



Construction's impact on the big society

UK Contractors Group

The UK Contractors Group represents over 30 leading contractors, who together produce some £36 billion of construction turnover - some 30% of the construction industry's total output.

Introduction

In October 2009 UKCG published a study on the economic benefits of investment in infrastructure. This study is available on our website at www.ukcg.org.uk/fileadmin/documents/UKCG/pamphlets/UKCGfina.pdf

It showed that:

- every £1 invested in construction generates £2.84 in total economic activity;
- 92p of every £1 spent on construction is retained in the UK;
- every £1 invested by the public sector yields a return of 56p to the Exchequer. The net investment is therefore 44p.

The report also highlighted the enormous contribution construction makes to the UK economy:

- The construction value chain is 13% of GDP
- Construction provided a £534 million trade surplus for the UK over three years (2007 – 2009)
- 290,000 firms work in construction, many are SMEs
- Construction employs 2.8 million people – 9% of the workforce

In addition to the economics, construction also makes a huge impact to the fabric of society.

For example, nearly a quarter of all small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) work in construction. These one million companies contribute £174 billion to the economy and provide many jobs within local communities.

This report seeks to showcase, through a series of case studies, some of the many other ways construction is having an impact on local communities and contributing to the “big society”.

Key messages

This report shows that the construction industry is:

- Helping through public private partnerships to deliver better education
- Delivering vocational skills suitable for the 21st century
- Helping to eliminate social exclusion
- Reducing re-offending and supporting people to turn round their lives
- Restoring sustainable and vibrant communities
- On target to halving the amount of waste to landfill by 2012; and
- Providing cleaner and safer hospitals.

The case studies

1. National Skills Academy for Construction
2. The Prince's Trust "Get into Construction" Programme
3. BeOnsite
4. Restoring sustainable communities
5. Halving waste to landfill
6. Cleaner hospitals

PFI Schools

KPMG published a report in 2009 that showed:

- **The rate of improvement in educational attainment is 44% faster in schools rebuilt using the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) than those schools built more conventionally; and**
- **Unauthorised absences in schools rebuilt using PFI were reducing whereas in a comparable set of conventional schools it was increasing.**

National Skills Academy for Construction

Founded in 2006, the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAFC) is a new way of providing training in construction skills. Training is delivered on a local basis around major construction projects. It does not rely on classroom or college workshops and it is employer-led. Hence, it is delivering the skills needed for the construction industry in the 21st century.

By the end of March 2010, the National Skills Academy for Construction had:

- Engaged with some 3,500 companies.
- Supported over 400 work experience placements, including those undertaking the C&BE diploma.
- Over 700 apprentices who have gained employment on NSAFC projects as well as 100 graduates.
- Projects that have initiated over 1,900 NVQs in the workplace; of these 1,700 have been delivered to supply chain companies. 1,400 individuals have been supported in completing their NVQ whilst on site.
- Over 1,900 job opportunities coordinated through the PSC to ensure the local community can benefit from the construction work.
- Over 6,000 people who have undertaken some form of advanced health and safety training with an additional 1,000 people being trained through the Site Safety Plus training, 335 of these were on the five day course from within supply chain companies.

Some examples of the scheme working in practice are:

Stanhope Estate, Ashford

A training hub centred on a £60 million project to construct 450 new homes and refurbish 330 council owned properties owned by Ashford Borough Council. It will be completed in 2012. The project's training plan provides the workforce with a range of training opportunities focussing on work experience, apprenticeships, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS). The scheme has found work placements for 60 young people, provided over 37 new entrant training opportunities and delivered over 160 NVQs.

CASE STUDY

The National
Skills Academy
CONSTRUCTION

Lee Rand, trainee electrician

Lee Rand left school at 16 with few qualifications and spent the following two years claiming unemployment benefit. Lee who has lived his life on the Stanhope Estate had always harboured a desire to become an electrician, but found that doors were closed to him due to his basic qualifications.

