



**AGE**  
IRRELEVANCE

# Rebuilding the UK's construction workforce

**How the construction sector  
can create a new talent  
pipeline by unlocking the  
skills of experienced workers**



**Charles Allen,  
Lord Allen of Kensington CBE**

Non-executive Group Chair, Balfour Beatty

The construction sector plays a vital role in the economic and social life of the UK. Delivering the homes, infrastructure and services the country needs, depends not only on investment and innovation, but on having the right skills, experience and capability across the workforce.

Like many industries, construction is facing significant change. Demand for skills continues to grow, career patterns are evolving and expectations of work are shifting across generations.

Responding to these pressures requires long-term thinking, collaboration and a willingness to consider how we make the best use of the talent already within the sector, alongside attracting and developing new entrants.

This paper from Age Irrelevance offers a thoughtful contribution to that discussion by focusing on experience as a continuing asset. It highlights the value of knowledge, judgement and professionalism built up over many years and the role these qualities can play in strengthening training, mentoring and capability for the future.

At Balfour Beatty, we recognise that a resilient workforce is one that values contribution at every stage of a career.

Supporting apprenticeships and early careers is essential, but so too is creating inclusive environments where people can continue to contribute and share their expertise in ways that reflect changing needs over time.

There is no single answer to the skills challenge facing construction. However, innovative ideas that encourage knowledge transfer and support multi-generational teams are an important part of the wider conversation.

**I welcome this paper as a prompt for engagement and collaboration across the industry as we continue to build a workforce fit for the future.**



*The UK's construction sector must address its skills shortage through a fundamentally different approach to workforce planning"*

**Andrew McDermott**, former Divisional Managing Director, Orbit Homes

The UK construction sector is central to national growth, productivity, and resilience. Building the infrastructure on which communities and the economy depend. Yet the sector now faces a workforce challenge that cannot be solved by a traditional skills policy alone.

This is not simply a pipeline issue. It is a workforce longevity issue.

Construction is losing people faster than it can replace them. Apprenticeship completion rates remain fragile, productivity growth has stalled, and a significant proportion of the workforce is approaching state pension age. The average age of a construction professional now exceeds 45, rising higher still in many critical trades. Without intervention, decades of institutional, technical, and safety-critical knowledge will be lost at precisely the moment demand is accelerating through housing delivery, infrastructure renewal, and the transition to net zero.

So, the question must be asked: if experience is allowed to leave the industry unchecked, how can capability realistically be rebuilt at the pace the country now requires?

The sector must unlock the opportunity already on site: experienced professionals who want to continue contributing, but in different and less physically demanding roles. In the absence of structured transition pathways, too much expertise is lost to early retirement or economic inactivity.

Rebuilding the construction workforce therefore requires innovative thinking and new workforce planning - one that treats experience as a strategic asset. This paper sets out the **ConstructED** model: a practical, scalable framework to retain knowledge, strengthen apprenticeships, address further education shortages, and build a more resilient, multi-generational workforce aligned to national priorities on skills, participation, and social value.

**The challenge is clear, and the opportunity is substantial. With coordinated action from government, industry and education providers, construction can lead the way in longevity planning - securing the workforce the country needs today while building capability for the future.**



## The Problem to be Solved

*A structural skills shortage in the construction sector*

**The construction industry faces a persistent skills shortage driven by rising demand, accelerating retirement, weak retention and declining training capacity**

### **If we act**

#### **Repurpose experience to strengthen the skills pipeline**

- Enable experienced professionals to transition into training, mentoring and education roles.
- Retain technical, commercial and safety-critical knowledge.
- Expand training capacity without relying solely on new entrants.

### **Then the outcome**

#### **A stronger, more resilient workforce**

- Improved apprenticeship quality and completion.
- Clearer career pathways for younger workers.
- Extended, meaningful working lives for experienced professionals.

### **Because...**

#### **Experience is preserved, productivity is protected**

- Institutional knowledge is retained.
- Reliance on constant recruitment is reduced.
- Safety, quality and confidence in construction careers are strengthened.
- Attraction to the industry can be enhanced.

### **Why it matters now**

- Demand is rising.
- Exit is accelerating.
- Capability is being lost faster than it can be rebuilt.



