

Building Growth South West Closedown Report

Organisation Name:	YTKO
Project Code:	YTKO-PIC-19-01

Overview:

Despite the curtailed delivery caused by the Covid 19 pandemic, the Building Growth South West (BGSW) project has achieved a significant impact in supporting learners to build and explore a career in the construction sector.

The BGSW consortium offered unique networks across private sector industry, skills provision, public sector and third-sector outreach organisations to embed a culture of engagement so that individuals could explore the construction industry and gain the skills and confidence to foster long-term sustainable careers. Even though the project was not able to be completed our consortium felt that we embedded a network of key stakeholders to facilitate pathways to “change the face of construction” in the South West region.

*Across the project YTKO worked with nearly **one hundred** different partners, both sector-based and education providers; creating a network of stakeholders. Most of these partners continue to work collaboratively with us for the good of the sector despite the removal of funding for this particular project.*

The project aimed to tackle all the target learner groups and through our marketing, stakeholder engagement and initial training cohorts we demonstrated success at reaching all the key audiences:

- Women
- Ex-service personnel
- Long-term unemployed
- Young people not in employment education or training

Perhaps the most important element of the project was utilising YTKO’s profile across the regions (primarily focused on Bristol and Exeter) to maximise the opportunities to curate networks and reach disenfranchised learners, building pathways into training, mentorships and construction job opportunities. It is fortunate that YTKO’s continuing commitment to these pathways means that learners will continue to be introduced to funding opportunities and we are able to commit to facilitating partnership opportunities in the future.

*Over the project YTKO and its partners attended regular steering group meetings and progress meetings throughout the duration of this project. Alongside this YTKO and partners attended **35 events and reached an audience of over 3,000 interested participants**, this is not including the online engagement from several social media platforms that were used to reach out to the underrepresented target audiences.*

The extensive marketing and events activity continues to yield opportunities for learners and partners to work together. For example, YTKO are working with Exeter City Council to build their skills and apprenticeships strategy and have been at the centre of skills development work for Bristol City Council and the West of England Combined Authority.

The emails still come in from interested learners and the phones continue to ring and YTKO are pleased that we can continue to help these learners, brokering them into relevant partner opportunities or funding schemes. YTKO are still promoting the sector and the skills opportunities

from CITB at relevant events to ensure that the funding which was invested in the project is maximised in terms of its legacy and impact.

Finally, the learning materials which were developed in partnership with industry and embedded with a number of leading training providers (alongside the delivery which has already taken place) has meant that the project will continue to impact the opportunities for learners to create a basic understanding of the employment and career opportunities available in the construction industry and build the confidence to allow learners to take the first step on their employment journey in the sector.

Over the reduced project timeframe YTKO delivered training to 36 learners and an additional cohort are still progressing through the platform at their own pace.

Outreach and marketing:

Over the entire project YTKO and its partners attended a huge number of events. For the purposes of this report we have attached a detailed register of all the events we attended prior to the closedown of the project.

A key element of the BGSW project has been the social media engagement which was an extremely successful method of reaching new audiences in the target groups. To provide an illustration of this activity we have attached a summary social media report as an annex.

Below we have attached a list of events we attended as part of our *legacy activity* work for the project. The objectives of these events was to act as a facilitator to deliver expert knowledge to our target audiences and promote relevant funding opportunities within our network of provision and partnerships.

Event	Date	Approx. Attendees	Comment
Ways2work online meeting	03/06/20	30	Bristol City Council network meeting to promote support for underrepresented groups and communities.
Future of construction; Tech webinar.	04/06/20	20	Topics based on how technology will transform the industry and drive the cost of building down.
Weston College – working lunch webinar.	17/06/20	TBC	Webinar – Planning future workforce. Discussion around impact of COVID-19 and the way we work, do business and plan future workforce.
Online working group on apprenticeships in light of COVID-19 Working group.	17/06/20	6	Part of Construction and Development Group linking back to Building Back Better with reference to the pipeline of work and the role of the supply chain.
Women construct – online workshop	30/06/20		Monthly workshops to elevate women in construction.

