

Spotlight on... apprenticeships

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The Considerate Constructors Scheme's 'Spotlight on...' initiative focuses on different areas associated with improving the image of construction, and raises awareness among registered sites, companies and suppliers about the issues and how to help.

Spotlight on... apprenticeships

'Spotlight on... apprenticeships' intends to highlight the importance of apprenticeships, and the benefits to employers, the individuals and the wider community.



Many construction companies do have apprenticeship schemes in place, but a growing demand for skills and staff means more should be done to encourage the next generation to choose a career in construction.

There are many benefits to offering apprenticeships, which include improving productivity, filling a skills gap or training in a specialist area within the business, as well as a more motivated workforce.

The skills shortage is one of the most pressing issues facing construction, with industry leaders often citing a lack of skills and staff being the biggest challenges. This has even led to some companies having to turn down work due to not having enough resources. The **Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)** predicts that the industry needs almost 36,000 new workers annually through to 2021 to meet demand. Apprenticeships can be one solution to meeting this demand.

However, **Construction News report** that despite the introduction of the Apprenticeship levy in April 2017, the number of total apprenticeship starts between April and July 2017 was 48,000, down 59% from 117,800 between April and July 2016.

While construction held up relatively well compared to other industries, still only 50-60% of construction

apprenticeships are completed. The industry has to address this issue and attract more construction apprentices.

The industry is doing a great deal of work to recruit, train and retain apprentices and there are a number of resources available for contractors to find out more about apprenticeships, some of which are detailed further in this campaign. There are signs these efforts are working, with 70% of parents in a **2018 survey** saying they would advise their children on studying an apprenticeship.

The initial launch of 'Spotlight on... apprenticeships' in 2014 coincided with the first National Apprenticeship Week, run by the Government's National Apprenticeship Service's (NAS), which was held between 3-7 March. National Apprenticeship Week is held every year in early March and is designed to increase awareness, understanding and demand for apprentices.

Here are some facts on apprenticeships in England taken from the **House of Commons December 2017 Briefing Paper:**

- 2016/17 saw a record high number of people participating in an apprenticeship at 912,200, which is 12,800 more than in the year before.
- In 2016/17, there were 491,300 apprenticeship starts in England, 18,100 less than the previous year
- People aged 25 and over accounted for 46% of apprenticeship starts in 2016/17. People aged 19-24 accounted for 29%.
- In 2016/17, 54% of apprenticeships starts were by women.
- The number of non-white starters has been gradually increasing since 2011/12, from 51,350 to 55,000 in 2016/17

Law and legislation

The subject of apprenticeships is an important pillar of the industry's image. The following law and legislation below highlights exactly how employers and employees must be aware of the legal aspects involved:

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

This act ensures the agreement of basic terms of employment plus a statement of the trade or skill that is being trained. This can be in the form of a written statement of particulars of employment, a written contract of employment or a letter of engagement. It also introduced new apprenticeship frameworks and apprenticeship certificates.

Apprenticeship Levy

The Apprenticeship Levy, which was introduced in April 2017, requires every firm with a payroll of over £3m to pay 0.5 per cent of their wage bill into a central fund for new apprenticeships.

Please note that skills and training are devolved policy areas, so the countries of the United Kingdom manage their own apprenticeship schemes.

External resources

Any industry can offer apprenticeships to help develop the skills and knowledge of its future workforce.

- **City & Guilds** are a skills development organisation, providing services to training providers, employers and trainees. They offer a number of qualifications and apprenticeships in the construction industry, which can be found [here](#).
- The **Government** has published a page designed principally for those looking to apply for apprentice roles which also provides general information about apprenticeships in England, Scotland and Wales.
- The **National Apprenticeship Service** (NAS) has end to end responsibility for apprenticeships in England. The NAS has been designed to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities and provide a dedicated, responsive service for both employers and learners.
 - **National Apprenticeship Week** is an annual event organised by NAS every March, which aims to put the focus on apprenticeships and raise its profile amongst employers, individuals, teachers, parents and the media.
- **Prince's Trust's 'Get into Construction' programme** can help unemployed people gain valuable training and experience which could lead to an apprenticeship in the construction industry.
- **Scottish Apprenticeships** is the central location for information about apprenticeships in Scotland.
 - **Scottish Apprenticeship Week** is held every March to celebrate and promote apprenticeships.



What is already being done by the industry?

There are numerous resources available to sites looking to offer apprenticeship opportunities, along with many examples of how construction organisations have trained and developed apprentices.