However, through the National Skills Academy for Construction project his prospects changed. The scheme provided him with the opportunity to gain some practical experience and put himself in front of local employers. Lee visited the on-site Skills Academy Training Centre, and although his qualifications were not at a level to begin an apprenticeship, there was the opportunity to become an electrician's mate.

Lee started his new trainee electrician's role in February 2008, and shortly after applied to college again. The course, a four year City & Guilds 2330 (NVQ level 3) Electrical Technical qualification, allows him to work for four days a week and attend College on a day release. Having the opportunity to work on the Stanhope project has helped transform Lee's career prospects.

Lee Rand

Pinderfields Hospital

The £311m Pinderfields project created two new state of the art hospitals in Wakefield and Pontefract. Outdated buildings were replaced or upgraded to house new high-tech facilities designed to provide top quality care for patients. The new hospitals at Pontefract and Wakefield will be joining the excellent modern hospital at Dewsbury to provide high quality care to people throughout mid Yorkshire.

Launched in March 2008, the on-site Academy forged close links with training providers to ensure a wide range of opportunities were offered to new and existing workers, including offering cohorts of adult learners the opportunity to complete a 16 week course which leads to a City and Guilds 6217 Introductory Certificate in Construction.

The project established a strong relationship with the trade union UCATT to ensure support of the existing workforce. This included a focus on health and wellbeing. Over 80 individuals benefited from Skills for Life support by attending literacy and numeracy courses. As a result of the relationships established between the Project Skills Co-ordinator and the local training providers, 154 people have been registered onto an NVQ programme, with 141 people completing an NVQ on site.

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CASE STUDY

The National Skills Academy
CONSTRUCTION

The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Olympic Park contains six major construction projects. Contractors on the Park have committed to providing;

- over 200 work experience placements and 500 site visits for local schools, colleges and universities
- over 150 apprenticeships in addition to those already in the supply chain
- over 1,000 job opportunities; and
- over 250 NVQs to enable the upskilling of the existing workforce

From 2011 it is envisaged further commitments will be made as those contractors appointed for fit-out work commit to National Skills Academy for Construction principles.

The Athletes Village is making similar commitments under the National Skills Academy for Construction with Bovis Lend Lease as the main contractor offering;

- over 70 work experience placements
- 50 apprenticeships
- 800 job opportunities; and
- 200 NVQs for the existing workforce

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The Prince's Trust

Get into construction programme

More than 1.2 million young people are not in education, employment or training in the UK. 1 in 5 socially excluded people have no-one to turn to for help. The Prince's Trust helps change these young lives by providing practical and financial support to disadvantaged 14-30 year olds. Its focus is on those who may have struggled at school, been in care, are long-term unemployed or have been in trouble with the law.

The Prince's Trust Construction and Business Services Leadership Group (CBSLG) has had a huge success in supporting young people in a practical way. It has run over 100 programmes and helped almost 1,500 people to increase their skills. 56% of these young people are now in full time employment, 26% in training and education and 1% undertaking voluntary work.

Nearly 40 construction companies are directly engaged in this work and help finance the programme. Many others also work to offer training and job opportunities. The Prince's Trust engages with these companies linking the programmes they run to local building projects so that the young people get a real taste of working in the industry. Volunteers talk about the reality of working in the construction sector and many of the companies offer work placements, apprenticeships and jobs.

The "Get into Construction" programme aims to give unemployed young people, who are work-ready but do not have vocational skills, the opportunity to develop the relevant vocational skills and/or experience to enable them to move into a long term job. The trust has run "Get into's" in construction, plumbing, sustainable building, heritage building, quarrying, facilities management and painting & decorating. Many of these programmes have been run with Further Education colleagues, but increasingly trust members have run these themselves, which fits in very well with their corporate social responsibility agenda to train and employ local young people not in training, education or employment. All programmes contain the relevant skills qualifications that enable the participants to move onto entry level jobs.