## The Demographic Cliff Edge A Workforce at Risk

By Stuart Bosley BA(Hons) MCI Arb FPD  
MloD FRSA - Age Irrelevance Ambassador

### The UK construction sector is facing a problem that is both visible and predictable

Demand for skills continues to rise. The [Construction Industry Training Board](#) estimates that an additional 250,000 <sup>i</sup> workers will be required by 2028 to meet projected output. The Government's commitment to deliver 1.5 million new homes within five years will add need for a further 150,000 roles. The potential shortfall is therefore not marginal. It is in the order of [400,000 people](#). <sup>ii</sup>

This pressure is already being felt. Data from the [Office for National Statistics](#) shows that approximately 29,000 <sup>iii</sup> vacancies remain unfilled across the sector today, even before future demand is fully considered. Projects are delayed, costs rise and capacity is constrained - not by ambition, but by a lack of people.

At the same time, the workforce is ageing. [Over 32% of construction workers are now aged 50 or over](#). This means that, due to a concentration of workers in the 50–64 age bracket, the industry could lose around 625,000 people – approximately a third of its workforce – in the next 17 years. <sup>iv</sup>

This is not merely a reduction in headcount. It is the loss of experience. It is the departure of minds - decades of institutional, commercial, legal and technical knowledge exiting the sector together. Knowledge that underpins safety, productivity, risk management, and delivery is not easily replaced, nor quickly learned.

Many of those approaching the later stages of their careers do not wish to stop working. They wish to continue contributing, but not indefinitely in physically demanding roles. They seek work that is sustainable, valued and appropriate to their stage of life. What they lack is not motivation or capability. It is a pathway. At the beginning of a career, transition is carefully planned. Graduates move from education into employment through structured training schemes, mentoring, supervision and defined routes to progression. These systems are deliberate, well-resourced and widely accepted as essential to economic participation and productivity.



As careers mature, that structure fades. At the point where experience is greatest, transition is no longer designed. Exit is unmanaged. Expertise is allowed to drift away.

The effects of this imbalance are already visible. Despite sustained emphasis on apprenticeships, completion rates remain weak. Attrition stands at 47%.<sup>v</sup> In 2022/23, only 8,620 construction apprentices reached End Point Assessment, against an estimated annual requirement of 96,000 new entrants. The pipeline is under strain, not only at the point of entry, but throughout its length.

At the same time, younger generations are increasingly drawn towards alternative narratives of success - fast, remote and digital. Construction, with its early starts and physical demands, has struggled to articulate its long-term value in this environment, despite offering careers that deliver tangible outcomes and lasting economic return.

This challenge is compounded by a shortage of educators. The National Audit Office projects a shortfall of up to 12,400 further education teachers by 2028/29, with construction among the most affected disciplines.<sup>vi</sup>

Without sufficient lecturers, assessors and trainers, apprenticeship quality declines and attrition rises - further weakening the system.

These matters are not isolated. They arise from the same design flaw. Workforce policy has been built around entry and extraction: attracting talent at the beginning of a career and making limited provision for what happens as contribution changes shape. Experience is treated as expendable, rather than as an asset to be retained and redeployed.

The construction sector now stands at a point of choice.

It could continue to accept unmanaged exit as inevitable. Or it could recognise that resilience, productivity and continuity depend on valuing contribution across the whole of working life.

**The consequences of that choice are already apparent.**

***I would argue that if the demographic outcome is foreseeable and we know the consequences, at what point does inaction cease to be an oversight and become failure? This challenge paper is a call to action to have that innovative discussion now.***

## What needs to be done

It's time to address the demographic shift to ensure the construction sector remains competitive, attracts great talent and retains expert knowledge.

We can:

- Enable skilled, experienced professionals to stay connected to the construction industry.
- Create a formal mechanism to help people repurpose their skills and knowledge after they no longer want - or are able - to continue in a demanding physical profession.
- Start to create a clear route for a site manager to become a mentor, for a foreman to become a lecturer, or for an engineer to inspire the next generation.

We need to adopt an approach that recognises age and knowledge transfer as a mission critical business strategy that can help reverse the talent decline and build a pipeline for the future.

