



Awards 2013 Case Study

Award Winner

Young Achiever of the Year

Kristian Cartwright Willmott Dixon Construction

With construction set to play a major role in the future of the Welsh economy, the need for top quality young people to take the industry forward is more important than ever before.



Energy and enthusiasm are among the many qualities they will need and these are certainly evident in the CEW Young Achiever for 2013, Kristian Cartwright, whose drive and positivity have been instrumental in his career success to date.

The award celebrates young talent in the construction industry in Wales. Winners must have less than five years' experience in the industry and need to have demonstrated a positive impact against the current G4C (Generation for Change) priority areas of people, sustainability and innovation.

The 27-year-old graduate trainee with Willmott Dixon has ambition in bucket loads, but this is balanced by a philanthropic streak that has led to a long list of activities demonstrating his willingness to go far beyond what is required of him.

His hands-on, practical approach to dealing with issues in construction – on site or in the office – made a huge impression on this year's judges. Kristian has shown repeatedly that he is a good problem solver and great with people. He has devoted time to work with local communities and has already been awarded Construction Ambassador of the Year by CITB Construction Skills, for services to the industry.

Swansea born and bred, Kristian received his secondary education at Gorseinon College then went on to study carpentry at Neath Port Talbot College. It was working on building sites as a self-employed carpenter that made Kristian realise that he would relish greater challenges.

As a result, funding himself as a mature student, he gained a degree in Project and Construction Management from Swansea Metropolitan University and subsequently won a place on Willmott Dixon's two-year graduate trainee scheme. It is an opportunity that he has approached with the same focused work ethos that he had when he was self-employed.

"I am happy to get stuck in," said Kristian. "I look for opportunities to do positive things for myself and for the company. I don't think of this as a 9-5 job."

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The scheme has enabled Kristian to work across all departments of the business including commercial, preconstruction, HSE and operations. He sits on the company's trainee board, holds ICIQB accreditation and is working towards his full Chartered Builder status (MCIOB) on the Personal Development Programme.

Kristian has demonstrated a keen awareness of the importance of collaboration and integration, an area in which his considerable people skills have proved invaluable. A typical example was his vision in organising a 5-a-side charity football tournament, ostensibly to raise funds for the Hospice of the Valleys, but with the knock-on effect of consolidating team relations and site 'spirit' at The Works, in Ebbw Vale.

He has organised three charity golf days, culminating in a one-day event that raised £3,000 for Age Concern; donned the Ivor Goodsie costume three times to promote site safety in schools; helped organise a WD trainee charity day; organised a charity three peaks event involving Willmott Dixon staff, and much more.

With characteristic willingness to encourage others, Kristian has spoken at a careers evening in Cwmbran and has been involved in a WJEC task group to create a new set of construction qualifications, currently being approved for GCSE, AS and A' levels. He has organised factory visits for trainees to engage with manufacturers and learn more about manufacturing processes, and was a keynote speaker at the CITB South West conference on the Heseltine report and on sector issues affecting major contractors.

As far as CEW is concerned, Kristian represents all that is best about traditional construction values combined with an exemplar approach to sustainability and the contribution construction can make to the local community.

Kristian acknowledges that his experience in a skilled trade has given him an additional, practical perspective to the challenges of construction management, and his ability to think 'out of the box' and to innovate bears this out.

He has been involved in the introduction of adhesive-free flooring products in Measydderwen School and worked with site teams at The Works to use local labour, resulting in opportunities for six locally long-term unemployed people to get back to work.

And whilst working at the Gwent Records Office in Ebbw Vale, he discovered old job cards which he helped organise and put on display in the GRO museum. This might have been enough for some people, but he then went on to organise a short film highlighting the work of an employee during its heyday, now being screened in the museum. A



further example of his commitment to the community is the help he gave pupils in a special needs school in Blaenau Gwent, constructing plastic bottle greenhouses to promote environmental awareness and well-being.

Ceri Gullet, Sustainability Manager for Willmott Dixon said: "During his time with us Kristian has demonstrated that the industry can and is attracting forward thinking young people who have a real passion for construction."

"He has shown great maturity and willingness to learn new skills as well as sharing his own experiences as a 'subbie' with the rest of the team. The direct and open approach he has taken in dealing with clients, external stakeholders and other members of his team has been very refreshing. Keen to get involved in all aspects of construction, he has the ability and confidence to question decisions but also provide solutions where possible, with some very impressive results that are now being replicated in other projects across the business."

Kristian has demonstrated a real sense of what makes the Welsh construction industry such a creative, innovative and exciting environment in which to work. He has a clear understanding of its history and its pivotal place in the economy. Kristian Cartwright is an outstanding example of the dynamic future represented by G4C and Welsh construction as a whole.