

Females of the Future: International Women's Day

Meet Julia...

What did you want to be when you were at school?

I wanted to join the Army, but I wasn't tall enough.

What subjects at school have you transferred into your job?

I was never any good at Maths! I worked hard, with great support, and am so glad I did- especially when I am approving multi-million-pound projects!

What has been your career Journey to date?

I started working in the Department of Health and Social Security in 1985. I found I could make a difference and quickly moved into a variety of roles in different departments. After the birth of my son, I took a role on promotion implementing a new benefit followed by becoming a Training Manager in the Ministry of Justice, and a learning consultant. After 17 years of training and consultancy work, I decided that I wanted to practice what I preached – moving out of the theory of leadership training into the practice and I moved to what was then Highways Agency as a Strategy and Commercial Team leader, within the Traffic Technology Division – one of only two women in leadership roles in the whole Division! For the last 12 years I have remained in Technology, undertaking roles in the “non-technical or not so technical” areas; Head of Enabling Services, Head of Governance and Performance and I am currently on a secondment at Director of Technology Programmes.



Julia Thorne
Technology Programmes Director

What does your job involve?

My job is quite diverse; as Technology programme Director I have accountability for the delivery of all Technology projects and programmes across Digital Services and the wider National Highways. This means that I spend most of my time attending project boards where updates on how projects are progressing and any issues or risks to delivery. I also have accountability for Governance in Digital Services, this includes financial governance so that would be our financial business plan, reporting and performance, risk and assurance activities and the contract and commercial aspects of implementing and maintaining digital data and technology.

Why did you decide to do your role and what career advice would you give?

I wanted the challenge, work out of my comfort zone. To keep trying; the most rewarding things take more effort so never give up.

What do you enjoy about your job?

The people – we have lots of technical people that I work with, they baffle me most days with the intricate technical detail. Every day I learn something new – how something works or a new approach.

