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38,200 extra construction workers needed in South West by 2027

Against a backdrop of economic challenge, rising materials and labour costs, new figures from the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) reveal that 38,200 extra workers will be required to meet construction demand in the South West of England by 2027.

CITB's annual Construction Skills Network (CSN) report shows that:

- 38,200 extra workers (7,640 a year) will be required to meet construction demand between now and 2027 in the South West
- Construction output is set to grow for all nations and regions, however, recession is expected in 2023 with slow growth returning in 2024
- Employment must grow by 3.2% annually to meet increasing demand, which is higher than the UK figure of 1.7%
- The major sectors for demand are:
 - private housing

The report highlights that construction is expected to remain a sector where there is demand for workers despite the current economic uncertainty. As a result, recruitment, training, development and upskilling remain major priorities for the industry for 2023 and beyond.

CITB is responding by investing in apprenticeships, launching a range of targeted initiatives and working collaboratively with industry, to help the construction sector have a skilled, competent, and inclusive workforce.

CITB England Engagement Director, Deborah Madden, said: “Construction is vital in developing and strengthening our regional and national economies, and while the industry will certainly face challenges heading into the new year, our report shows there is also a lot of opportunity available for the South West.

“Despite the economic challenges, there is still huge demand for more workers in the industry, and it will become even more important to retain our current workforce over the next 18 months. There are a range of projects set to bring a steady stream of work into the South West this year, with the £25bn Hinkley Point C nuclear new build continuing to be at the forefront, as well as the Goram Homes project which plans to deliver 1,435 new homes over the next 5 years. These opportunities in the private housing sector will be major drivers for growth in the South West.

“Supporting the industry in attracting and retaining talent from right across the South West will be our main priority, with a particular focus on training routes. There’s no denying we have a major task ahead, but I feel inspired by the resilience shown over the last couple of years and look forward to supporting industry in emerging stronger when the recession ends.”

To help directly address these challenges and maximise the opportunities which will arise, CITB has invested almost £50m of Levy to support over 22,000 apprentices to help them join the industry; while grants have helped support over 16,000 learners to complete their qualifications.

Direct funding has provided grants over 269,000 training courses and in total £97m has been invested in grant funding by CITB, to make it as easy as possible for employers to recruit and retain their skilled workforce.

The CITB Grants Scheme provides grants for construction employers that provide day-to-day training for their workforce. There are several areas whereby businesses can apply for grant, including apprenticeships, short courses, and short or long qualifications.

The scheme is just one of the many ways CITB supports employers to maintain standards on construction sites and ensure the right skills are available in the right place. CITB also offers employer funds, which last year amounted to over £19m back to industry, assisting with standards development, training delivery and apprenticeships. One business who has benefitted from the CITB Grants Scheme is Bournemouth-based Daniel Jeffries Carpentry.

Daniel Jeffries, Daniel Jeffries Carpentry, said: “The scheme was great for me because when I first started, I was just on my own. Then I got talking to a painter on site one day and he suggested I look into getting some support. I’d never thought about it really because I’d always thought it would be a bit complicated, and a bit too much paperwork and hassle, but it was actually really easy.”

“I was also able to get the rest of the team on training courses through CITB support. They’ve been doing all sorts of different tests here, including some essential training like the health and safety courses.”

CITB continues to provide targeted support to SMEs through grant and funding and through support in accessing training and funding. Since April 2022, CITB’s engagement team has supported SMEs on 26,976 occasions, supporting them to continue to train during the current economic uncertainty.

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Notes to Editors

For further information or enquiries, please contact: press.office@citb.co.uk

For more information on how the CITB Grants Scheme supports employers, please click [here](#)