



Construction & The Built Environment

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

PURPOSE

The Workforce Development Partnerships (WDP) serve as a collaborative forum bringing together employers along with education and training providers to address workforce development challenges and formulate effective solutions. The primary objective of the WDP is to foster dialogue, exchange ideas, and promote collaboration to enhance the skills and capabilities of the local workforce.

The Construction & Built Environment WDP across Oxfordshire & Berkshire will benefit from strong partnership working with trade bodies such as the CITB, ECA, HBF and CECA. It will focus on continuing relationships between providers and employers through hosting a series of themed sessions focusing on key priorities for the industry such as Net Zero, Digitalisation etc.

WHAT ARE THE KEY OUTCOMES WE ARE SEEKING?

- Creation of a direct channel of communication between education providers and construction and built environment employers, focused on the key priorities for the sector
- Provide a forum for employers to gain insights into education and skills and providers to gain insights into priority sectors
- Generate resources and advice for signposting employers to skills
- Strengthen relationships between attending providers and employers, and those they are there to represent, to generate further partnership solutions
- Narrow skills gaps as identified in the LSIPs for Berkshire and Oxfordshire
- Ease recruitment difficulties as identified in the LSIPs for Berkshire and Oxfordshire

WHAT WILL BE OUR WAYS OF WORKING?

- Meetings will occur quarterly, from Autumn 2023 to the completion of the current LSIP project – March 2025
- They will be convened by the LSIP team who will be responsible for minute taking and circulation and following up on actions decided upon
- They will be chaired by the LSIP Champion for Construction
- Members will attend both in their own capacity but also in the capacity of representing their wider sector
- Partnership working between meetings will be important to achieving desired outcomes. Members become part of a genuine workforce development partnership, where the work that goes on between meetings will be as important as the meetings themselves
- The partnership is designed to find practical solutions to skills shortages in the sector and will work in that spirit

KEY ACTION AREAS

- Inspire and inform more people about the Built Environment
- Undertake a role-mapping and directory-creation exercise
- Work on continuing to match education and training provision to local employer needs

Construction & Built Environment

RATIONALE

Demand within the Construction industry across Oxfordshire is forecast to continue increasing in size and will require an additional 4,500 workers by 2035. The Skills Imperative 2035 estimates are for an average of 1.5% annual growth over this period, compared to the CITB's[11] estimate of 0.1% annual growth in the national Construction workforce over the same period. Digital skills and a need for wider availability of green skills training have been highlighted in our interactions as were the demand for coaching, leadership, and management training. A big impact for employers was the new skills arising from the green agenda and a necessity for those teaching to have up to date knowledge of the requirements in the industry. Employers also told us that the skills gap in the construction industry is not limited to traditional trades such as bricklaying and plumbing, but also digital skills, and sustainability skills.

LABOUR MARKET

4,660 enterprises – an increase of 11% since 2017.

The majority of these companies were micro or small, with only 15 medium-sized employers.

An estimated need for an additional 4,500 workers and 13,600 replacement workers, totalling 18,100 in Oxfordshire by 2035.

SECTORAL CHALLENGES

The CITB has identified key skills gaps in the construction industry, including plastering, and electrical installation, as well as skills in BIM (Building Information Modelling).

The largest growth 2017-22 was in the number of companies involved in the Construction of Residential & Non-Residential Buildings, which increased by 20% (165). There was also a rise in the number involved in Plumbing, Heat and Air Conditioning Installation, increasing by 17% (90) over the same period.

SPECIFIC REPORTED SKILLS GAPS

BEMs- Building Energy Management Systems (energy efficiency)
BIMs (Building Information Modelling)
Installing, configuring, calibrating and troubleshooting a range of electronically connected Digital Home Technologies
Installers and engineers for other heating systems which provide an alternative to traditional gas/oil boilers – these are due to be phased out by 2027:
Ground and air source heat pumps
Thermal Imaging
Retrofitting
Dual Fuel Smart Meter Installation
Digital skills such as the use of tablets on site, use of digital platforms for capturing work, ability to access and use on-line training packages.
CAD (Computer Aided Design)
Coaching & mentoring skills
Fire and security systems for electricians
H&S- SSST SMST (Site Supervision Safety Training Schemes and Site Management Safety Training Scheme)
Numeracy and literacy, including language courses for overseas workers