This helps ensure that construction is open to a much more diverse work force. The Prince's Trust works with young people who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Of the young people supported during 2009/10 aged 16-25:

- 99% were unemployed
- 75% were educational underachievers
- 31% were ex-offenders
- 7% were in the care system.
- 22% were non-white ethnic minorities
- 3% were refugees
- 14% were disabled.



These are truly the hardest to reach young people in the UK.

The Trust has been working closely with local authorities and councils to link its agenda as the UK's leading youth charity tackling worklessness and long term youth unemployment to their directive of increasing the skills and employment opportunities of local disadvantaged young people. The impact on their lives is far reaching.

Through the Construction & Business Services Leadership Group, the Prince's Trust has united the construction and business services sector to support disadvantaged young people across the UK.

Balfour Beatty

Balfour Beatty has not only made a vital financial commitment to Get Into Construction, but has also turned their attention to offering top quality work placements for young people taking part.

To recognise this leading commitment to helping young people take their first steps into employment, the CBSLG awarded Balfour Beatty an Award of Excellence.

Group Managing Director, Mike Peasland, is now Chairman of the CBSLG and has a firm focus on ensuring the growth and sustainability of Get into programmes into the future, linked to their industry.

Building on their shared partnership through the CBSLG, Balfour Beatty is also working with The Trust to enhancing the social environment of the many communities in which they work. To celebrate 100 years of success, Balfour Beatty launched a flagship charity programme Building Better Futures. Through Building Better Futures Balfour Beatty has extended their support to The Trust's Community Cash Award programme and The Trust is now proud to name Balfour Beatty as a Silver Patron.

Carillion plc

Carillion deliver programmes offsite, at their Training Centre. They also incorporate a visit to a local working site during the course so the young people are able to ask the foreman questions and see how their practical training is implemented in the work environment.

All young people on Get into Construction programmes with Carillion take their CSCS (skills) test and Abrasive Wheel Certificate. They are also provided with personal protective equipment which they can keep at the end of the programme so they have the correct clothing for beginning work in the industry.

Aware of the need to gain experience in practical skills, Carillion offer training on a variety of skills, such as: basic bricklaying, carpentry, plastering and tiling and painting and decorating. Carillion have also made good use of current apprentices to come



and speak to the young people and do demonstrations. Similarly, due to the length of this partnership, young people who have progressed in the industry as a result of Get into Construction are sometimes invited to speak to current participants which is particularly inspiring.

Carillion's apprenticeship programme provides the perfect next step and some young people have progressed directly on to this opportunity. Carillion have also directly offered jobs to some young people upon completing the course, which is testament to its success.

True life story - Warren Christian

"Before getting in touch with The Prince's Trust, I'd essentially given up on life. While academically bright, I was shot at for being 'in the wrong postcode' and things deteriorated. I saw gangsters as role models and carried a knife. After one of my friends was killed, I became depressed and aggressive.

"I heard about The Prince's Trust Get into Construction course through a friend. It was amazing how much people at The Trust understood me and cared about what happened to me. Six months after applying for the course, I was learning five trades and earning my CSCS card which allows me to work on construction sites.

"After the course, I was given an apprenticeship that led to work as a Finishing Manager. I hope to study Construction Project Management."

Warren Christian



Construction Youth Trust (CYT)

CYT undertakes similar work to the Prince's Trust and targets its training and support to 16-30 year olds from under-represented groups in construction. These include people financially disadvantaged, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, women and those with low aspirations. CYT works with around 3,000 people a year – nearly 700 of whom have progressed into education, training or employment.

BeOnsite

BeOnsite was established by Bovis Lend Lease and is the culmination of eleven years of leading the industry in linking local people to construction training and jobs resulting in almost 12,000 people finding construction employment, and a further 11,000 people going into retail jobs.

It aims to tackle social exclusion and reduce re-offending. It also helps tackle welfare reform. For example:

- a person claiming Job Seekers Allowance and housing benefit will cost the tax payer c£9k per year. A BeOnsite employee earns a minimum of £15,800pa and pays c£3,000 in tax and NI.
- an offender in prison costs society a minimum of £35,000 and may cost as much as £75,000. An ex-offender employed by BeOnsite earns a minimum of £15,800pa and instead contributes c£3,000 in tax and NI.
- sheltered accommodation for a homeless person requires an annual service fee of up to £20,000 per year. A BeOnsite employee earns a minimum of £15,800pa and pays c£3,000 in tax and NI.