- The **Construction Industry Training Board** (CITB) provides a wealth of resources for all construction companies, including training, accreditation, publications and apprenticeship services.
 - The CITB are the largest provider of apprentices for the construction industry, with over 45 years' experience of developing skilled workers. Apprenticeship training is developed in consultation with the industry to ensure the right skills are learnt. For more information on CITB Apprenticeships, click [here](#).
 - CITB's **Go Construct** website provides information about apprenticeships and showcases careers in construction.
 - CITB have also launched the website **bConstructive**, which provides information to support the decision of choosing an exciting career in the industry.
- The **Construction Youth Trust** (CYT) is a registered charity working with young people to help them access training, education and employment opportunities in construction, with a strong focus on developing apprenticeships.
 - CYT run the **Budding Brunels** initiative, a schools engagement programme aimed at informing and inspiring students from disadvantaged backgrounds about higher education and career options within the construction industry.
- **Construction 2025** is a joint strategy which sets out how industry and Government will work together to put Britain at the forefront of global construction over the coming years. Included in this document are numerous references



to apprenticeships, including how a fall in apprenticeships is a threat to the growth of the industry.

- The **Cross-Industry Construction Apprenticeship Task Force** (CCATF) aims to bring together all sectors of the construction industry to champion the culture and ethos of training in the industry and to encourage those not training to do so. CCATF also want to promote the benefits and value that an apprentice can bring to an employer.
- **Crossrail**, in partnership with its principal contractors, has created more than 1,000 apprenticeships since the start of the programme in 2009. For more information about their apprenticeship programme, click [here](#).
- **'No more lost generations'** is a February 2014 cross-party parliamentarians' inquiry supported by CITB and CIOB, emphasising the importance of offering apprenticeships in construction to secure the industry's future.
- **Y Prentis** is a partnership between Melin Homes and Monmouthshire County Council and is funded by the CITB and the Welsh Government. The scheme interviews and hires apprentices and places them with construction companies.



Examples of best practice

The Scheme aims to improve the image of construction through sharing best practice with the industry. Below are a number of best practice examples that have been witnessed by the Scheme's Monitors on their visits or submitted directly by registered sites, companies and suppliers:



- The contractor supported an organisation that helps young offenders back into employment.
 - The site participated in National Apprenticeship week by interviewing their apprentices and sharing their stories with the company and through social media.
 - As part of employing apprentices from the local college and providing them with specific on-the-job training, the site presented an award to each apprentice if they completed their allotted time on site as an additional incentive to complete the course.
 - An unemployed and homeless man was given work experience, sponsored to obtain a CSCS card and helped to obtain employment with a subcontractor.
 - Selected pupils from the local school were invited to decorate part of the building as an introduction to the trade and a possible apprenticeship.
 - The site actively participated in training by having two day-release students working on site.
 - The site provided an on-site skills centre and certain members of staff acted as career mentors in conjunction with the local college.
- To view all Best Practice Hub entries relating to the 'Spotlight on... apprenticeships' campaign click [here](#).

Case studies

Read the following case studies to see how contractors and young people are working together to promote apprenticeships:

Balfour Beatty

The company has since had its most successful National Apprenticeship Week ever. Please click [here](#) for more information.

Balfour Beatty have shared with the Scheme a number of case studies written on six of their apprentices. Please click on each name to read their story:

[Adam Moxey](#), Trainee Site Manager

[Freddie Palmer](#), Junior Engineer

[Kamila Laton](#), Apprentice Document Controller

[Liam McCallan](#), Apprentice Electrician

[Shane Hood](#), Apprentice Site Supervisor

Balfour Beatty also play an active role in promoting the Scottish Apprenticeship Week. They have provided a further six case studies below, as well as a link to their website on how they have supported the 2014 launch. Click here for more information and or the names below to read their story.

[Christopher Miller](#), Technical Trainee

[Gary Baird](#), Technical Trainee

[Ryan Flood](#), Apprentice Electrician

[Colin Watt](#), Design Draughtsman

[Rory Mair](#), Apprentice Electrician

[Dean McLeman](#), Apprentice Joiner



BAM Construction were set a challenging target by Manchester City Football Academy to take on apprentices. For more information, please click [here](#).

BAM manage the Coventry and Warwickshire Shared Apprentice Scheme, which they started with Coventry City Council and City College Coventry in December 2010. BAM employ the apprentices and find them work placements with local contractors, supporting them throughout their apprenticeship, with the aim of securing them full time employment on the completion of their framework. Click [here](#) for more information.