Digital National Employment Careers Fair – BFRS	Sept 20	20	Online event to raise profile of project requirements and recruit service leavers looking to start a career in construction.
Bristol Housing Festival digital expo	Oct 20	1,000	BGSW will again have a key role to highlight the opportunities in the supply chain and recruit learners into the programme,

Key Events:



CITB SW Roadshow 2019



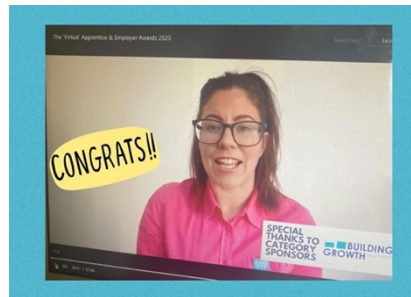
Building Greater Exeter – Construction Job shop



Weston College Construction Academy Visit



BGSW Training Development Workshop



BGSW Sponsoring Exeter College Virtual Apprenticeship Awards 2020



BGSW hosting Exeter Social Sessions for young individuals

MARKETING FOCUS – The Bristol Housing Festival

YTKO has worked closely with the Bristol Housing Festival for several years. The annual festival is much more than just a three-week event to promote modular housing and, backed by the Bristol Mayor’s office, it offers a huge opportunity to raise the profile of skills and training issues within construction. In the first year the BGSW project presented at City Hall alongside both the Bristol City Mayor and West of England Metro Mayor.



In 2020 the virtual expo offered a number of fantastic opportunities to join panel discussions on social value in construction, skills and training barriers, innovation in construction and the future of modular homes.

This profile has generated a massive amount of interest in YTKO and its partners and paved the way for us to continue to be at the centre of skills and employment discussions in the West of England.



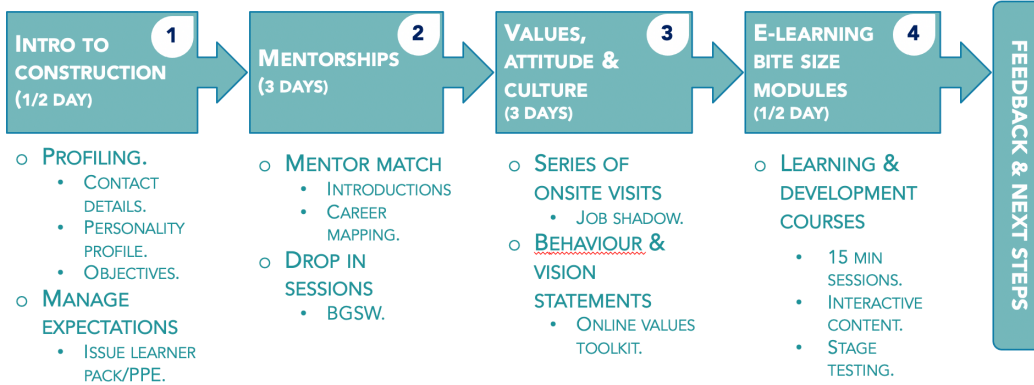
“Working with YTKO and the CITB has been a fantastic opportunity for the Bristol Housing Festival. The construction and housing sectors are suffering from a skills crisis and the solutions aren’t always as straightforward as building more Colleges or training more brickies; plus there isn’t always a full-time job at the end of it! Programmes like BGSW helped to drive that narrative, creating inclusive networks to change the image of construction and make sure that new entrants to the sector have the knowledge, confidence and understanding to realise long-term, fruitful careers.” **Jeز Sweetland, Founder of the Bristol Housing Festival**

Training development and delivery:

Over the course of the project YTKO and its partners developed an extensive programme of training to support new entrants to explore the construction sector.

The training was developed in partnership with industry to offer a “soft skills” programme. Coupled with support from certified industry mentors we helped learners to improve their understanding of the sector, build confidence to undertake effective employment training and provided pastoral support to ensure that learners had access to a number of different employment opportunities across the sector.

SOFT SKILLS TRAINING PLAN



It was important to make the training as flexible and accessible to the learners as possible and the blend of digital resources with 1-2-1 mentor support was extremely effective. The training was supplemented by a support programme to make sure that learners had a large number of opportunities to meet key stakeholders from industry and develop employment pathways in line with key public sector partners – such as the Job Centre Plus and relevant local authorities. A pack of resources and training materials are included in the annexes of this report.

Course review for BGSW Constructing Champions Course
by Adonaye Toli | ★★★★★

Course review for BGSW Constructing Champions Course
by Paul Strawbridge | ★★★★★

Introduction to Health and Safety

The Importance of Being Well

Mentor Mission

POW!