## How to deliver change

- **Use skilled, experienced construction workers and re-skill them as trainers, lecturers, mentors, assessors and school ambassadors.**
- **Utilise this expertise to promote knowledge transfer between the generations.**
- **Assist older workers to remain in the construction sector but in new roles that are less physically demanding.**
- **Ensure organisational culture values multi-generational teams, age-diverse leadership and non-linear careers.**
- **Treat inclusion as structural - embedding age into workforce planning, leadership pipelines and succession strategies.**



**If we only focus on young apprentices, we miss the talent already on site. The future of construction depends on valuing every life stage – from apprentices to the experienced ground worker. We need to create reasons for people to stay and grow, and to pass on what they know. That is one way we can close the skills gap.**



## The UK construction sector is at the sharp end of demographic change

**Fact: the construction industry is losing people faster than it is replacing them. Between Q4 2019 and Q4 2023, UK construction lost about 14% of its workforce. <sup>vii</sup> Historically, this was offset by migrant labour, particularly from the EU. Post-Brexit, however, three-quarters of EU workers lost to the sector were aged 25–39 – precisely the age band that should be replenishing the pipeline of skilled workers. <sup>viii</sup> In 2023, the average age of a construction professional was 42. By 2050, it's estimated it will be 46 years. <sup>ix</sup>**

Census and Labour Force data <sup>x</sup> already show how skewed the workforce has become. In 2000, around 13% of construction workers were aged 55 and over; by 2023 that had risen to 24%. Almost one in four are 'boomers' (those born roughly between 1946 and 1964) and they dominate many skilled trades, meaning a large cohort is now within a decade of retirement.

At the same time, the inflow of new talent is nowhere near enough. The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) forecasts that the UK will need around 250,000 additional construction workers by 2028 to meet projected demand. <sup>xi</sup>

Its latest Workforce Outlook <sup>xii</sup>, the CITB suggests the industry must recruit roughly 48,000 extra workers every year from 2025–2029 just to stand still and deliver planned programmes. And this is before the estimated extra 150,000 people required to fulfil the ambition to build 1.5 million new homes. <sup>xiii</sup>

**Our provocation to the construction industry: rise to the creative challenge to design the future of work. Don't lose skilled workers – retrain them.**



## Unintended Consequence

**Safety Cards:** Older workers may have accumulated decades of experience but may lack 'nationally recognised' formal qualifications. In the past this has been called 'grandfather rights'. This approach is being phased out meaning now older workers must undertake training and qualification. As someone nearing retirement this can be viewed as a step too far.

The industry whilst maintaining very high standards of safety should still look at the 'experienced worker' route. An unintended consequence could be that some employers are unwilling to invest in the training of older workers. Indeed, in the 2018 CITB report [Fuller Working Lives](#) this was noted as a barrier to retaining older workers.<sup>xiv</sup>

The removal of the Industry Accreditation route removes a flexible career pathway that many older workers relied on. There has been an increase in grants available to mitigate this, however many older workers do see this as a barrier.

We need more data on what proportion of older workers aged 50+ currently hold Industry Accreditation Cards versus nationally recognised qualifications. We need data on how many people have opted to retire rather than retrain.

**Apprenticeship Completion:** There is some commentary that in smaller organisations apprentices often get caught in a cycle of contracts that close before the end of their three years. Project continuity is vital to the apprentice pathway.

Apprenticeships and on-the-job training are essential for building a skilled workforce. However, short-term contracts may hinder apprentices from completing their two or three year training, creating a barrier to continuity. More data is needed on how many apprentices leave the industry when their employer's contract ends.

Apprentices in small firms can feel isolated. Tier 1 construction firms could host apprentices and place them with smaller subcontractors. This route offers protection through the supply chain. This enables a greater sense of belonging as the apprentice is part of a larger cohort using a group training model providing continuity to reduce drop out rates. The apprentice's employer doesn't disappear when a contract ends. This option enables further secondments across supply chains. This model can be supported using assessors from a cohort of older workers.



## Current construction landscape

32 %

The construction workforce is ageing: 32% of workers are over 50 <sup>xv</sup>

625<sub>K</sub>

625K construction workers in the current workforce are expected to leave through retirement in the next 17 years <sup>xvi</sup>

42<sub>Y</sub>

Average age of a construction professional was 42 in 2023. By 2050, it's estimated it will be 46 years <sup>xvii</sup>

1.5<sub>M</sub>

The UK Government has committed to 1.5 million new homes <sup>xviii</sup>

47 %

2024 saw a 47% dropout rate of construction apprentices <sup>xix</sup>

1.0<sub>M</sub>

By 2032, the UK will need nearly 1 million additional construction workers <sup>xx</sup>

70<sub>K</sub>

Over the last 5 years, the UK has lost an average of 70,000 construction workers per year <sup>xxi</sup>

31<sub>K</sub>

Over the last 5 years apprenticeships starts have averaged 31,000 <sup>xxii</sup>



**Net loss of workers**

There were 2.05 million people employed in UK construction in 2025 Q3 – its lowest level in almost 25 years <sup>xxiii</sup>

# The construction sector can lead longevity planning



## Our 11-point plan

Step 1: Create a Demographic Dividend Report

### 1 How detailed is your demographic understanding?

Have a robust process for knowing your employee demographics. Understand the future landscape and how employees will be planning for their retirement. This is more than data collection – it is about identifying experience and skills that will exit the sector over a 10-year forecast. Understand the profile of apprentices and how they are progressing through training programmes. Analyse drop-out rates and training progress.