The scheme also has its own awards, with BAM recognising the hardest working apprentices. Click [here](#) for more information.

SPOTLIGHT ON...



BAM Nuttall run an award-winning apprenticeship programme which covers three different routes - civil engineering, quantity surveying and planning.

For more information, please click [here](#).



Berkeley's Victory Pier site has a structured approach to encouraging apprenticeships, which supports the wider Group's efforts to attract more young people into the industry. Find out more [here](#).

Read the stories of **Darren Down, Assistant Quantity Surveyor**, **Sam Lane, Apprentice Site Manager** and **Sharon Griffin, Site Office Manager**.

Berkeley has produced a number of materials promoting apprenticeships including: **poster encouraging subcontractors to take on apprentices**, **eye-catching visuals outlining key statistics**, and **promotional posters for Berkeley's Apprentice Awards**.



Costain and Network Rail's London Bridge Station Redevelopment site has achieved Skills Academy status which enables local people to be trained into local jobs, helping to create a sustainable community.

For more information, please click [here](#).



Durkan work with a number of organisations which assist with placing and supporting apprentices, as well as running their own successful apprenticeship scheme.

For more information, please click [here](#).



GallifordTry work with a number of Construction Training Initiative schemes to provide long-term waged work experience for candidates enrolled on apprenticeships.

For more information, please click [here](#).



GB Building Solutions Ltd developed a strong relationship with Lewisham and Southwark College to provide those on construction courses with practical help and placements.

For more information, please click [here](#).



Laing O'Rourke's Apprenticeship+ programme is a bespoke four-year scheme, designed to give participants the opportunity to develop a well-rounded suite of skills that will set them on a path to a successful career in construction.

For more information, please click [here](#).



The company has created sustainable apprenticeship opportunities at their Pudding Mill Lane site for Crossrail. Click [here](#) for more information.

Morgan Sindall's approach to apprenticeships has been rewarded at the Crossrail Apprentice Awards. Click [here](#) for more information.



Pochin offer a number of apprenticeship opportunities in various roles and have shared four case studies of apprentices thriving in construction.

For more information, please click [here](#).



VolkerHighways have provided the Scheme with an article written by apprentice James Gunn, currently working as an engineer in Catford.

For more information, please click [here](#).

What can you do?

It is vital that the industry continues to offer apprenticeships, not only to young people, but to anyone who has an enthusiasm for working in construction.

There are many benefits to providing apprenticeships and not just for the employer and apprentice, but to the wider community.

You will find below some helpful advice on what can be done to be better prepared and better organised for apprenticeship opportunities:

1. Ensure you as an employer are following the correct conditions and processes

It is important to understand that taking on an apprenticeship can be a lengthy and structured process. Therefore as an employer you should be fully aware, up to date and versed in the process of hiring an apprentice and the conditions that must be followed. These would include eligibility, pay and duration as a few examples. Please visit the official guide; 'Employ an apprentice' here.

2. Be mindful an apprentice may never have had a full time job before

Many apprentices will not have been in full time employment before, it is important to provide them with a proper induction like any other employee. Be sure to brief the apprentice with their rights and obligations, the job description and what is expected from them and the apprenticeship programme. It is also worth bearing in mind they may not be aware of some of the more simple processes of full time employment and its working environment, you should therefore demonstrate as an employer you are happy to answer any questions they may have throughout the programme.

3. Provide a structured and reliable support system

Support is crucial for any employee, this is no different to an apprentice and in some cases even

more important. Be sure to allocate a designated line manager or mentor to your apprentice who will act as the programme lead, first point of contact and person of support. The mentor should build a supportive relationship with the apprentice.

Whilst the aim of the programme is to gain skills and knowledge, the workplace can also be a daunting environment for some and therefore their mentor should be someone they can trust. The mentor should be someone with good communication skills and shows an attitude to help young people.

As well as the information above, it is also advised to use the resources provided in this campaign, which offer a plentiful amount of resources from other organisations and companies that cover the full spectrum of the topic.

With the skills gap and shortage of resources already having an effect on some companies, it is essential that the industry as a whole encourages new people into construction and provides sufficient training and support which allows them to excel.

The Scheme hopes that the information and resources provided in this article will encourage even higher numbers of companies to consider offering apprenticeships, and take action to ensure they have the necessary skills and staff to lead them into the future.

The Scheme will continue to update this campaign as new initiatives and case studies are identified.

If you would like to share how your company is promoting apprenticeships, please contact the Scheme by emailing
enquiries@ccsbestpractice.org.uk