

SKILLS ACTION PLAN

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skills action plan

The key findings of this research were presented to the NHTG Executive Committee and other sector partners on 10 March 2008. These included contractors, trade federation representatives, training providers and building professionals who focused upon three key areas:

- deliberating upon, questioning and endorsing the findings of the research project
- discussing and agreeing solutions to address the key issues raised in the report
- contributing to and agreeing the Skills Action Plan.

The research was also peer-reviewed by members of the NHTG Executive, and this consultative process has remained a constant and central part of the NHTG Skills Needs Analysis research since 2005.

This Skills Action Plan embraces the twin aspects of providing an overarching national strategy to create a climate of shared information, advice and guidance for the benefit of the whole sector, and specific deliverable actions with performance measures and key milestones provided to enable progress to be monitored, re-evaluated and where necessary adjusted to meet changing needs. It responds to and provides a cohesive, long-term solution to the current skills issues identified in the report.

The immensely dedicated work by the NHTG, English Heritage, ConstructionSkills and many other sector partners since the 2005 report has provided an excellent foundation for maintaining momentum to achieve the key objective of providing a fully qualified workforce to undertake appropriate work on the wider built heritage sector – the more humble buildings as well as the landmark buildings and those protected as being of historic or architectural importance.

While the NHTG strategy and operational activities since 2005 have been very successful in reducing the skills shortage, it is essential now to concentrate upon closing the skills gaps to ensure that the workforce is properly equipped and versed in the understanding of traditional building methods and materials, and has the expertise, ability and judgement to carry out this work to the highest possible standard.

The Skills Action Plan provides a number of interrelated measures aimed at:

- stimulating client demand for traditional building skills and evidence of competence
- ensuring contractors and craftspeople in the

supply chain have the required skills

- refining and improving the training infrastructure to meet current and future workforce demand.

This research has demonstrated contractors' preferred methods of recruitment, working and learning styles, which understandably places great emphasis on learning on the job. While acknowledging the crucial role the FE sector can play in delivering traditional building skills, considerable work needs to be done to better integrate this field into mainstream construction delivery, even through a module within a course unit. The two-way process of learning from all sectors of the construction industry must be further developed. Modern construction can learn from the past and, by bringing the two together, encourage respect for the evolution of the built environment.

The immediate challenge for the built heritage sector is to develop traditional building skills provision that incorporates site-based learning and ensures that the craftspeople and contractors are equipped to meet the construction industry expectation of a fully qualified and safety-aware workforce by 2010. Mechanisms exist to achieve both objectives and extend the current skills base, but as before this needs continued sector-wide partnership between government and its planning and funding agencies – English Heritage, ConstructionSkills, Proskills, heritage organisations and amenity societies, contractors, employers' groups, FE and private training providers – coordinated through the National Heritage Training Group.

We are confident that we can maintain progress towards providing an integrated long-term solution to overcome the current skills and knowledge gaps clearly identified in this report, but this requires combined resources in terms of funding, person hours, and thinking and planning.

The measures in the Skills Action Plan can be delivered and appraised singly, but it is essential that many are pursued collectively and read across to ensure coordination on a range of issues, from introducing traditional building skills at an early age in the school education, to matching client demand for skills with ensuring that a suitably skilled workforce is available, in the right place at the right time.

The partners identified in the action plan are those thought to be most appropriate to deliver the particular action. Most are already involved in this skills agenda, but others may need to be consulted regarding any resource implications for their organisations.

Addressing the issues

The Built Heritage Sector in England Skills Action Plan

Research Theme 1: Demand for Skills and Materials

Implement measures to stimulate demand for traditional building skills and materials.

