



Working collaboratively is the key to solving the skills crisis

Working together is the key to solving the skills crisis.

We face an acute housing crisis. And whilst huge progress is being made, with output up 74% in the past four years, we are still nowhere near delivering the number of homes the country needs. Government has set us an ambitious target of building 300,000 homes a year. If we are going to meet this challenge we need a workforce that can deliver.

Alongside housing generally, skills and training issues have moved up the political agenda. This was highlighted in the November 2017 Budget with bold government plans announced for more than £30m of construction skills training – particularly for those retraining. This has to be welcomed. With this interest

though comes pressure, and Government wants to see us playing our part in developing the capacity we need.

I am passionate about skills in our sector and honoured to chair the Home Building Skills Partnership.

Already great progress is being made. More than 70 companies have now signed our Skills Pledge and committed to work with their sub-contractors to recruit more people into the industry and train them to high standards.

Projects are underway to fast-track young college leavers into the sector, to agree training standards to improve quality, and on a campaign to attract more, high quality young people into our industry.

Momentum is growing and the Partnership



John Tutte, Chairman of the Skills Partnership

is already demonstrating that by pulling together, we can make a difference.

There is of course much more work to be done. We need to get more people and more companies on board to help us drive this agenda forward. I encourage you to get involved.

John Tutte – Group Chief Executive of Redrow and Chairman of the Home Building Skills Partnership

Training the existing workforce

Not only do we need to attract more people into the home building industry, we also need to retain the talent we do have – and make sure they have the right skills for the roles they are undertaking.

This is a key priority for the Skills Partnership and as such we have been working to establish a series of minimum skills standards against the 12 key roles identified, developing key training modules contextualised to the home building sector.

The site manager is one of the roles identified, one that is right at the hub of a house builder's operation.

Working with NHBC and training provider Hamilton Deeds, we have now developed a range of CITB funded contextualised short training courses to fill individual gaps in existing training standards, and help site managers build their competency. These courses started in January 2018, and are running to the end of May (there will be



more options available post May), with more than 130 training options across England and Scotland, which range from one to five days in duration.

Jenny Herdman, Director of the Skills Partnership, said: "Site managers are absolutely key to what house builders deliver on site. These courses are an incredible

opportunity for our members to improve the skill set of their site managers and so secure key benefits for their business."

"If these courses prove to be a success we hope to build on this and add more training programmes, but we need companies to get involved."

Full details of funded courses available by visiting hbf.co.uk/training. **Sign up today!**

We are looking at a range of ways to connect with our target audiences and attract people into house building.

As part of developing a network of dedicated Home Building Ambassadors, who can go out and talk to potential entrants into the industry, we hosted our very first dedicated training day in September in Birmingham. Six recent entrants from Taylor Wimpey, Barratt and NHBC took part in this lively interactive CITB led day, with guest support from Clare Hindley, New Entrant Programme Manager at Redrow, and Keepmoat's Social Value lead Dale Powell.

Barratt Graduate and participant Muneni Chirinda said: "Thank you for the opportunity to be a Home Building Ambassador and the essential training provided by the CITB. This is a role of great significance to me and the resources made available will prove invaluable!"

Trainees had the perfect opportunity to practice what they had learned by helping staff our Housebuilding Careers stand at the school leaver targeted What Career Live show in London over 6th -7th October. This included Taylor Wimpey Trainee Production Manager Emmy Martin, and Beverley Hall, graduate trainee.



Trainees at our first Home Building Ambassador training day

Careers events and Ambassadors

Beverley explains: "I found the day very interesting and rewarding, listening to students talk about their aspirations. I had an opportunity to share my knowledge of the home building industry and hopefully my story will inspire others to undertake a similar career path after they leave school".

We were joined by Galliard's award-winning apprentice plumber Robert Bishop, several graduate trainees from Barratt, plus HR representatives from Persimmon, Galliard, Barratt and Taylor Wimpey.

Further Home Building Ambassador training days are being planned, with the next one scheduled for 14th February at Redrow's training centre in Tamworth. See the Diary Dates

section for future dates. Clare Hindley who is helping lead this work said: "Ambassadors are key to inspiring the next generation of home builders, and this network will play an important part in that process. I am looking forward to taking this work forward on behalf of the Skills Partnership and encourage as many people as possible to get involved."

If you'd like to take part or nominate colleagues for either a Home Building Ambassador training day or support us on the stand at the next What Career Live event on 2nd -3rd March at the NEC in Birmingham, please get in touch!

Putting the boot into closing the skills gap

Last summer several intensive boot camp bridging courses took place at five colleges around the country: three in bricklaying, two in dry lining and one in carpentry. The objective: to find a way to address the issue of young people leaving construction courses unable to get employment in the sector; and boost college leavers' skills so that they are "job ready" and can move straight into home building employment.

