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19,050 extra construction workers needed in East of England by 2027

Against a backdrop of economic challenge, rising materials and labour costs, new figures from the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) reveal that 19,050 extra workers will be required to meet construction demand in the East of England by 2027.

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

- 19,050 extra workers (3,810 a year) will be required to meet construction demand between now and 2027 in the East of England
- 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 1.5% annually to meet increasing demand
- The major sectors for demand are:
 - infrastructure
 - public non-residential
 - 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 East of England.

“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 East of England this year, especially the East Anglia Two and East Anglia One North wind farms, which are due to start construction in 2023, as well as the new nuclear power station at Sizewell C. The £8.2bn Lower Thames Crossing will provide infrastructure work to the sector, while developments such as the Cambridge New Garden Town project will boost the private housing sector. Alongside buoyant public non-residential construction output, these opportunities will be major drivers for growth in the East of England.

“Supporting the industry in attracting and retaining talent from right across the East of England 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 for 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.

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

We've increased investment at our National Construction College (NCC) in Bircham Newton to meet the industry's specialist training needs. By focusing the curriculum on unmet demand, we have achieved a 25% increase in the number of people trained. 96% of CITB apprentices progress to employment or further education, with over 90% remaining in construction.

CITB also offers funding aimed specifically at smaller companies such as the Skills and Training Fund. Companies with fewer than 250 PAYE employees can access up to £25,000 annually (depending on their size). By the end of quarter two 2022/23, £3.9m had been invested in companies via this fund.

This includes Cambridge-based L Lynch Plant Hire & Haulage, who received £15,000 from the Medium Skills and Training Fund to expand the capacity of their GPS plant training centre. Gez Bonner, National Training Manager, said the process was simple and straightforward, and greatly improved the centre's productivity.

"The partnership with CITB made it possible," said Gez. "We received so much support from our Engagement Advisors. CITB made the process very simple, and communication is always flowing between us. Some businesses across the industry might put a barrier between them and CITB but I always say, it's not us and them, it's us together. Training is not a profit, but value to the whole construction industry"

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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 Skills and Training Fund supports employers, please click [here](#)