

Leading firm paves the way for more women to work in construction

3 years ago



One of the construction industry's leading employers for women has announced a range of roles for people looking for a step up in construction.

Following recent growth, specialist property solutions provider [Fortem](#), has announced several management opportunities within its award-winning team and it is keen to hear from women interested in progressing their career.

Currently women only make up around 14% of those working in the construction sector, due to reasons ranging from insufficient training to generalised perceptions around the industry's roles.

Fortem is keen to promote the industry as a positive workplace for women and is currently looking to fill several regional managerial [roles](#) as well as more senior national positions. A new development opportunity is also included allowing people to start as an assistant general manager and train for 12 months to become general manager on new contracts as they are won.

Over its 20-year lifespan, Fortem has built a reputation as a great place for women to work and has achieved a negative Gender Pay Gap status since 2019. Three out of seven members of the company's board are women – one of whom was promoted midway through her pregnancy – and women occupy roles in a range of departments at different levels of seniority.

Joining the company 16 years ago, Melinda Simon, national health, safety and environment manager has utilised the support provided to her by Fortem – including the three-year trainee management scheme – to carve an impressive career.

She said: "When I was younger, I had a perception of the roles women could take on, but once I was on the inside, I saw women at every level – and not just in HR and admin either. While these are great positions to take, Fortem is keen to encourage its employees to experience the operations side, and I certainly learnt so much from my time working on a building site.

"I would highly recommend the trainee scheme to anyone starting with Fortem, particularly women. I was able to shadow people across a range of departments and it really opened my eyes to possibilities."

As well as recruitment, Fortem understands the importance of supporting women to enhance employee retainment. It offers a range of benefits to enable women to work around life changes, including a recently-enhanced maternity leave offering 26 weeks' full pay – more than many of the firm's competitors – 'keep in touch' days to help women transition when returning to work and flexible working to suit individual childcare needs.

Casey Turner, operations manager at Fortem, also joined as a trainee and was supported by Fortem to complete a degree before progressing up the ladder.

She said: "It's great to see the focus Fortem has on reaching out to young women because I had no idea about this industry growing up. Seeing women in senior roles gives you something to strive for – and it makes it seem possible. I have also seen women do it all and still have time for children, and be parents, so I know I could too."

Working closely with Fortem's Group company Willmott Dixon, it is also able to offer the industry leading Women's Leadership programme. The programme has been hugely successful since its introduction, with half of those that have attended gaining a promotion. At the Inspiring Women in Construction & Engineering Awards 2022, the programme also won the Excellence in Business Culture category.

Mike Hart, managing director at Fortem, said: "The success of Fortem as a business can be attributed to our culture – we put people first, and our values are at the heart of everything we do. Giving men and women equal opportunities to succeed doesn't have to be difficult, and we are proud that our board, our departments and our schemes reflect a more equal workforce that realise the potential of all.

"These roles and opportunities are hopefully a gateway for more women to not only join Fortem, but become part of the construction industry."

For more information about Fortem and to see the jobs available, visit <https://jobs.fortem.co.uk/>

New senior and management roles include:

- Regional assistant general managers (South East, Central London, West Midlands and East Midlands) – with 12-month development opportunities
- Bid Manager (East of England)
- Senior estimator (East of England)
- Senior mobilisation manager (national)