthand the assumptions women often face in the industry.

During one memorable moment, she and two female colleagues—all qualified and experienced—were overlooked in favour of a male school student on work experience. Subcontractors repeatedly directed technical questions to him, even seeking his reassurance after Louise answered.

Experiences like this fuel her determination to challenge outdated perceptions and empower more women to thrive in construction.

“These are the barriers we need to break down.”

Why Culture Matters for Long-Term Career Success

For Louise, culture isn't just important—it's essential.

"If a company doesn't value what you bring, push you to do better, or support you at your lowest, you won't achieve your potential."

Confidence grows when people feel valued and supported. And with confidence comes opportunity.

Conclusion

Louise's journey shows that your path doesn't need to be perfectly planned for you to build a successful, fulfilling career. With determination, self-belief, and the right people around you, you can break barriers, challenge expectations, and thrive in an industry that needs more talented women.

Her story is proof that construction isn't just a career for those who always knew they wanted it — it's a place where you can discover strengths you didn't realise you had, grow in confidence, and make a real impact.

For any young woman wondering whether construction could be for her, Louise's message is clear: take the chance, trust your instincts, and don't underestimate what you're capable of.

The industry is changing — and there's space for you to shape it.