1.1	HERITAGE CONTRACTORS REGISTER Develop a unified Accredited Heritage Building Contractors Register for use by public and private stockholders, and in particular to provide consumer protection to homeowners when selecting a suitably experienced and competent contractor for pre-1919 building work	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NHTG Heritage Building Contractors Registration Working Group in conjunction with English Heritage, trade federations and trade unions to develop guidelines and selection criteria for a unified accredited register and by using existing registration schemes as sector models 2. Achieve sector-wide support for the scheme, while recognising differences between different craft trades 3. Promote the accredited register through the NHTG website and signposting to and from other related websites, including linking with the government TrustMark Scheme and including a marketing campaign 	
Performance Measures	2008: Develop outline framework document with selection criteria for consultation with heritage bodies, trade federations and trade unions 2009: Launch unified accredited register and promote the scheme through a marketing campaign	Lead Partners: NHTG with English Heritage, trade federations and trade unions Scope: UK-wide but with national and regional emphasis in England
1.2	INFORMATION, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE Provide improved information, advice and guidance on conservation, repair, maintenance and restoration to clients and stockholders by making fuller use of existing information sources	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scope extent of existing technical advice and information sources, and where necessary adapt for mass distribution to the public, for instance through English Heritage and The National Trust to their visitors and members, Heritage Lottery Fund, local authorities, City Heritage Trusts, heritage groups, and other home country partners 2. Signpost information, advice and guidance sources between major stakeholders' websites to provide reliable, consistent advice in easily understandable language and manner of presentation 3. Coordinate the activities of major stakeholders to produce authoritative guidance on appropriate ways of repairing, maintaining, conserving and restoring pre-1919 buildings, with particular attention to appropriate ways of meeting sustainability needs 	
Performance Measures	2008: Complete scoping exercise to establish level and types of information required; commission writing and publication; develop strategy for dissemination 2008: Establish protocol for signposting and sharing information between sector partners	Lead Partners: NHTG to provide coordinating role with English Heritage, The National Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, local authorities, amenity groups, Historic Scotland, Cadw, Welsh Assembly Government and Department of the Environment Northern Ireland Scope: UK-wide

1.3	CLIENT DEMAND Stimulate client demand for skills for all major built heritage projects to ensure the continued supply of suitable contractors and craftspeople	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with heritage organisations and major stockholders to continue to build upon gains made in introducing quality price weighting in public procurement procedures involving pre-1919 buildings, and develop a standard approach to include specifying level of skills required in project specifications 2. Agree a Works & Training Contract framework with heritage organisations which can be used by the whole sector 3. Explore the use of the City of Edinburgh procurement model requiring training provision and evidence of competence and qualification as part of tendering for major repair programmes 4. Ensure that clients/stockholders are aware of and insist upon evidence of competence and safety-awareness through the ConstructionSkills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Heritage Skillscard for all built heritage sector work to comply with the construction industry objective of a fully qualified workforce by 2010 	
Performance Measures	2008: Agree Works & Training Contract model for sector consultation 2008: Produce and circulate CSCS Heritage Skills card information leaflet, and develop case studies for NHTG website of best practice among clients/stockholders to promote scheme 2009: Monitor uptake of CSCS Heritage Skills cards and record a 50% increase in registrations from January 2008 figure	Lead Partners: NHTG with English Heritage, trade federations and trade unions Scope: UK-wide but with national and regional emphasis in England
1.4	LOCAL AUTHORITIES Work more closely with local authorities to encourage the use of an appropriate skilled regional and local workforce for pre-1919 buildings, and provide guidance on this to private stockholders within their regions and localities	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In partnership with the Institute for Historic Building Conservation and other professional bodies, scope and develop improved information for conservation officers and planners on traditional building materials and traditional building skills 2. Provide simple information, guidance and advice to building control officers to educate them on the approach to the built heritage in terms of its requirements for energy efficiency and building regulations 3. Respond to the Heritage Protection reform and any ensuing future legislation to ensure that traditional building skills and materials are considered within delivery of advice and protection measures 4. Develop a Traditional Building Skills Charter with local authorities to use their procurement processes to stipulate the use of skilled craftspeople and traditional building materials in pre-1919 building contracts, to address the latent demand for traditional building skills training and development for upskilling and qualifying general builders (Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 and CSCS Heritage Skills card) 	
Performance Measures	2008: Complete scoping exercise to establish level and types of information required for items 1 & 2, and develop strategy for production and dissemination 2008: Monitor and respond to changes within the historic environment to the Heritage Protection reform, and record contributions to process in relation to traditional building skills and materials issues 2009: Have established a local authority endorsed regional training programme for general builders in the nine English regions	Lead Partners: NHTG, Institute of Historic Building Conservation, English Heritage, ConstructionSkills, Asset Skills Scope: England-wide