BeOnsite takes individuals who have been socially excluded and who have low levels of existing skills and supports them into work. The model involves a short pre-employment programme which includes training in employability, health and safety and bespoke industry learning. This is followed by on-the-job training which provides a pathway into a specific trade or skill set. This employer-led model enables individuals to become fully-skilled and employed in key trades by training on the job over a period of years and undertaking a professional qualification. Each person's training and employment path is discussed and mapped out with contractors, to provide clear routes from entry to employment and onto fully qualified tradesperson status.

BeOnsite works with a wide variety of people including prisoners and ex-offenders. In this sector, BeOnsite has found that many currently serving prisoners have little if any experience of the world of work. As a result they are likely to have many misconceptions, unrealistic expectations, fears and doubts. BeOnsite seeks to identify and attempt to deal with these from the outset as this approach is much more likely to result in sustained employment. The key difference of the BeOnsite approach to working with offenders is that the candidates start with a supported and real experience of the world of work as early in the process as possible. BeOnsite is also championing the reduction of youth reoffending with the London Mayor's 'Time for Action' project where not only jobs are offered but where current employees act as peer mentors. Both offenders and their mentors deal with reality rather than an 'imagined world' from the beginning. Thus BeOnsite employees can not only turn around their own lives but also help others to achieve the same.

As technology develops within the construction industry, new skills are needed. BeOnsite works directly with the supply chain to understand what the skills are and then organises bespoke training using employer-led provision with direct influence from the manufacturers. In some cases, training is provided directly by manufacturers. This collaborative approach working with Industry, Government, sector skills councils and training providers looks to ensure the industry gets the

training provision it needs, the individual gains sustainable careers, and the UK remains competitive within a global economy.

BeOnsite believes that skilled workers have best chance to help themselves, gaining expertise and contacts. BeOnsite was created to help those who don't have these advantages but who can also prove themselves to be excellent workers and an asset to the industry given the right support and training.

BeOnsite has focused on working with people who would have been pushed much further to the 'back of the queue' if they had not sought them out. By doing this it has saved the Treasury money, totally transformed individual lives and made communities safer places.

Mitch Defeal

Meetojah "Mitch" Defeal, 19, was met by BeOnsite's offender-dedicated team member in his first week of release in August 2009. He had a rough idea of what he wanted to do but no experience of work. After several meetings building relationships and discussing options, a route was jointly mapped out with a contingency plan in place to support any potential upsets. Mitch was then taken on a visit to Bovis Lend Lease's £270m One New Change project for a taster of a live site.

BeOnsite works closely with the Bovis Lend Lease supply chain and in particular with specialist drylining contractor Measoms who assessed Mitch on their behalf. It was evident to all that Mitch's motivation was high and he engaged enthusiastically. Measoms were highly impressed and offered him a work trial which then led to an apprenticeship.

This placement was at the national minimum wage and as such his earnings would not meet the high rent required for the specialist hostel in which he was required to live. BeOnsite together with the on-site JCP team, worked hard to resolve this and other practical issues by accessing employment start-up funds, housing benefit support and advocating on his behalf to ensure a smooth transition into work.

Thus Mitch took the brave step of completely turning his back on his previous offending and worked instead towards the new goal of employment. This route was new territory for him and a change of lifestyle that he took on board with excitement and trepidation.

Mitch has now been working at One New Change for almost a year and is thriving in his new environment, working diligently and attending College one day a week as part of his apprenticeship. He is looking forward to a bright future as this testimonial shows.

"Mitch is still learning the practical side of the job, but he more than makes up for that with enthusiasm. He is very well liked, shows character, and has, in my and the opinion of all I ask, fitted in very well. His character makes him shine. You get the desire to learn, along with the mischievousness needed to fit in, and the wanting to produce something worthwhile. He is just right for Measoms."

