



## **Anna Brosnan - Wastewater Non-Infrastructure (Above Ground) SLA Lead**

Anna Brosnan always loved maths and science. She attributes her love of maths to a teacher she had in Coláiste Bríde in Enniscorthy, Sister Ella. While she went to an all girls' school, engineering was not typically a career that students were encouraged to consider, but Anna said her maths and science teachers really brought the subjects to life for her.

Anna said, "I knew that I wanted to do a professional degree and be a 'something' at the end of it. With my love of maths and science, engineering seemed like a good fit."

Not knowing which discipline of engineering to go into, Anna studied general engineering for her first two years in Trinity College Dublin and chose Civil Engineering for the final two years of her degree course.

"I liked the idea of building things; buildings, roads, bridges. Looking back on my childhood, I had always enjoyed construction related toys like Lego and Meccano. Civil engineering just felt like the right fit for me. During my third year in college, I spent the summer in London working on a bridge building site. I spent many days doing concrete slump tests to make sure the quality of the concrete was correct. I recognised then that the buzz of working in construction really appealed to me."

"After college, I was offered a job at WS Atkins Consulting Engineers and worked for their Water and Public Health section in Epsom, Surrey, England. I worked with them for 5 years and for 2 of those years, I was seconded to Thames Water Utilities Limited, where I worked on site as a tunnel engineer on the London Ring Water Main Project."

"My role included surveying the tunnel and making sure that it was being built to the right line and level. The tunnels, up to 3m in diameter and 45m in depth, were built using concrete segments to form a ring. While the tunnels were under construction, we travelled underground in 'locos,' which

are small train carriages, which also transported excavated materials, tunnel segments and other supplies to and from the tunnel face.”

Anna’s husband is a miner and she met him on that project.

During her time with WS Atkins, Anna also worked on other interesting projects, such as the investigation into the Heathrow tunnel collapse. She was then offered a site-based job directly with Thames Water Utilities.

Anna loved working on site, “There is a great sense of job satisfaction and the team approach of working on site really appeals to me.”

One of the site offices Anna worked in was in the residential cottages of an Old Treatment Works site. Back in the 19th Century, when the treatment works was built, cottages were also built for the staff who worked there. They lived in the cottages with their families and operated the treatment works. The cottages were long since abandoned, but one of them was used as a temporary site office and was believed to be haunted!

Working with Irish Water since 2013, Anna’s main motivation for working in the wastewater area is the protection of our environment. Being from Ferns in Co. Wexford, a coastal county, Anna grew up near some great beaches and developed a respect for the sea environment as well as land-based watercourses.

Anna now lives in Co. Limerick with her husband Steven and 3 teenagers. She is a chartered member of Engineers Ireland and is a keen supporter of STEM subjects for students through involvement in ‘Limerick for Engineering’ and other engineering related events.

When she isn’t working, Anna enjoys spending time with family and friends and relaxes by walking with her dogs in the Glen of Aherlow and at Lough Gur. She also loves reading, craftwork and is known to enjoy a good jigsaw, all very pandemic compatible pursuits.

“I also love travelling and am fortunate to have visited many parts of the world already. But what I really look forward to now is getting back to see live theatre and music performances. Live music and acting, I really can’t wait for that again.”

When asked if she would recommend a career in engineering, Anna said, “Absolutely, there is a great sense of achievement in working as an engineer. There are loads of opportunities and you can go in many directions. Engineers have the ability and opportunity to protect, shape and improve our world.

The best advice is to find your niche, what you’re good at and really go for it. It’s so important to enjoy what you’re working at, as life is short.”