1.5	FISCAL POLICY Respond to fiscal policy to represent and lobby for a level playing-field in respect of the built heritage sector to stimulate client demand for skills and training	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work to ensure that public funding levels for the built heritage sector are maintained 2. Promote the value of Works & Training Contracts in delivering higher-quality projects and contributing to current and future skills supply 3. Continue to lobby government to eliminate the current anomalies regarding VAT on listed buildings, which is a double tax and disincentive for property-owners and contractors/craftspeople 	
Performance Measures	2008: Complete consultation with sector heritage organisations to use Works & Training Contracts for all historic building contracts	Lead Partners: English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, NHTG, ConstructionSkills, Arts & Heritage All-Party Parliamentary Group
		Scope: England-wide
1.6	SUPPLY OF INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL BUILDING MATERIALS Increase awareness in planning authorities of the need to specify where possible traditional materials from England to stimulate demand for indigenous materials for local and regional use and in reducing the carbon footprint of the material supply-chain	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote the English Heritage Strategic Stone Survey as a means of matching demand and supply and controlled stone quarrying without adverse environmental impact, and disseminate to public bodies information on successful cases and technological advances in quarrying techniques and environmentally sensitive means of local stone extraction 2. Encourage local authorities to see quarries as assets for stone supply for local and regional building needs to reduce extensive use of imported stone 3. Improve the supply of home-grown and imported hard- and softwoods for repair of traditional buildings, and use the English Heritage Sustainable Timber Project as a means of matching demand and supply by planting suitable trees for future timber repair 4. Work with Proskills to develop manufacturers and suppliers of traditional building materials to promote indigenous materials and product specifications and training 	
Performance Measures	2008: Research started to explore and promote increased availability of traditional building material sources 2009: Develop and use case studies in publications and websites to promote examples of best practice 2010: Organise an international conference linking the built heritage skills and materials supply-chain to the sustainability, regeneration and innovation agenda to promote best practice	Lead Partners: English Heritage, English Stone Forum, NHTG
		Scope: England-wide

Research Theme 2: Supply of Skills and Materials

Ensure that contractors and craftspeople invest in training and skills development to respond to sector demand for a fully qualified and competent workforce, and assist their business to remain competitive.

2.1	WORKS AND TRAINING CONTRACT Develop a sector-wide Works & Training Contract framework for pre-1919 buildings	
Action	1. Promote the benefits of the Works & Training Contract framework to contractors and craftspeople to encourage them to invest in training and develop training plans for on-site training	
Performance Measures	2008: Built heritage sector stakeholders consulted over draft Works & Training Contract framework 2009: Framework in operation and its benefits promoted to showcase best-practice models within the sector	Lead Partners: NHTG, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund local authorities, Royal Institute for Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
		Scope: England-wide

2.2	QUALIFYING THE WORKFORCE Increase awareness of the demand for training and skills development to achieve a fully qualified, competent and safety-aware built heritage sector workforce	
Action	1. Work with heritage contractors, employers' groups, trade federations, trade unions, heritage bodies, local authorities etc. to achieve a fully skilled, qualified and health and safety aware workforce in this sector by 2010 2. Work with other heritage bodies to follow the example of English Heritage in demanding the CSCS Heritage Skills card as a requirement to work on their pre-1919 properties and sites 3. Work with the livery companies and trade federations to market the Senior Craftsperson NVQ Level 4 leading to Master Crafts status following peer review by federations or livery companies to encourage less experienced practitioners to aspire to achieving a higher skills level	
Performance Measures	2008: Develop consultation with other leading sector stakeholders to adopt English Heritage's lead on demand for CSCS Heritage Skills card 2009: Senior Craftsperson NVQ Level 4 available	Lead Partners: NHTG, English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund, Churches Conservation Trust, ConstructionSkills
		Scope: England-wide

2.3	DEMAND FOR TRADITIONAL BUILDING SKILLS TRAINING Increase demand for traditional building skills courses and training opportunities for contractors and craftspeople	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to promote the Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 and Senior Craftsperson NVQ Level 4 to stimulate demand for training and self-development, and review, adapt and respond to the need for improvements in existing qualifications to reflect employer demand 2. Support training providers to actively publicise heritage- and conservation-related construction courses to tap into and meet latent demand 3. Focus energy and resources on attracting those already working in the construction sector and career changers from other trades or professions to train and upskill to work in the built heritage sector 	
Performance Measures	2008: Record 250 Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 achievements 2009: Record 400 Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 achievements 2010: Funding and placement providers in place to extend and expand the Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme for England and Wales beyond its current timescale	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills, English Heritage
		Scope: England-wide