Gordon Chrystie, Site Supervisor, Measoms

Mitch Defeal



Restoring sustainable communities

Castlefields, Runcorn

By the 1980s, the Castlefields estate in Runcorn had slipped into environmental, social and economic decline. Crime, particularly drug dealing and anti-social behaviour were rife and the estate's deck-access flats were hugely unpopular. Since 2003, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), working with Halton Borough Council and two local housing associations, had been implementing a comprehensive masterplan for Castlefields' redevelopment. The deck-access flats are coming down, new homes are being built and residents are once more returning to the estate.

The issues

The Castlefields estate was initially popular with the new residents who moved there from the suburbs of Liverpool between 1968 and 1972. They were promised 'streets in the sky' and most were happy to build a new life in neighbouring Runcorn.

But the estate's 2,400 original properties (including 1,400 deck-access flats) and some of its modernist design principles, did not stand the test of time. When Halton Borough Council consulted with residents on the estate's future nearly 10 years ago, Castlefields had become synonymous with economic, environmental and social deprivation, crime and poor housing.

The estate's residents were clear about what they wanted, demolition of the deck-access flats and the regeneration of the estate's neglected district centre. They wanted new homes, improved public spaces and better community facilities.

What is being done?

The HCA provided funding to build new affordable homes at Castlefields and assisted with site preparation and remediation to kickstart the estate's regeneration.

A rolling programme moving residents into new homes in small numbers (alongside existing neighbours) before demolishing existing deck-access properties is well underway. Work is also being done with Halton Borough Council to help bring forward land at Castlefields for the development of private housing, the ambition being to widen housing choice for new and existing residents including a mix of social and private housing. Work also began in February 2010 to create a new local centre for Castlefields. The area has benefited



from a new £2.6m park built on a former brownfield site. Phoenix Park includes a pavilion, children's play area, skateboard and BMX area and a climbing boulder.

To date 883 of the deck-access flats have been removed, with a further 128 earmarked for demolition by 2011. These have been replaced by 597 new homes with a further 489 planned or under construction. Local residents' aspirations for the future of their community are being met and the fortunes of an estate with a poor reputation are being turned around.



A new sustainable and vibrant community, more prosperous and more integrated with its neighbours is taking shape.

View from the grassroots

Castlefields resident Christopher Harrison says: "I moved here in 1971 with my parents just after I left the Navy. There was a real sense that we were moving to a better life. There was hope, optimism and an almost holiday atmosphere but by the 1980s, as the nearby factories closed one after the other, things started to go downhill."

"I moved out of the family home into one of the deck-access flats but I never really called it home. You didn't know your neighbours and the crime and drug dealing was terrible."

"Just over three years ago my old flat was demolished and I was given a two bedroom house with a garden. The positive psychological effect this has had on me has been massive. I'm much happier here and have grown in confidence. I've begun to get involved in local housing issues, taken housing courses and really immersed myself in the area's regeneration."

"There's a nice sense of community spirit here and the houses are lovely. The optimism is back at Castlefields."

Christopher Harrison



Halving Waste to landfill

It is estimated that almost 20 million tonnes of UK construction, demolition and excavation waste ends up in landfill every year without any form of recovery or reuse.

25 UKCG members have committed to WRAP's Halving Waste to Landfill commitment and aim to achieve this by 2012. By adopting the Halving Waste to Landfill agreement, and committing to measure and report their progress against it, these companies have set out a clear message of intent to make changes and deliver improvements.

Signatories to the agreement have committed to reduce waste arising on projects and working with their supply chain to implement that plan. They will increase recycling of construction waste that is generated on site, and mandate the use of materials with recycled content wherever possible. All of these actions provide benefits to the construction projects themselves, the society they serve and embed sustainability in the built environment.

Reusing materials on site

The best opportunities to reduce waste in construction occur at the design stage. The design team for a new school in the Aston area of Birmingham, for example, identified some high impact waste reduction techniques that were easy for the contractor, Bovis Land Lease, to implement.