Step 2: Report Demographics on Business Risk Register

### 2 How aware are the Board, NEDs and executive leadership of demographic data - both UK trends and in the organisation?

Share and explain the demographic dividend report with your Board. Include it in the risk register and strategic plan. Establish a NED responsible for maintaining Board awareness and helping drive change as well as recognising risk. Understand what recruitment and succession planning look like to meet labour needs.

Step 3: Employee Collaboration

### How can you identify people who can re-skill as mentors and trainers/trainers/teachers?

Set-up a process for connecting and identifying a cohort of people who may be open to re-skilling and explore new pathways for a future that supports how the sector can train and attract younger workers. This can be done via employee resource groups, listening groups, visible communications or direct conversations in planning for retirement transition sessions. This is about having open communications to help people think about their working future.



## Step 4: Intergenerational Teams

### 4 How much intelligence do you have on intergenerational connections?

Design into work structures how age difference drives knowledge transfer and create teams that thrive from that diversity of experience. Workplaces will need to adapt to different needs and be drivers of multigenerational teams. Bring in reverse mentoring as well as skills mentoring to help with succession planning.

## Step 5: Health and Wellbeing

### 5 How much age difference awareness goes into employee assistance programmes?

A 65-year-old person is likely to have different health support needs from a 20-year-old. Physical aspects of the job roles will need different approaches. Ensure employee listening groups are included in the design and procurement of employee assistance programmes.

## Step 6: Education Partnerships

### 6 How do you help people transition to a new teacher/trainer career?

The longevity strategy must incorporate and connect to creative partnerships with Further Education (FE) colleges. This is a two-fold partnership – the construction sector can find and support people who can re-skill as trainers, educators, assessors and mentors. Connect to the process designed to recognise industry experience as the primary qualification. Find people with 'occupational competence' and get them teaching whilst training part time for a teaching qualification.

## Step 7: Longevity Listening Groups

### 7 Can you listen and hear feedback on all aspects of age?

Create listening forums to hear how intergenerational teams are working/listening to young people, mid-lifers and older workers.



## Step 8: Showcase Career Pathways

### 8 Do you share stories of career transitions?

Show how experience does not have to retire but can be repurposed into a role of training or teaching which can be anything from a FE lecturer to a school ambassador. Map out transition career pathways to show how people can transition to a new career in teaching and assessing. Map out what currently happens when a worker can no longer manage the physical aspects of their role and calculate what the associated cost is. Then include this in the demographic dividend report.

## Step 9: Promote the Quick Qualification Route

### 9 How aware is your workforce of career alternatives?

The most accessible entry route is a Level 3 Award in Education that can be completed in approximately 10 weeks. Can you help map out how a fractured income portfolio can help with planning towards retirement with some part-time work and some part-time teaching? Can you transition colleagues into your HR function on a part-time basis as they help drive the talent pipeline and map succession plans?

## Step 10: Retirement Planning

### 10 How well can you support transition - is this connected to reasonable adjustments and phased reduction of hours?

Set up conversations and help with gradual changes and support - from wellbeing to financial preparedness. Consider knowledge transfer, enabling people to transition from manual work to teacher. Do you offer secondments and volunteering opportunities? Can you build school ambassador roles?

## Step 11: Age Irrelevance ChangeMaker

### 11 Partner with Pro-Age and become an Age Irrelevance ChangeMaker to develop your approach

ProAge can help you manage your programme and support your training needs. Age Irrelevance can help showcase and promote your impact.



# ConstructED

**ProAge and Age Irrelevance  
propose an innovative  
approach to workforce  
planning**



# Imagine the benefits to the economy if the construction industry could retain the knowledge and skills of older workers to attract and train a new cohort of workers

## Here's how ...

### 1 Preserve industry knowledge

Create funded pathways for experienced tradespeople to gain teaching/assessor qualifications while still in work, enabling older workers to transfer to fractional roles.