2.4	FUNDING FOR SKILLS TRAINING Make best use of current funding sources and improve future funding streams to assist contractors and craftspeople investing in and benefiting from training schemes	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to ensure that traditional building skills training is on the regional Learning and Skills Council agenda and funding streams 2. Through the Regional Heritage Skills Action Groups monitor and make best use of local, regional, national and international funding opportunities 3. Expand and extend the Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme for England and Wales to fund work-based practical experience through placements with heritage building contractors 4. Extend the system of bursaries to enable master craftspeople to travel and train around the UK and abroad 	
Performance Measures	2008: Traditional building skills firmly embedded on regional learning and Skills Council agenda and funding streams 2009: Learning and Skills Council representatives maintain active role in regional Heritage Skills Action Groups 2010: Funding and placement providers in place to extend and expand the Traditional Building Skills Bursary Scheme for England and Wales beyond its current timescale	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills, English Heritage, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)
		Scope: England-wide

2.5	CAREER PROGRESSION Promote and develop career progression routes within the built heritage sector	
Action	1. In partnership with the livery companies and trade federations deliver and expand the NHTG mentoring programme whereby experienced craftspeople pass on their skills and knowledge to less-experienced practitioners to allow them where possible to progress to Master Crafts status 2. Promote the Senior Craftsperson NVQ Level 4 and Master Crafts status to provide a career path where supervisory and practical involvement are seen as equally important.	
Performance Measures	2008: Pilot mentoring scheme completed 2009: Rolling programme of mentoring scheme firmly established and Senior Craftsperson NVQ Level 4 being delivered	Lead Partners: NHTG, Conference on Training in Architectural Conservation (COTAC), ConstructionSkills
		Scope: England-wide

2.6	MANUFACTURER AND SUPPLIER TRAINING Improve the integration of training of manufacturers and suppliers of traditional building with traditional building skills training	
Action	1. Work with Proskills and manufacturers and suppliers of traditional building materials to develop training for contractors, craftspeople and heritage training providers on the production and use of their materials 2. Include manufacturers and suppliers in the delivery programme or in providing attendees on the NHTG Training the Trainers programme for FE college trainers	
Performance Measures	2008: Dialogue with Proskills and selected manufacturers established, and training programme outlined 2009: Manufacturers and suppliers included in Training the Trainers programme or linked to regional Heritage Skills Action Group's training delivery	Lead Partners: NHTG, Proskills, ConstructionSkills
		Scope: England-wide

2.7	INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE Maintain exchange of ideas on training and skills development with key stakeholders in the UK, Republic of Ireland and Europe	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure coordinated approach to delivery of skills action plans, and explore and promote as necessary European programmes for exchanges of personnel and experts between the respective countries 2. Use the regular meetings between the four home-country heritage bodies' chief executive officers to include updates on skills issues, and link to European counterparts' meetings 	
Performance Measures	2008: Develop links with other home countries, expand on work in the Republic of Ireland and develop links with European partners on traditional building skills training	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills
		Scope: UK and Europe

2.8	PROMOTE TRADITIONAL BUILDING SKILLS IN SCHOOLS Continue to promote careers information on traditional building craft trades within the school education system	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote the positive image of the built heritage sector at a younger age by increasing interactive demonstrations by contractors and craftspeople within schools, at skills events or as part of historic environment and construction sector education and outreach programmes 2. Target information packs and skills events towards parents, career advisers, employment agencies etc. to highlight the potential for careers in traditional building skills to command a rewarding salary and career 3. Maximise distribution of the NHTG Careers in Conservation & Restoration brochure and the careers section of the NHTG website to educate potential entrants of the career possibilities within this sector 4. Through the Construction and the Built Environment Diploma and Young Apprenticeship in Construction include conservation, repair and maintenance (CRM) and traditional building skills input in vocational training in schools 5. Work more closely with Connexions and careers and recruitment agencies to provide information to students to attract new entrants and career changers to this sector 	
Performance Measures	2008: Increase marketing of careers information through ConstructionSkills and English Heritage Education Teams and NHTG website to map careers and job opportunities for craft trades 2008: Explore means of integrating CRM and traditional building skills into vocational training in schools 2009: Measure effect of careers promotion and skills events	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills, English Heritage
		Scope: England-wide

Research Theme 3

Develop flexible training and Develop skills to meet the needs of contractors and craftspeople, and the skills requirements of the built heritage sector.

