

In her own words: Helen Kenyon

From what drives them to login every morning to advice they would give their 16-year-old selves, here are candid insights from some of the incredible women at the National Composites Centre (NCC) who help us build towards a brighter future.

Meet Helen Kenyon

Head of Estates, NCC; Director, North Bristol SUSCOM Ltd

Joining the NCC

Pure luck led to me spotting the LinkedIn advert, although at the time, I thought I didn't have a hope without an engineering background. After the interview, I picked up from Cumbria and moved to the other end of the country, keen to be part of research and innovation.

Many people inspire me. I like to consider how I can incorporate the elements or aspects that I admire about people into what I do - be it changing the way I work or interacting with others.



What motivates my login

It is the feel of the NCC: what I get to see, the way people work together and help each other. It is difficult to find a business where one gets the level of support and opportunity to be creative and drive improvements.

Allyship to me

As a woman in facilities management - with a disability, and being a natural introvert - progression has not always been easy. I did not always see the value in being open or honest, as I was concerned being who I was might be held against me. Now, I can help support those on the same journey so they do not have to feel that same way. Allyship is taking the opportunity to learn from others, build relationships and help make a positive change together.

Advice to my 16-year-old self

“ **Don't be afraid of saying the wrong thing. Find the confidence to speak out; give an opinion. It may not always be the right solution, but it could help us get there. Believe in yourself a little more, and don't be afraid to reach for better, whether at work or at home.** ”

Making safety seen

Safety in engineering is always a challenge, especially when some of the work we do has never been done before. It comes down to communication: making sure that we are looking at the processes in place; involving the right people to help identify ways to improve the way we do things while mitigating potential hazards or risks. It is a joint responsibility to identify the line between what is reasonably practicable to keep people safe while still allowing the creativity and innovation to take place.