

# In the news

Weekend West NEW HOMES

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Women in Housing

22

## Drafting the best answer

### GEMMA NISBET

A passion for drawing and painting pictures of houses blossomed into a high-school interest in technical drawing and subsequently a career for Summit Homes' drafting manager Karyn Newman.

Having always felt that drafting was going to be her career, Ms Newman began studying while her children were young and later started her own drafting business from home, "picking up bits and pieces of work", mostly relating to home improvements and commercial jobs.

In 2001, Ms Newman entered the housing industry full-time, working for a project builder before starting with Summit Homes two years later. By 2006, she had moved into her current managerial position.

As drafting manager, Ms Newman is in charge of six drafters, managing the team's workflow, dealing with shires and developers and their covenants, and liaising with site



Drafting manager Karyn Newman, pictured right working with Monty McDonald and the drafting team, rear from left: Nicky Rutler, Kirsten Beretta, Tanya Wasley, Wunna Kyaw, Michelle Oakley and Alex Biscotto.



supervisors to resolve issues.

"We are a sales-orientated company so the main part of my job is providing support directly to the sales representatives and then on to the clients to make sure we provide a house specifically suited to the clients' needs, which is also going to adhere to all the shire requirements," she said.

Ms Newman said she enjoyed her "very technical" role and relished the challenge of coming

up with design solutions to problems and being able to provide a good outcome for clients.

While there were a lot of women involved in the administrative side of the housing industry, Ms Newman said drafting was traditionally male-dominated, although this too was changing.

"When I went to TAFE I was one of only three women in my stream and when I was in my

first drafting position, I was the only female.

"Then when I moved to Summit suddenly there seemed to be this influx of women, especially in drafting.

"I haven't found being female in a male-dominated industry difficult at all. I'm fairly laid-back, I don't let myself get pushed around at all but being reasonable and easy-going has made it easy to deal with all the other management."

Ms Newman encouraged young women who might be thinking of following in her footsteps to take the opportunities offered by what she described as "a wonderful industry to work in".

"There's a lot of support for women in the industry now and there are a lot more women in the industry, especially in the technical divisions.

"I'd say just go for it and give it your best shot."

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