3.1	TRAINING DELIVERY Continue to develop a framework and process for delivering flexible training provision	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and promote a clear skills road map of all occupational levels on how to enter the construction industry and traditional buildings sector, and potential progression routes 2. Support the provision of an accredited/approved suite of training provision from registration for the Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 and Senior Craftsperson NVQ Level 4 to short training courses to meet sector and employers' needs 3. Where necessary, create mobile training units on the basis of ConstructionSkills OSAT model and through the regional National Heritage Training Academy structure to deliver practical hands-on training 	
Performance Measures	2008: Mapping of entry routes to construction and the built heritage sector, and career progression scoped 2009: Employer demand for training scoped, training response assessed, and cost and means of delivery identified	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills
		Scope: England-wide

3.2	FE TRAINING Increase the uptake of traditional building skills training within the FE college system	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop the Advanced Construction Award necessary for delivery of the Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 by training providers, and promote this qualification to FE colleges and trade federations to encourage uptake and ensure that potential latent demand can be met 2. Continue to upskill existing trainers to support delivery of the Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 or conservation units/modules within the training environment 3. Assist training and education partners to improve opportunities for craftspeople to develop routes from vocational training to higher education through appropriate building conservation foundation degree programmes 	
Performance Measures	2008: Advanced Construction Award developed and have nine FE colleges linked into delivering the Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 to adult workers 2008: Foundation Degrees in Historic Building Conservation established at the Building Crafts College, London 2009: Expand the NHTG Training the Trainers programme and distribute its related training materials 2010: Heritage Skills NVQ Level 3 fully supported within FE colleges	Lead Partners: British Association of Construction Heads (BACH), NHTG, ConstructionSkills, training providers, Foundation Degree Forward, Learning and Skills Council
		Scope: England-wide

3.3	ON-SITE TRAINING Respond to contractors' preference for on-site, practical training	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Through the Regional Heritage Skills Action Groups and trade federations establish the demand and level for on-site training from contractors and craftspeople 2. Increase the training component of ConstructionSkills On-site Assessment and Training process to deliver on-site built heritage training to upskill and qualify the workforce, where possible linked to the National Skills Academies for Construction 3. Match contractors to training providers with heritage skills expertise to develop local and regional training solutions for ongoing continuing professional development (CPD) 4. Maintain linkages to the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAFC) to integrate appropriate conservation and repair projects into this accredited on-site training to expand live site-based training opportunities for craftspeople and to ensure visibility of conservation, repair and maintenance within mainstream construction initiatives 	
Performance Measures	2008: Scope demand for on-site training 2010: Integrated on-site training provision established	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills
		Scope: England-wide

3.4	REGIONAL TRAINING Ensure coordinated regional training delivery to provide regional solutions to regional demand by maximising the existing training infrastructure or developing new training where none exists	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to promote and develop a National Heritage Training Academy in each of the nine English regions as a virtual network of training providers, facilitating information exchange and providing a source of specialised trainers 2. Continue to support the ongoing development of the National Heritage Training Academy – South West and promote its achievements as a role model for the sector 3. Help to secure regional funding for and continue to develop the regional Training the Trainers programme for trainers 4. Continue to support regional Heritage Skills Action Groups to provide flexible regional training solutions 	
Performance Measures	2008: Long-term funding secured for the National Heritage Training Academy – South West 2008: National Heritage Training Academy – Yorkshire and the Humber launched, and framework and governance structure for other academies produced 2009: Funding secured for Training the Trainers programme 2011: Sustainable National Heritage Training Academies established in each of the nine English regions	Lead Partners: NHTG, ConstructionSkills, English Heritage
		Scope: England-wide

3.5	COMBINED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES Rethink aspects of traditional building skills training and education to where possible share learning opportunities between craftspeople and building professionals	
Action	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploit opportunities for shared training and education between building professionals, contractors and craftspeople through formal education routes, CPD skills events, short training courses, and on-site learning to increase cross-fertilisation 2. Expand NHTG mentoring programme to include building professionals 3. Support the development and delivery of on-site training for building professionals through the National Heritage Training Academies 4. Develop a Training the Experts programme for HE lecturers of built environment degrees to help integrate conservation as part of mainstream built environment degree courses 	
Performance Measures	2008: Combined learning for craftspeople and building professionals established 2009: Establish and deliver a pilot Training the Experts programme	Lead Partners: NHTG; ConstructionSkills; English Heritage; further education, higher education and private training providers; BACH
		Scope: England-wide