TABLE 1 Recruitment Difficulties Reported by Employers	Technical Occupations (Levels 2-3)	Higher Technical Occupations (Levels 4- 5)	Professional Occupations (Level 6+)
Bricklayers	Bricklayer (L2)		Onsite Construction
Cladding	Commercial Thermal Insulation Operative (L2) Roofer: Roof Sheeter & Cladder (L2) DG		
Plasterers and Dry Liners	Plasterer: Fibrous Plastering (L2) Plasterer: Solid Plastering (L2) MG		Onsite Construction
Scaffolders	Scaffolder (L2)		
Plumbers	Low Carbon Heating Technician (L3) DG		Building Services Engineering for Construction
	Plumbing & Domestic Heating Technician: Environmental Technologies (L3) MG		
	Plumbing & Domestic Heating Technician: Gas, Fossil Fuel Oil or Solid Fuel (L3) MG		
Air Conditioning/ Refrigeration	Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heat Pump Engineering Technician (L3) MG		Building Services Engineering for Construction
Smart Home Technician	Dual Fuel Smart Meter Installer (L2) DG	Smart Home Technician (L3) DG	
Electricians	Domestic Electrician (L3) MG		
Business Administration	Business Administrator (L3)		

[11] CITB Construction Skills Network: Five Year Outlook, 2023-27

SECTOR SPECIFIC: CONSTRUCTION AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE AND EXPECTED BENEFIT	ACTIONS	OWNER	EMPLOYER CHAMPION	TIMESCALE	POTENTIAL FUNDING
<p>Facilitate a Construction & Built Environment Workforce Development Partnership (WDP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a forum and focus for employers to gain insights into skills, and providers to gain insights into priority sectors. Generate resources and advice for signposting employers to skills. Strengthen relationships between attending providers and employers to generate further partnership solutions. <p>T Levels in Construction (Onsite & Building Services) not available in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>The Sector Profile illustrates those changing technologies, particularly in Green Skills are driving the need for upskilling in new technology, retrofitting and digital.</p>	<p>Convene a WDP for Construction and Built Environment Sectors, collaborating with CITB, Home Builders Federation and the Electrical Contractors Association. This will be a new group, pan-Oxfordshire and Berkshire to maximise benefits.</p> <p>Education & Training Providers to explore the market for T Levels in Construction in their catchment areas and consider implementation accordingly.</p> <p>Education & Training Providers to use LSIF, Innovation Fund or Skills Bootcamps as alternative sources of funding to align delivery to the priority skills needs (pg. 9) via new programmes such as short, modular courses.</p> <p>Education and Training Providers to work together collaboratively, through the LSIF to invest in up-to-date technologies, capital and spaces for Construction & Built Environment.</p>	<p>ERB ETPs Partners Employers</p> <p>ETPs</p> <p>ETPs</p> <p>ETPs</p>	TBC	<p>Summer 2023-March 2025</p> <p>By Sep 2024</p> <p>Autumn 2023-March 2025</p> <p>Autumn 2023-March 2025</p>	<p>LSIP LSIF AEB Bootcamp App 16-18 Emp</p>

Information Key PARTNERS

ERB

The Employer Representative Body- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (Thames Valley Skills Unit)

WDP

Workforce Development Partnerships

ETPs

Education & Training Providers

LEP

Thames Valley Berkshire LEP

PARTNERS

Including Trade Bodies, Careers Advisers, JCP and other agencies

CEIAG

Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance

Information Key FUNDING

LSIP

Local Skills Improvement Plan Funding

LSIF

Local Skills Improvement Fund (funding)

AEB

Adult Education Budget (inc Innovation Fund and Loans)

App

Apprenticeship Funding

16-18

16-18 year old education funding

Emp

Employer funded, or time commitment

Bootcamp

Skills Bootcamp

Construction & Built Environment

RATIONALE

The Skills Imperative 2035 estimates an average of 1.5% annual growth in the Berkshire industry over the period 2023-27, which is significantly higher than the CITB's[7] projection of 0.1% annual growth in the national construction workforce over the same period. Berkshire employers told us of a need for greater knowledge of the sector in schools to show the many opportunities and career progression available. Digital skills and a need for wider availability of green skills training have been highlighted in our interactions as were the demand for coaching, leadership, and management training. The new skills requirement arising from the green agenda and a necessity for those teaching to have up to date knowledge of these new requirements in the industry is having a big impact. Employers also told us that the skills gap in the construction industry is not limited to traditional trades such as bricklaying and plumbing, but also digital skills, and sustainability skills.

LABOUR MARKET

5,945 enterprises, the majority of these companies were micro or small, with only 30 medium-sized employers.
An estimated need for an additional 4,300 and 14,900 replacement workers in Berkshire by 2035.

SECTORAL CHALLENGES

The CITB has identified key skills gaps in the construction industry, including plastering, and electrical installation, as well as skills in BIM (Building Information Modelling).
Specifically, in Berkshire, there has been a 19% decline in the number of Carpenters & Joiner jobs; an 8% drop in electrician and electrical fitter jobs and a 9% decrease in construction operative jobs, along with a 7% fall in elementary construction occupations.
Moreover, research by the ECA – the UK's leading trade association for the electrotechnical and engineering services industry – confirmed that, the electrician population within the area is 'very low', with Berkshire ranking 35th out of 38 LSIP areas.

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[7] <https://www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/construction-industry-research-reports/construction-skills-network-csn/>

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