

CARON BALLANTYNE IEng FIHIE

At school, Caron was good at technical drawing, and joined local engineering consultants. Then she went to Sheffield City Highways Department and in 1999 to Jacobs, as a Principal Engineer.

In 2000 she took a secondment to Lincolnshire County Council which has continued: she is Client Services Officer. In this unusual partnership she remains a seconded member of staff. Her wide-ranging and sometimes challenging work entails liaising with Councillors at County and District level, and having an overview of progress in many projects.

She is involved in the Boston Transport Strategy, which opened up a bus route to the then pedestrianised centre of town. There were local objections to this, which Caron engaged with, and bus usage has subsequently more than doubled. The strategy is to mix different approaches: cycling, walking, bus re-routing, and car-sharing.

She is also involved in the preliminary work on the Spalding Western Relief Road, and on Park & Ride in Lincoln, a rather awkwardly configured city for this purpose.

Caron sees her career developing by achieving CEng registration through IHIE. She thinks it is an opportunity for people who, like her, "is someone who is good at doing the work, rather than taking exams", and that CEng is the aspirational goal for people who gained O and HNCs rather than taking degrees.

She has worked with CITB to further the profession, talking to schools, and to girls, about an engineering career. The image is still very much of hammers, saws and shovels, but slowly advances are being made. She is happy in her work, and tries to get across the real nature of a career today as an engineer.

Now on IHIE Council, she hopes that her local Branch can get back on its feet, and is interested in how Branches have done this successfully.