

CASE STUDY:

Nikki

Gas Technician
Yarlington Housing Group

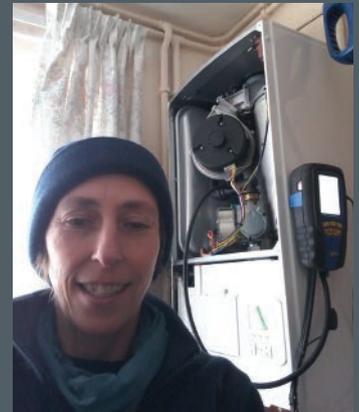


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Nikki is a gas technician for Yarlington Housing Group, which serves 10,000 properties across Somerset, Devon and Dorset. As the only female in a team of 100 workmen, Nikki shares her story of working within a male dominated industry and how the ASCP Women in Compliance group was a refreshing change, bringing together women that had plenty in common.

'In my role as a gas technician I service, maintain and repair heating systems, working within a small team of 11 technicians. I joined the team over 10 years ago, initially training as a solid fuel technician before completing my training and continuing to complete my ACS gas qualification.

'I've faced many a raised eyebrow and mild disbelief from my male counterparts. I got the impression they didn't think I would last, so I really felt I had to prove myself by completing my training, which I did. Only then was I really accepted. I quickly realised that knowledge is key in the world of compliance and that knowledge is what gains you respect...even more so for a woman.'



Everyone spoke freely, which was great as there was some real honest conversation, with a great sense of support within the group.'

Breaking down barriers

'I have encountered sexism in the workplace from co-workers. For example, one man I worked with wouldn't follow up on works I had raised, stating that I didn't know what I was talking about. It took another man to explain the technical reasons behind my recommendations, before he would accept that I did know what I was talking about.

'When people ask me, what made me want to do a man's job? it's hard to find a reasonable response! But times are changing, and I feel more men are coming around to the idea of women in this role. The more they witness it for themselves, the more it becomes acceptable. I also feel as a woman that you must impress men with your knowledge and ability before they will respect you in these roles.

Then & now

'The guys in the gas team are great and we all now see eye to eye, helping each other out and sharing knowledge and experience. It has helped us all to become better technicians. The guys have been quite supportive over the years and sometimes received more backlash than they have dished out, as I strive to hold my own in the realms of banter!

We are all more aware of these types of discrimination nowadays and the industry is far more bound by law to ensure a fair and safe

workplace for everyone, so I hope that these types of situations will soon disappear completely.

Joining Women in Compliance

'Attending the Women in Compliance lunch was refreshing for me, not least because I rarely get to chat with other women! My manager suggested I attend the event, but I really had no idea what to expect. I love meeting new people and learning new things, so with that and the offer of a free lunch, I was up for it!

Upon arrival, I did feel slightly out of place. Everyone else was office based and I wondered what I might contribute. Once we all got to know a bit about each other though, we got into it. We were soon sharing experiences and challenges. Everyone spoke freely, which was great as there was some real honest conversations with a great sense of support within the group. We actually ran over time, as we were all buzzing.

Unsure about joining Women in Compliance? What have you got to lose?

For someone unsure about joining the group I would say, what have you got to lose? The least you will gain is a free lunch, but you will also find likeminded people and gain knowledge and understanding. There is also support if you need it, solutions to work issues and a good list of contacts.

Join the FREE Women in Compliance group, you'll gain:

- ✓ Invitations to group meetings
- ✓ The opportunity to network with peers and share experiences
- ✓ Access to mutual mentoring schemes
- ✓ Inspiration and guidance from expert speakers
- ✓ Technical advice in asset and building compliance

Email Candice Appleton to join Women in Compliance
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