TRAINING FOCUS – Vistry Partnerships and Bell group

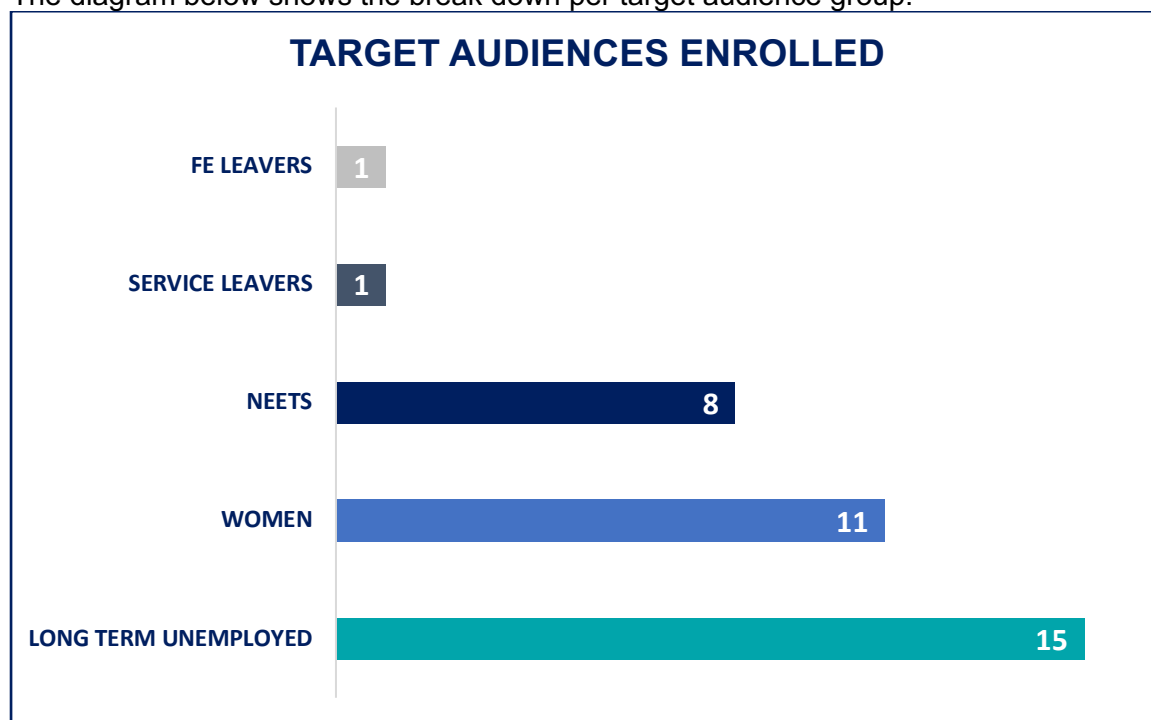
During the project YTKO worked with a number of leading industry partners but particular engagement and support was received from Vistry Partnerships and Bell Group who were particularly active in the West and South West regions.

Both organisations recognised the importance of the work which was being undertaken by BGSW and were keen to promote the soft skills training and mentorships within their supply chains and contractor networks.

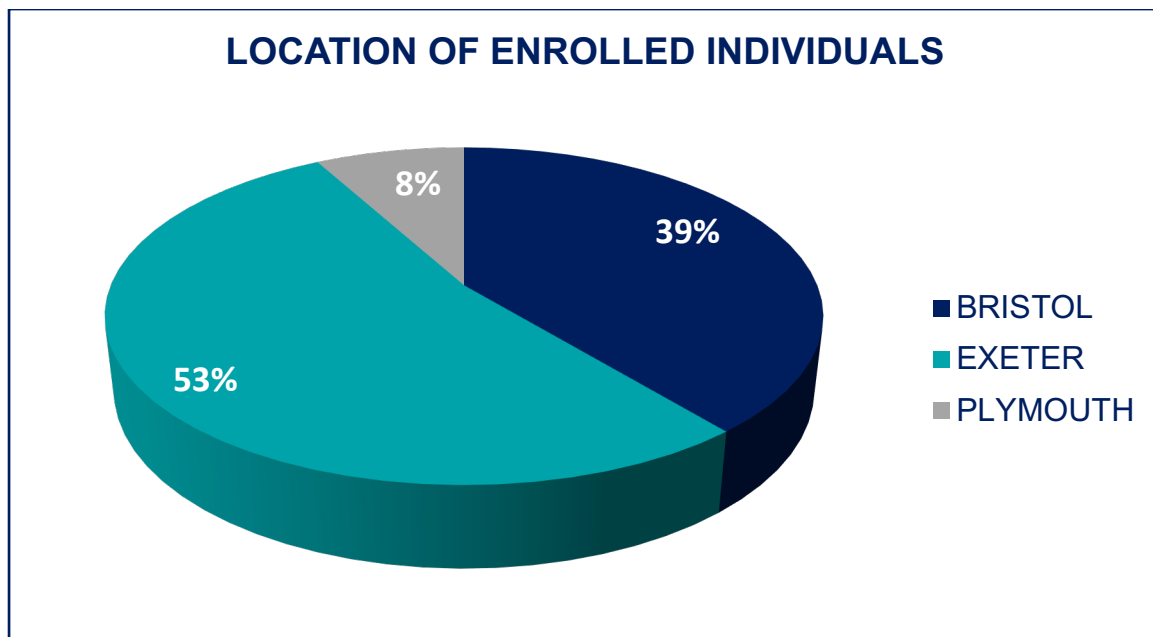
“Working with BGSW was really exciting as it demonstrated key investment in the region to drive inclusivity in the construction sector and get to the heart of issues which have caused the skills crisis. It is not just about qualified trades from technical colleges; it is also about showing the sector in its entirety to potential learners so that we attract a wide-range of roles and backgrounds. Creating the confidence that working in construction is about developing a diverse and exciting culture of work. Going forward the skills and training which was developed – and the lessons we’ve learnt – will be at the very heart of our employment and skills work in the West.” **Charlotte Olver, Vistry Partnerships Ltd.**