Thirty one of the participating candidates are now working towards their NVQs and in jobs with companies including Persimmon, David Wilson Homes, St Modwen, and subcontractors Absolute Build & Design, Measoms, Astins, Stanmores MPG and Macs Plasterboard.

Director of Training for Saint-Gobain UK and Ireland, Shenaaz Chenia, which facilitated a bridging course with Barking

and Dagenham College, Romford, adds: "As a business we are acutely aware of the emerging skills gap in the construction sector and we are determined to do our bit to encourage the next generation of engaged and skilled workers."

Christine Harvey, Executive Director of Construction & Building Services at participating West Suffolk College, says: "By getting the support from employers and working with the The Home Building Skills Partnership, it has ensured that the students are working to the right standards and meeting the expectations of the construction industry."

There is a strong appetite for a follow-up programme among participating colleges, so watch this space!

For more information visit www.hbf.co.uk/hbsp

News In Brief ...

House Building Careers website

We have been making improvements to our house building careers website – a one-stop shop for young people and job seekers – so that it better reflects the needs of our target audiences. Visit www.housebuildingcareers.org.uk and let us know what you think. We would encourage you to link to this website, or use the content, on your own website.



Twitter page

One way you can keep right up to date on the latest Skills Partnership developments is by following us on Twitter at **@HomeBuildSkills**. We want to hear your home building skills stories – **so please share them!**

Supply Chain

Subcontractors provide the backbone of the house building industry's workforce. Ensuring they have the confidence and support to recruit and train the right people is thus absolutely central to what the Skills Partnership needs to achieve.

It is why one of the three main work areas of the Skills Partnership is focussed on how house builders can work better with suppliers, subcontractors, training providers and others to develop more joined up thinking on training.

Through this work we have secured CITB funding to support the development of skills within this key audience. To date, North East based Story Homes and national house builder Bovis Homes have taken advantage of the initiative and are using the funding to work with their sub-contractor bases to explore how they can help increase training provision.

Story Homes has run two successful pilot events to test the level of interest among sub-contractors in taking up funded initiatives aimed at improving skills in the workplace.

Fran Stott, its Group HR Director, said: "The level of interest has been incredibly encouraging. We had over 70 subcontractors attend our first engagement event in June and the appetite is really strong for more." Story has now secured funding to deliver up to 539 funded training days across three regions – Cumbria, North East and North West.

Bovis Homes has been running a series of



Story Homes supply chain event

Supply Chain workshops, and will be delivering the equivalent of 492 training days to its supply chain. Roger Morton, Head of Talent, said: "In the last month we have run three SSSTS (Site Supervisors Safety Training Scheme) courses exclusively for contractors. Forty one contractors have been trained and we are very grateful for the Skills Partnership funding for this initiative.

Around half of those trained are currently working with other house builders and it is encouraging to see how keen they are to engage with us. None of them have been provided with training from a house builder before. This is just the start to our programme: in the New Year we will have customer care training, stress awareness training and workshops to support contractors in pursuit of unlocking funding to support their own training."

Better harmonising the relationships between house builders and their subcontractors on recruitment and training would deliver huge benefits for all parties. We strongly encourage home builders to get involved and take advantage of this funding opportunity.

Agency appointed for major campaign

Raising awareness of the career opportunities available in house building is absolutely key to our ability to attract more, talented people. To help us tackle this challenge we have appointed a specialist creative agency to work with us to develop and implement a major home building career awareness campaign.

Initially targeting school leavers, parents and teachers, plus ex-military personnel, the aim is to raise the profile of the opportunities in the sector and build a better understanding of specific career paths. The campaign will kick off during March 2018 and the first phase will run for six months.

ThirtyThree, selected to be our creative partner following a tendering process in November, is already well on with developing a tailored campaign.

Andy George, Head of Talent Management at Barratt Developments, who is helping take this work forward, says: "Home building simply isn't seen as a positive career path

and there's a misconception that it's all about muddy boots. Through this campaign we want to help debunk some of the myths about career opportunities within the sector, especially among young people and their key influencers. We are really excited to be working with ThirtyThree and look forward to reporting back on progress".

Sara Morgan, Client Director from ThirtyThree, adds: "We're thrilled to be partnering with the Home Building Skills Partnership on such an exciting campaign and can't wait to launch it. The current housing crisis means it is an excellent time to be working in the sector. From school leavers to experienced professionals, there's never been a better time to get involved!" Our careers website **housebuildingcareers.org.uk** will be the main platform where our target audiences can discover what the sector offers.

Why not take a look?



Previous Housing Minister Alok Sharma with John Tutte and Stewart Baseley at HMI

Home Building Skills Pledge

The Home Building Skills Pledge was launched at the HBF's Housing Market Intelligence (HMI) Conference last October. This call to arms urges the home building sector to commit to recruiting, training and retaining the right workforce to build the right homes where we need them, and collaboratively tackling the widening skills gap.