### 2 Improve apprenticeship completion rates

Create a pipeline of trained mentors and coaches attached to apprentices, improving the quality of teaching and inspiring and motivating younger people to see the value of a career in construction.

### 3 Strengthen skills pipeline

Formalise mentorships between generations making the industry feel more inclusive and values led. Promote a sector where anyone can enter, evolve, retrain and thrive at any age.

### 4 Attract people to the construction sector

Create a 'knowledge transfer network' using experienced workers to lead a recruitment drive rebuilding pride, purpose and showing career pathways. Industry led ambassador programmes can pair experienced workers with schools, job fairs and STEM events.

### 5 Increase economic activity of older workers

Enabling older workers to retrain and stay connected to construction has a much wider macro economic impact. If just 10% of the 625,000 workers due to retire over the next 17 years stayed in work through teaching and mentoring, the Treasury could potentially retain over £2 billion in fiscal value over a decade.



Thousands of experienced construction workers are approaching retirement. Many want to keep working - just not full-time on site where climbing scaffolding and physically demanding roles may be increasingly hard.

## What if they became the next generation of educators?

- Further Education colleges can't find enough teachers
- 45% of FE teachers in England are 50+<sup>xxiv</sup>
- Construction has 9.6 vacancies per 100 teachers<sup>xxv</sup>
- A recent report warned the UK could be short of 250,000 tradespeople by 2030, yet only 2% of sole traders currently take on an apprentice<sup>xxvi</sup>

**A growing shortage of construction lecturers in further education is quietly undermining the apprenticeship system – just as the UK needs more skilled trades than ever**

Teacher shortages mean larger groups, cancelled workshop sessions and gaps in key specialisms. Apprentices experience inconsistent teaching, long waits for assessments and outdated curriculum content, because there simply aren't enough expert lecturers to redesign programmes and train on new technologies. That reduces completion rates and leaves employers frustrated with the readiness of apprentices.

If FE colleges cannot provide reliable, high-quality training because they cannot staff construction departments, many employers will simply stop engaging – and apprentices will be the ones who lose out on skilled careers and progression.

**Colleges cannot scale-up places, or even maintain quality, if they lack specialist staff to deliver off-the-job training in bricklaying, electrical, plumbing, retrofit and digital construction.**

**We believe that if the construction industry works collaboratively, they can create opportunity and drive-up recruitment.**

That is why we have shared this approach on ConstructED...

To show how a new approach can work.



One solution lies hidden in plain sight - the highly experienced tradespeople now approaching retirement. Reskilling construction workers aged 50+ to become lecturers and trainers could transform both the talent pipeline and the future of apprenticeships.

Across the industry, one in three construction workers is now aged over 50, with significant numbers likely to retire in the next 10 years. Meanwhile, colleges are struggling to recruit tutors in areas such as bricklaying, electrical installation and retrofit - with vacancies in construction and engineering among the hardest to fill. This dual crisis creates a clear opportunity: to retain industry expertise by reskilling experienced tradespeople as educators.

Older workers hold deep, practical knowledge - not just in technical skill but in safety culture, problem-solving and mentoring younger colleagues. Reskilling them into teaching roles could help bridge the gap between classroom theory and site reality, producing more confident and work-ready apprentices. It also aligns with the government's lifelong learning ambitions and the '50+ workforce' agenda - turning longevity into an economic advantage.



*To tackle the shortage of further education lecturers in the construction sector, we need to recognise the untapped potential of experienced older workers. By reskilling seasoned professionals to support new apprenticeships, we can not only address teaching gaps but also unlock powerful knowledge transfer — ensuring that the next generation benefits from decades of real-world expertise"*



**Mike Mansfield CEO, ProAge**



# Success stories

**Age Irrelevance  
Changemakers proving  
that a ConstructED model  
works**



By combining data-led insight, practical guidance and dynamic collaboration, ProAge is reshaping employment practices to better include older workers. Its efforts not only elevate older people's workforce participation but also deliver organisational benefits through improved retention, diversity and business agility.

## Challenge

3.5 million people aged 50 to 64 are economically inactive in this country. Closing the employment gap between old and young could boost the UK economy by £9 billion.

## Intervention

ProAge supports employers to assess age inclusion through tailored audits, identifying gaps and designing practical interventions including employee resource groups to support multigenerational working.

