

Sector Skills Plan October Update: Driving Skills, Careers and Workforce Development across Home Building

Despite ongoing market challenges, the industry's skills agenda remains a key priority. HBF continues to work closely with members, government departments and industry partners to ensure home builders have access to the workforce, training and funding support needed to meet future demand.

Championing Skills Investment

Earlier this year, HBF surveyed members on changes to CITB funding. Feedback highlighted significant concerns about the balance of funding available to support the current workforce and attract new entrants into the industry. In response, HBF has engaged directly with CITB and Government, calling for a review of existing provision and a more balanced approach to investment. HBF continues to meet quarterly with Tim Balcon and the CITB team to raise member concerns and discuss potential solutions.

Building the Next Generation of Homebuilders

Following a successful spring collaboration with the Careers & Enterprise Company, HBF is continuing to build momentum around the findings of the report [*Supporting a Stronger Pipeline: Growing the Next Generation of Home Builders*](#). The research demonstrated growing interest in construction careers among young people and is helping shape wider industry discussions, including apprenticeship initiatives, workforce planning and careers promotion activities.

Delivering the Sector Skills Plan

Current activity is focused on delivering five priority projects within the Sector Skills Plan:

- [Women into Home Building](#) (WiHB)
- [Partner a College](#) (PaC)
- [Industry Masterclasses](#)
- NHBC Hubs
- Site Ready Solutions apprenticeship support structure

These projects are designed to strengthen recruitment, improve workforce development and create clearer pathways into the homebuilding industry.

Award Success for Women into Home Building

The Women into Home Building programme continues to go from strength to strength, recently winning the 2026 Women in Housing Award for Best Career Initiative. Interest in the latest recruitment campaign was exceptionally strong, with 113 applications received for 30 places offered by 11 employers across England, Scotland and Wales.

Partner a College Enters Phase Two

Partner a College has now moved into its second phase, with new employer-college partnerships being established alongside continued support for existing collaborations. Funding has been secured through to December 2028, ensuring the programme can continue creating meaningful links between education providers and employers.

The project is also expanding its support offer, with tutor CPD modules planned for autumn delivery and employability workshops for students being delivered in partnership with Michael Page Recruitment later this year.

Shaping the Future Sector Plan

Industry collaboration remains central to the programme's success. In September, the Sector Plan Steering Group met alongside Homes England and other key stakeholders to discuss priorities for the 2027-2031

Sector Plan. Around 30 homebuilders, suppliers and subcontractors are actively involved in steering groups and project delivery, helping ensure future plans reflect industry needs.

Influencing Policy and Promoting Careers

HBF continues to work closely with Skills England, the Department for Education, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Construction Leadership Council and the Construction Skills Mission Board to influence policy and support long-term workforce development.

Work has also begun on a refreshed HBF Careers website, while HBF has joined a CITB project group tasked with revitalising the Go Construct website to better support careers promotion across the sector.

Haydock Careers Event Nears Capacity

Preparations are well underway for the Haydock Careers Event on 12 November, which is expected to welcome around 300 Year 8 and 9 students for an interactive introduction to careers in homebuilding. Supported by NHBC, Liverpool City Region Careers Hub and Oakmere Homes, the event has secured participation from 11 homebuilders, eight subcontractors, three suppliers, a college and NHBC. Twenty-seven of the 30 invited schools have already confirmed attendance, including students with SEND. Steve Rotheram, Mayor of the Liverpool City Region has confirmed his attendance along with Danielle Gillespie, Executive Regional Director, Homes England, Paul Bunting, Director of Housing & Regeneration, LCRCA and senior representatives from participating home builders and industry partners. The mayor will deliver a brief welcome to attendees and students before touring the event, meeting employers and industry leaders, and engaging with participating students.

Get Involved

Members can support current industry initiatives by:

- Contacting Catherine Bullough (catherine.bullough@hbf.co.uk) to find out more about joining Partner a College Phase Two.
- Contacting Tracey Hill (tracey.hill@hbf.co.uk) to find out more about the Women into Homebuilding Programme.
- Exploring DWP Youth Guarantee and Youth Grant funding opportunities to support recruitment of young unemployed people.
- Registering future talent for the Future Talent Group by contacting Hannah.gillman@hbf.co.uk

This work demonstrates the industry's continued commitment to attracting, developing and retaining the skilled workforce needed to deliver the homes the UK requires.