



Sarah learns about Sustainable Construction in Germany

Sarah Warnock is a project architect for Belfast based White Ink Architects, who specialise in design architecture and project management for both public and private sector clients. Sarah is responsible for the design, technical development, specification and day-to-day management of building projects during both the design and construction stages. Sarah was successful in gaining a place on 'Building Skills for Sustainable Construction', a two week training programme for 15 local construction workers in Biberach, Germany focusing on sustainable construction methods, renewable energy and environmental standards.



The 'Building Skills for Sustainable Construction' project was organised by CITB NI and funded by the European Commission's Leonardo programme which is managed by Ecorys in the UK. The programme was delivered by KOMZET (a Centre of Vocational Excellence in Timber Construction and Finishings).

Speaking about the training Sarah said, "I was made aware of this training opportunity via the Royal Society of Ulster Architects (RSUA) and felt it would help me gain more experience and further my knowledge in practical sustainable building methods. As I have a passion for sustainability and believe that sustainable design is key to the future growth of the construction industry, I definitely felt this was the right training opportunity for me."

"Climatically, the Baden-Württemberg region of Germany we visited is rather different to Northern Ireland, meaning their buildings have to cope with greater extremes of temperature and snowfall but less wind and rain. It also means they have an abundance of high quality, strong timber at their disposal locally. However, the general principles and theory that they apply to their building physics and detailing is far more inclusive. It was this 'back-to-basics' look at building design that struck me most and has prompted me to challenge our 'traditional' methods of building in Northern Ireland."

"The majority of the course was very practical and many of the technical lectures will help me in the planning, design and detailing of future building projects that I am involved in. Since returning from the course, I have been overseeing the completion of several buildings that were already on site and I have found myself viewing these current projects in a different way. I hope to fully employ my new knowledge in the future design projects that I undertake. White Ink have an established method of sharing key information from various training opportunities undertaken and I have uploaded all relevant material from the training course and technical details from the practical workshop sessions to the company intranet."