It delivers training to understand the impact of ageism in the workplace, challenge stereotypes, and build more inclusive recruitment and retention practices.

Pro Age partnered with Lancaster University to explore how flexible working arrangements can attract and retain older workers.

It conducted a joint survey with Brave Starts on how employers are preparing for an ageing workforce and ran workshops to help employers design practical interventions to attract and retain older workers.

## Outcomes

**Partnering with leading employers:** ProAge is working with nine national and multinational employers to advance age inclusion, valuing the contribution of older workers, adapting workplace practices, and building stronger multigenerational teams.

**Raising awareness:** Contributed to the World Bank Conference on Social Protection and Supporting Systems for an Ageing World, exploring how lifelong learning, job design, and employer action can enable longer working lives.

**Driving engagement:** Over 800 people attended ProAge's training and events in 2024. LinkedIn campaigns generated more than 26,000 impressions in the past 12 months, helping shift perceptions of older workers and promote age-inclusive practices across a wider audience.



The 5% Club is a dynamic movement of over 1,200 employer organisations across the UK, united by our commitment to building and sustaining a workforce that is equipped for the future. Our core purpose is to expand ‘earn-and-learn’ opportunities – apprenticeships, graduate schemes, and workplace training – so that every employer contributes to developing the talent and skills that underpin a strong, inclusive economy.

## Challenge

The construction industry has one of the most urgent needs for apprenticeship expansion. Yet persistently high dropout rates highlight the fragility of the current system. We know from our members that programmes succeed when apprentices are supported by guidance, mentoring and structured training. ConstructED’s emphasis on embedding experience into these pathways directly aligns with our belief that apprenticeships must not only attract but also retain and develop talent.

## Intervention

The 5% Club has consistently championed knowledge transfer as a critical success factor in earn-and-learn. The idea that experienced workers – whether approaching the later stages of their careers or seeking less physically demanding roles – can be repurposed as mentors, assessors, and lecturers is not only sensible but vital. Apprentices benefit from exposure to lived experience, judgement, and problem-solving skills that cannot be replicated in textbooks. Employers, in turn, gain from lower dropout rates, better trained recruits, and a more resilient skills pipeline.

## Outcomes

**Stronger attraction for apprentices:** Renewed enthusiasm from younger people to join the construction sector.

**Better succession planning:** Organisations uncover internal talent, reduce knowledge loss, and manage transitions earlier.

**Cost efficiencies:** Career reinvention reduces attrition, boosts engagement and helps close workforce purpose gaps - while improving workforce planning scores and retention KPIs.

**Culture change:** Later-career support shows how organisations value experience, positioning longevity strategy as central to social value, ESG metrics, sustainability goals and long-term workforce health.



Social enterprise [VIY \(Volunteer It Yourself\)](#) challenges young people to develop trade and employability skills by refurbishing local community spaces and venues in need of essential repairs and improvements. The idea is simple: older tradespeople mentor young people on real projects.

## Opportunity

In conversation with Trevor, 62, semi-retired and a VIY Trade Skills Mentor:

Trevor is a painter and decorator and used to run his own business. He joined VIY in 2022 and, since then, has mentored on more than 25 projects. "I have a passion for bringing young people into construction and giving them a trade," he says.

A recent highlight for Trevor was the Debdale Sports Park project in Mansfield, where works centred on creating new female changing rooms to help encourage more women and girls to get involved in sport. Trevor helped support and guide 27 young people aged 16-24 on the project, most of whom were NEET (not in employment, education or training) or at risk of becoming NEET. Of these learners, 25 successfully achieved an Entry Level City & Guilds trade skills qualification and three have also already progressed to employment in construction beyond the end of the project.

## Outcomes

For Trevor, mentoring with VIY has been equally rewarding: "It's kept me active in semi-retirement, involved in my local community and feeling proud to pass on my trade skills to the next generation."

**It's a win-win: mentors share their skills and experience, while young people gain confidence, skills qualifications and a vocational trade. Each year, VIY delivers over 100 projects UK-wide, benefitting more than 2,000 young people.**



## From Compliance to Cultural Shift – A New Age of Work

**ConstructED is not just an economic strategy - it is a safeguard of professional standards. By enabling experienced professionals to mentor, train and up-skill the next generation, we are preserving a critical chain of legal, ethical, and procedural knowledge that cannot be taught from a textbook alone.**

Young tradespeople need not only to learn how to build — they must learn how to build responsibly.

