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25,350 extra construction workers needed in West Midlands by 2027

Against a backdrop of economic challenge, rising materials and labour costs, new figures from the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) reveal that 25,350 extra workers will be required to meet construction demand in the West Midlands by 2027.

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

- 25,350 extra workers (5,070 a year) will be required to meet construction demand between now and 2027 in the West Midlands
- 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 2.3% annually to meet increasing demand
- The major sectors for demand are:
 - private housing
 - non-housing repair & maintenance
 - commercial

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 West Midlands.

“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 West Midlands this year, from the £96bn investment to build new and upgrade existing rail infrastructure as part of the Integrated Rail Plan, to the regeneration of Coventry city centre and largescale housing projects across the region. These opportunities will deliver output for several sectors, becoming major drivers for growth in the West Midlands.

“Supporting the industry in attracting and retaining talent from right across the West Midlands 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 £97m in direct grant funding, supporting over 269,000 training courses to make it as easy as possible for employers to recruit and retain their skilled workforce.

CITB’s England Construction Opportunities (ECO) commission has awarded a total of £1.8m to help address the industry’s skills gap, increase employment retention, and provide vital support to new starters at the beginning of their construction careers.

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.

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.

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.

This includes Craig Foster, who, following a career in the armed forces, relished a new challenge. Thanks to support from CITB and his employer, Birmingham-based B Price Ltd, Craig completed an apprenticeship in carpentry. He's found his feet in construction, progressing to a site supervisor and hoping to go further.

"Throughout his apprenticeship both he – and B Price Ltd – were supported by CITB in getting all of the relevant qualifications for Craig, and for B Price accessing funding and everyday advice," said Libby Price, from B Price Ltd. "By employing apprentices we retain good staff and the business benefits from having reliable and committed personnel whose work always meets the highest standards."

ENDS

Notes to Editors

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

To find out more about Craig's start in construction, please click [here](#)