

Profile: Construction

Alignment to strategic priorities:

National Hampshire CC Surrey CC Coast to Capital Enterprise M3

52,865 Jobs (2019) 17% above National average	+6.0% % Change (2019 - 2022) Nation: +1.9%	13,834 businesses (2021) 86% have 1-4 employees	£34.7k Average wages per job: LSIP = £31.0k South East = £30.5k Nation = £30.4k
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Source: Lightcast

TOP ONLINE POSTED OCCUPATIONS:

1. Elementary Construction Occupations
2. Civil engineers
3. Quantity Surveyors
4. Plumbers and Heating and Ventilating Engineers
5. Production Managers and Directors in Construction

TOP SPECIALISED SKILLS:

1. Construction
2. Carpentry
3. Painting
4. Civil engineering
5. Plumbing

TOP SOFT SKILLS:

1. Management
2. Communications
3. Planning
4. Customer service
5. Leadership

JOB POSTINGS REGIONAL BREAKDOWN:

1. Guildford
2. Basingstoke and Deane
3. Winchester
4. Reigate and Banstead
5. Rushmoor

Data are for January 2019 – December 2022 | Source: Lightcast

Additional insights and intelligence

The UK construction industry contributes 8% of economic output and employs 2.7m people but, following the pandemic, has faced a deepening skills crisis highlighted by high job postings activity and delayed construction projects due to reduced labour¹.

The sector employs a significant number of people (17% above the national average) and it is dominated by a high percentage of SMEs (99.96%). The LSIP focus group highlighted the capacity challenges SMEs face in being able to engage with the skills system and requiring additional support from colleges. Another key feature of the sector is the importance of supply chains and contractors linked to larger “anchor” companies, which presents opportunities for colleges to develop engagement with the sector through. The employer survey highlighted a key challenge in recruiting to roles as being candidates having the right employability skills (41% indicated this was a problem)², with “motivation” featuring in several responses. Some of the main occupational gaps included: Site managers, quantity surveyors, fitters, roofers, and dry-liners³.

¹ “Driving construction skills, growth, and jobs through Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)”, CITB, <<https://www.citb.co.uk/media/v3ybdhft/citb-lsips-guidance-january-2023v2.pdf>>

Construction is also a priority sector when it comes to the green economy in the LSIP area. The Green Skills report highlights construction roles occupying six of the top 50 green occupations, both currently and projecting forward to 2030, with the top jobs being *Electricians, Production and construction managers* and *Plumbers*⁴.

For example, retrofitting buildings to meet government energy efficiency targets requires an additional 350,000 skilled construction workers in Britain by 2028⁵. Construction companies in the area have reported a need to reskill and upskill the existing workforce to make existing and new buildings more energy efficient and low carbon. Examples of skills required include *retrofitting project coordination* and *heat pump and solar panel installation*⁶ but also Electricians with electrotechnical skills for *solar power, energy storage systems* and *electric vehicle charging*⁷. This is a particular challenge in the LSIP area in which the current Electrician workforce is very low with a ratio of 1:746 in the general population – placing our area 38th out of 38 LSIP areas⁸, which is potentially exacerbated by evidence of very low progression rates from non-apprentice learners into electrician apprenticeships ranging from 0% to just 14%⁹.

With both a high resident population and concentration of businesses in the area, there is a need but until there is increased consumer demand for retrofitting, employers – most of which are SMEs – are reluctant to invest in training¹⁰. And in terms of the UK talent pipeline, only 40% of further education learners studying construction courses progress into the industry¹¹, reflecting the reported lack of careers guidance which also impacts on the challenge of diversity in the workforce¹².

In terms of local provision, in 2021-22, there were 970 achievements (5.2% of all achievements) in *Construction, planning and the built environment* sector subject area – mostly at level 2. Apprenticeship starts in this subject area accounted for less than 5%; less than the national proportion¹³.

CASE STUDY: The ESF-funded **Technical Construction Skills for the Unemployed project**¹⁴ led by Hampshire County Council offers training and support for young people across Hampshire and Surrey who are looking to move into the Construction industry. Part of this training includes skills for sustainable construction; crucial for an industry trying to adapt to become low carbon.

To date, nearly 900 individuals have participated in the project, 470 of whom have qualified so far with at least their CSCS card. This number includes 44 care leavers, 20

carers, 34 homeless people and over 158 ex-offenders. Over 50% of those that qualified have secured employment.