And who better to teach risk awareness, contractual diligence, health and safety culture, and ethical professionalism than those who have stood on sites, in planning meetings, in courtrooms, attended adjudications, or given expert evidence?

By addressing workforce shortages and enhancing skills development, ConstructED contributes to national economic growth and infrastructure goals, also complementing the Taking Teaching Further Initiative. ConstructED presents a fiscally responsible, evidence-based, and scalable solution to critical challenges in the UK's construction sector. By re-engaging experienced professionals, the programme not only addresses labour shortages but also delivers substantial economic and social returns.



### **Testing and trialling ConstructED**

**“ProAge will be conducting a pilot for ConstructED to enable a detailed benefits realisation model to be produced. This will include a robust evaluation of unlocking older workers’ skills to strengthen construction education.”**

**Mike Mansfield**



# AGE IRRELEVANCE

Age Irrelevance is a strategic consultancy and advocacy campaign redefining how society, business, and government respond to the realities of longer lives and changing demographics. We're a not for profit, social enterprise that inspires organisations to unlock the economic and social value of longevity through practical, evidence-based solutions. To achieve this, we offer Longevity Strategy Consulting. From Parliament to the boardroom, we advise and work with businesses to design longevity strategies, support multi-stage careers, and prepare for 100-year life dynamics across employment, leadership, and consumer engagement. We partner on thought leadership and research, producing white papers, frameworks, and briefings that shape boardroom agendas and inform national strategy.



**Kay Allen**  
Campaign Director



**Fiona Lennox**  
Strategy Director

## Want to Lead the Change?

Collaborate with Age Irrelevance and share your learnings.  
**Contact us and find out about becoming a Changemaker – you can be the spark of change.**

[kay@ageirrelevance.com](mailto:kay@ageirrelevance.com)

[www.ageirrelevance.com](http://www.ageirrelevance.com)



## Ambassadors

Dave Allen  
Ashton Applewhite  
Francisco Beloso  
Stuart Bosley  
Jim Boyd  
Andy Briggs MBE  
Kate Brigham  
Amanda Britain  
Jamie Bunce  
Emma Burrows  
Peter Cheese  
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Rt Hon Baroness Hodge DBE PC  
Jez Hughes CBE  
Julian John  
Karen Lewis  
Henry Lumby  
Mike Mansfield  
Sir Michael Marmot  
Ian McKay  
Kate Nash OBE  
Sir Ken Olisa OBE  
Sir Trevor Phillips OBE  
Michael Pitfield  
Rt Hon Baroness Prashar CBE PC  
Rachel Neaman  
Rebecca Robins  
Nick Sanderson  
Andrew J Scott CBE  
David Sinclair  
Carole Spiers MBE  
Charlotte Sweeney OBE  
Lalita Taylor  
Johnny Timpson OBE  
Victoria Tomlinson  
Michael Voges  
Ritika Wadhwa  
Caroline Waters OBE  
Emma Webster

## Changemakers and Allies

The 5% Club  
55 redefined  
Bean Research  
Brandpie  
Brave Starts  
Greengross Family  
Hassell Inclusion  
Inspired villages  
Intergenerational England  
Marrons  
Moving Ahead  
Next-Up  
Oaktree Court  
Picture This  
ProAge  
Rathbones  
Socialudo  
Standard Life Centre for the Future  
of Retirement  
The Connection Project  
Utley Foundation  
Veronica Arts  
VIY