One of these ideas was simply to recycle demolition material arising on site by using it under the sports pitches as drainage fill. This eliminated the need to import new material – reducing waste by 7,200 tonnes and embodied carbon by almost 980 tonnes. As well as the significant financial benefit, this decision had an immediate social impact through the reduction of construction traffic on local roads. The reuse and recycling of materials also has the wider environmental benefit of reducing the amount of virgin materials required for the project – helping to relieve the pressure on the Earth's finite resources.

Specifying recycled content

Construction clients can improve their projects' environmental performance by setting requirements to increase the use of materials with recycled content. Specifying the use of materials with higher levels of recycled content stimulates demand for recovered material, thereby preventing it ending up in landfill. Many products with high levels of recycled content are readily available, usually at no extra cost.

Take the example of London's new Olympic Park. The Olympic Delivery Authority stipulated the use of 25% recycled aggregate, by weight, for the permanent venues and Olympic Park wide infrastructure. On average, the structural concrete provided by the London Concrete batching plant on site contained 30% recycled aggregate by weight of total aggregate. It also used between 25% and 40% of pulverised fuel ash,

depending on the class of concrete involved, as a cement replacement. This decision helped the ten principal contractors on the project divert thousands of tonnes of material away from landfill and towards effective construction uses – reducing the overall environmental impact of the construction process.

Recovering materials

Direct community engagement in The Bridge Learning Campus, a Building Schools for the Future project in Bristol, led to a reduction in demolition ‘waste’ and provided the local community with useful, and free materials for their own use. The contractor, Skanska, invited Scout Enterprises, a charity affiliated to the local youth Scout Club, to take any materials from the school building prior to demolition work. The charity found a use for a significant amount of items, with salvaged kitchens and toilets fitted to scout huts.

Contractors are now routinely seeing more than 80% of their segregated site waste being recovered and recycled.

Reducing congestion and disruption

Central St Giles is a mixed use development comprising office space, apartments, restaurants and ground level retail units. The restricted central London location forced Bovis Land Lease to use a number of logistics strategies to efficiently manage the movement of materials. These included Wilson James’ London Construction Consolidation Centre, on-site logistics specialists overseeing delivery and reverse logistics for waste removal.

Using a consolidation centre to store materials and package deliveries led to a massive reduction in vehicle traffic for this project. Between January and July 2009 there were 956 fewer delivery journeys into central London as a direct result - a 75% reduction. Carbon emissions were naturally greatly reduced as a consequence as well as easing congestion, noise, vibration and fumes produced by continuous lorry movements.

With the spiralling cost of ‘waste’ a huge factor of each and every construction project across the UK, the business case for waste reduction has never been more compelling. It’s clear that by adopting simple good practice the construction industry can improve the way it manages waste and resources.



Cleaner hospitals

Many contractors not only build, for example, new schools and hospitals but also help maintain them throughout their life time. One such contractor is Balfour Beatty which has a 15,000 strong team providing support services.

A particular challenge for them is hospital cleanliness and the need to minimise the risk of infection. In early 2008, the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh (RIE) was only achieving 89% on the NHS Scotland National Monitoring Framework. This was viewed as unacceptable and a full review of domestic services was undertaken. It concluded that a target of 95% could be achieved and this was duly done by 2010. 95% has been sustained since April 2009 to date.

The review looked at people, technology and processes and as a result:

- New monthly monitoring processes and training programmes were put into place.
- A British Institute of Cleaning Services accreditation system was introduced for all staff; and a bespoke permanent training room provided to allow on going training.
- New equipment and processes were deployed. These included:



- steam sterilisation for sanitary areas providing a more thorough clean and requiring no harmful chemicals;
- a new cleaning material for mops and cloths – microfibre - was introduced which removes 99.9% of bacteria; and
- a new process was used in washing machines which is 3200 more powerful than chlorine, therefore a reduction in use of chemicals, and a reduced water temperature.





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