We are pleased to report that since then more than 70 companies have acted on this and signed up. Collectively, this represents more than half the new homes built in England – an incredibly powerful commitment that only serves to illustrate how acute the industry considers the skills challenge to be, and we thank you for joining us – but this is just the start!

Our aim is to far exceed this in the year ahead, and cover the length and breadth of the home building industry, so we would encourage you to spread the word among your subcontractors and promote the Skills Pledge through your various communications channels.

So far, our focus has been on setting the foundations for a range of initiatives that we will be implementing in the coming months against our identified 12 key job roles, including:

- Fast tracking young people from college into bricklaying, dry lining and carpentry jobs in home building;
- Training standards for assistant/site manager roles;
- Expanding our pilot of engaging subcontractor supply chain in training by home builders;
- Launching an attraction campaign to raise awareness among school leavers and those that advise them in March 2018;
- Building a Training and Development Needs Analysis Tool to help you formalise those areas of development for you and your teams.

The Home Building Skills Pledge:

- Train to a standard;
- Engage and support;
- Champion diversity and inclusion;
- Promote careers.

Now it is over to you – so please get involved and let us know which are your key areas of interest!

For more information visit
www.hbf.co.uk/hbsp

Skills & Development

The impact of signing the Home Building Skills Pledge since its launch in October 2017 is already becoming apparent in the sector. Numerous additional businesses have signed up and we now have more than 70 companies engaged in the Skills Partnership work.

Developer Kier Living, for instance, is very interested in the work of the Skills Partnership to set out competency standards for each key job role and highlight any training or skills gaps. This aligns very well with their own training model, and has helped them identify additional elements they had not considered previously. We are exploring opportunities to share content and funding against their

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Nikki Hawthorn, Head of Talent & Development, Keepmoat

bespoke home building training. Executive Director John Anderson says: "We're proud to sign the Home Building Skills Pledge, which underlines our commitment to addressing the skills gap, to build on our 1% pledge commitment."

House builder Keepmoat Homes is strengthening its commitment to attracting new starters and providing traineeships. Nikki Hawthorn, Head of Talent and Development at Keepmoat Homes, explains: "We are committed to attracting new people to our company and equipping our trainees with the skills that are needed to deliver new homes. Signing up to the Home Building Skills Pledge strengthens this commitment and we are proud to be part of this."

"As experts in transforming brownfield sites into modern and thriving communities it's important that we train people in this field so that we can continue our work and pass on our knowledge to the next generation." They currently employ 121 apprentices and trainees, with 8% of the workforce made up of trainees, apprentices and graduates. The company also understands the benefits and importance of a diverse workforce and is proud that 27% of all trainees and apprentices at Keepmoat Homes are women.

Out & About ...

BARRATT'S award-winning Armed Forces transition programme aims to help close the skills gap by attracting and recruiting former armed forces personnel with transferable skills and fast track them into future management roles. The 12-month programme includes management development, on-site learning and classroom based modules.

So far, 29 people have completed the



Some of the 2016 Barratt Armed Forces transition scheme participants at its simulation centre in Coventry

programme, including former Marine, Greig Mills, who is now well on his way to becoming a site manager. He says: "I had lots of transferable skills, which I was able to take onto site. Working in a management role whilst I was in the forces, I was keen not to have to take a step down and go back to learning a trade. There aren't many job opportunities in management when you leave the forces. The scheme is brilliant".

For more information visit bit.ly/barrattforces

CREST NICHOLSON'S Site Management Academy won Best Training or Recruitment Initiative at the October

Diary Dates

14th February 2018
Home Building Ambassador training day - Tamworth Fully subscribed.

2nd -3rd March 2018
What Career Live - NEC
This major careers event brings together school leavers, employers and universities. The Partnership will be promoting home building careers and have a stand. Please get in touch if you would like to get involved. More detail at www.whatcareerlive.co.uk/birmingham.

13th June 2018
Home Building Ambassador training day - Tamworth
An opportunity for your new entrants to take part in training to become an ambassador for the sector and help recruit the home builders of the future. **Email us if interested.**

26th Sept 2018
Home Building Ambassador training day - Tamworth As above.

2017 Housebuilder Awards. Twelve trainees every year compile an experience portfolio of workplace tasks and are allocated a home to oversee from construction to the handing over to the customer. Each Academy Trainee is provided with a mentor ensuring that their management ability is consistently developed.

The structured programme ensures that there is clear career progression for trainees to obtain the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to move to Site Management level and beyond.

Anthony Wilkinson, Crest's Head of Talent Development, said: "Site managers are among the most difficult home building roles to recruit for, so by creating this progression model, we are nurturing and retaining emerging new talent and making the role more attractive to those wishing to start an exciting management career in new home building."

Got a story or wish to contribute an article? Get in touch!

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