No		Web Source
i	CITB Focusing on the skills construction needs	<a href="https://www.citb.co.uk/media/hwofsg5i/ctb1003_csn-rep_uk-full_adf">https://www.citb.co.uk/media/hwofsg5i/ctb1003_csn-rep_uk-full_adf</a>
ii	NOCN	<a href="https://www.nocn.org.uk/news/new-research-tackles-construction-apprenticeship-completion-rate-crisis.asp">https://www.nocn.org.uk/news/new-research-tackles-construction-apprenticeship-completion-rate-crisis.asp</a>
iii	ONS	<a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/unemployment/datasets/vacanciesbyindustryvacs02">https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/unemployment/datasets/vacanciesbyindustryvacs02</a>
iv	ONS	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2025">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2025</a>
v	NOCN/ British Association of Construction Heads	<a href="https://www.nocn.org.uk/data/News_Downloads/ConstructionAchievementRates(1).pdf">https://www.nocn.org.uk/data/News_Downloads/ConstructionAchievementRates(1).pdf</a>
vi	The National Audit Office	<a href="https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/teacher-workforce-secondary-and-further-education/">https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/teacher-workforce-secondary-and-further-education/</a>
vii	The CPA/PCB	<a href="https://www.pbctoday.co.uk/news/hr-skills-news/cpa-forecasts-dire-demographic-crisis-uk-construction-skills-shortage/145084">https://www.pbctoday.co.uk/news/hr-skills-news/cpa-forecasts-dire-demographic-crisis-uk-construction-skills-shortage/145084</a>
viii	Construction Magazine 2024	<a href="https://constructionmanagement.co.uk/constructions-ageing-workforce-where-are-the-next-generation/">https://constructionmanagement.co.uk/constructions-ageing-workforce-where-are-the-next-generation/</a>
ix	CITB evidence to UK Parliament	<a href="https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/143900/pdf">https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/143900/pdf</a>
x	CITB evidence to UK Parliament	<a href="https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/143900/pdf">https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/143900/pdf</a>
xi	CITB	<a href="https://www.citb.co.uk/media/hwofsg5i/ctb1003_csn-rep_uk-full_aw.pdf">https://www.citb.co.uk/media/hwofsg5i/ctb1003_csn-rep_uk-full_aw.pdf</a>
xii	CITB	<a href="https://www.citb.co.uk/cwo/index.html">https://www.citb.co.uk/cwo/index.html</a>
xiii	NOCN Group	<a href="https://www.nocn.org.uk/news/new-research-tackles-construction-apprenticeship-completion-rate-crisis.asp">https://www.nocn.org.uk/news/new-research-tackles-construction-apprenticeship-completion-rate-crisis.asp</a>
xiv	CITB	<a href="https://www.citb.co.uk/media/2bylp3yw/fuller-working-lives-in-construction.pdf">https://www.citb.co.uk/media/2bylp3yw/fuller-working-lives-in-construction.pdf</a>
xv	ONS	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2025">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2025</a>
xvi	ONS	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2025">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/economic-labour-market-status-of-individuals-aged-50-and-over-trends-over-time-september-2025</a>
xvii	CITB evidence to UK Parliament	<a href="https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/143900/html/#:~:text=Age%20profile%20of%20the%20construction,seen%20in%20the%20chart%20below">https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/143900/html/#:~:text=Age%20profile%20of%20the%20construction,seen%20in%20the%20chart%20below</a>
xviii	The Ministry for Housing	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/planning-overhaul-to-reach-15-million-new-homes">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/planning-overhaul-to-reach-15-million-new-homes</a>
xix	British Association of Construction Heads NOCN Group	<a href="https://www.nocn.org.uk/data/News_Downloads/ConstructionAchievementRates.pdf">https://www.nocn.org.uk/data/News_Downloads/ConstructionAchievementRates.pdf</a>
xx	Places for People Construction and Building Trades: The skills Horizon – quoting UK Trade Skills Index	<a href="https://www.placesforpeople.co.uk/media/ae5piox1/pfp-skills-final-report.pdf">https://www.placesforpeople.co.uk/media/ae5piox1/pfp-skills-final-report.pdf</a>
xxi	The Construction Index	<a href="https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/uk-constructions-demographic-timebomb">https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/uk-constructions-demographic-timebomb</a>
xxii	The Construction Index	<a href="https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/uk-constructions-demographic-timebomb">https://www.theconstructionindex.co.uk/news/view/uk-constructions-demographic-timebomb</a>
xxiii	BCIS	<a href="https://www.bcis.co.uk/news/latest-construction-workforce-figures">https://www.bcis.co.uk/news/latest-construction-workforce-figures</a>
xxiv	GOV.UK FE workforce in England	<a href="https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-catalogue/data-set/759cba7b-fc66-4cf9-afb0-c4536708224d">https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-catalogue/data-set/759cba7b-fc66-4cf9-afb0-c4536708224d</a>
xxv	The National Audit Office	<a href="https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/teacher-workforce-secondary-and-further-education/">https://www.nao.org.uk/reports/teacher-workforce-secondary-and-further-education/</a>
xxvi	ScrewFix Media Centre October 2025	<a href="https://press.screwfix.com/25-of-tradespeople-plan-to-retire-in-the-next-five-years/">https://press.screwfix.com/25-of-tradespeople-plan-to-retire-in-the-next-five-years/</a>