

Industry Attraction & Skills Update - September 2026

Building Momentum on Skills and Workforce Development

Despite ongoing market challenges, skills development remains a key priority for the home building industry. HBF continues to work closely with members, government departments and industry partners to ensure the workforce has the skills needed for both current and future housing delivery.

Following member feedback on recent CITB funding changes, HBF has called for a review of funding provision to better support workforce upskilling while continuing to attract new talent into the sector. HBF is also awaiting the outcome of the consultation on the proposed merger of CITB and ECITB.

Delivering Key Industry Programmes

Our current delivery plan is focused on five strategic projects - Women into Homebuilding, Partner a College, Masterclasses, NHBC Hubs & Site Ready Solutions apprenticeship support structure.

Women into Homebuilding Programme

Now an award-winning programme - 2026 Women in Housing Awards for best career initiative. The recruitment campaign for the Autumn cohort is underway closing 20th September. 30 places are on offer from 11 employers across England, Scotland and Wales

Partner a College Continues to Expand

The [Partner a College](#) programme now brings together 14 colleges and 15 home builders and suppliers across England and Wales. Phase 2 of the programme is due to commence from September 2026 and we are actively seeking new home building members to take part. The initiative helps students on Level 1 and 2 construction courses develop the skills and experience needed to become site ready.

A digital toolkit has been launched, tutor CPD modules are being developed, and employers continue to provide site visits, masterclasses and practical industry engagement opportunities

Shaping the Future Sector Plan

The Sector Plan Steering Group met on 2 September for an extraordinary meeting to review and discuss feedback from the Delivery Group on the future direction of the [Sector Plan](#). Representatives from Homes England and other key stakeholders joined the discussion to consider the proposed objectives for the 2027-2031 Sector Plan. Across both groups and associated projects, around 30 homebuilders, suppliers and subcontractor members are actively involved.

Industry Experts in the Classroom

The Dual Professional Model pilot continues to connect industry professionals with further education colleges, helping to strengthen teaching and bring real-world experience into the classroom. The project will continue until December 26, and employers interested in supporting the pilot are encouraged to get involved

Supporting Skills Growth Through Training Hubs

HBF continues to support NHBC's programme of regional training hubs, designed to create up to 3,000 additional apprenticeships over the next decade.

The hubs will provide accelerated training in areas including groundworks, bricklaying and carpentry, while also hosting industry masterclasses. Existing and developing hubs are helping to increase training capacity across the country

Masterclasses Improving Quality on Site

HBF and NHBC continue to deliver trade-specific masterclasses in brickwork, roofing & drylining that focus on common quality issues identified through inspections. These will remain fully funded until the end of September 2026 when funding will move to Employer Networks, charged at up to 50%

Over 17,000 trades have received upskilling training since the programme started.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of fully funded training opportunities while funding remains available.

Haydock Careers Event Set for November

Preparations continue for the Haydock Careers Event on 12 November, which is expected to welcome around 300 Year 8 and 9 students for a hands-on introduction to careers in homebuilding. Backed by funding from NHBC, Liverpool City Region Careers Hub and Oakmere Homes, the event will feature 15 interactive Try-a-Task activities and participation from major homebuilders across the region. Interest from schools has been exceptionally strong, with 36 schools already expressing an interest.

Supporting Ex-offender Recruitment

HBF has launched new employer guidance focused on recruiting people with convictions and prison leavers. Developed with organisations including New Futures Network, Fair Chance Business Alliance and Prisoners Building Homes, the guidance provides practical advice for employers seeking to build more inclusive recruitment practices.

HBF also continues to support the Fair Chance Business Alliance's ambition to encourage more employers to adopt fair chance employment practices.

Supporting Workforce Mobility

HBF has been working with the Department for Business and Trade and the Construction Leadership Council on labour mobility and skills shortages. This includes engagement with the Migration Advisory Committee regarding priority home building occupations that are difficult to fill through the domestic workforce alone.

Virtual Homebuilding Visitor Card

The Home Building Visitor Card is an industry-recognised card for individuals who regularly visit house-building sites but do not undertake construction work themselves.

Over 12,700 applications have been processed successfully with 165 companies have registered to take part in the scheme. The dedicated [Home Building Visitors Card](#) website has undergone a refresh, and cards are now issued with the new HBF logo.