“The Partnership is excited about the potential of the Building Growth South West project in making a real impact across Greater Exeter and supporting all of our partners with their recruitment needs. To be able to work with the groups that have been identified will broaden the reach and appeal of the construction sector as an employment and career choice.” **Matthew Cousins, Commercial Director at Apex Scaffolding (Exeter)**

The diagram below shows the break down per target audience group.



The diagram below shows the location where our learners were based.



Legacy

Despite the premature closure of the project due to the Covid19 pandemic the impact of the project will be significant - and legacy long-lasting. In the following section we will detail several of the impact areas where we expect to continue to provide a benefit as part of the BGSW project legacy:

Stakeholders and engagement networks:

- As a direct result of the networks and profile created in the BGSW project, YTKO and its partners in Devon County Council and Building Greater Exeter have developed a project to support SME businesses in the construction sector to improve their digital skills engagement. The project has the potential to unlock skills and training investment in over 500 SMEs in the HotSW region and is in the final stages of application approval with the European Social Investment fund.
- YTKO's work with the Bristol Housing Festival, supported by CITB, has led to work with the Bristol City Council Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's office to create a cohesive strategy to develop construction skills on an inclusive and innovative basis. This work is supplemented by an industry group to look specifically at the construction skills crisis as part of the One City Plan.
- From our roles in BGSW YTKO were invited to partner with the construction skills Centre of Excellence with Vistry Partnerships, Weston College and the University of the West of England.
- YTKO are leading a piece of work with the West of England Combined Authority to drive a Modern Methods of Construction Region of Excellence strategy. The skills and training investment will lead to massive funding opportunities for learners.
- From our profile-raising activities several key speaking, promotion and networking opportunities have been undertaken by YTKO which again helps to engage learners and training providers to embed the soft skills training.
- YTKO have committed to supporting sole traders and construction SMEs in South Bristol to engage new markets and business opportunities through our network of stakeholders.
- YTKO have committed to supporting entrepreneurs interested in starting a career in construction and will provide grants, funding, introductions and opportunities to work with our network.

Training:

- YTKO have committed to hosting the training materials on our e-learning platform until 2023. This will allow us to maximise the opportunities for training providers and construction employers to pilot the materials and embed them into their courses and pathways – we are already seeing demand from Vistry, Bell Group and Kier; alongside Exeter City College and Bristol City College. YTKO will also make staffing resource available to engage with potential training delivery partners to ensure that we make the materials as widely available as possible.
- YTKO will continue to take referrals from CITB should any learners wish to be enrolled onto the e-learning part of the programme up until 2023.
- YTKO are in the process of developing a mentor programme in partnership with Building Greater Exeter to allow learners to work with pre-selected mentors who can then arrange site visits and broker opportunities into apprenticeship pathways.
- YTKO have brokered opportunities for learners from BAME backgrounds, via our work with the young people charity Babassa, to receive support to explore a career in construction and further support to work with a BAME mentor in Bristol.
- YTKO, The Bristol Housing Festival and Bristol City Council are working in partnership as part of an Innovate UK project to support the local SME construction sector to explore opportunities in modular housing. This work will include opportunities to develop further training pathways to help learners from underrepresented communities and groups in Bristol to explore careers in housing and develop the skills required for the future of MMC construction processes.
- YTKO and Vistry Partnerships have committed to working together to support their skills academy in North Bristol to promote opportunities to BAME or vulnerable learners to explore a career in construction. As part of this work we are in discussions with the Mayor's Office to develop an offsite construction skills academy which again will utilise the training materials and resources developed as part of the BGSW project.

This legacy activity demonstrates the potential reach and impact of the project. It is a massive disappointment that the project was not supported to completion, however, the work of YTKO, the consortium partners and the continued support of the CITB has demonstrated that the investment in the first year of the project will continue to make a difference to learners and the wider industry.