



Press Release

Immed. 8 December 2025

CECA: Apprenticeship Investment A Welcome Step Towards Closing The Skills Gap

Civils contractors today welcomed the UK Government's [announcement of a £725 million package of skills reforms](#), including 50,000 additional apprenticeship and foundation apprenticeship opportunities for young people over the next three years.

The reforms will fully fund apprenticeship training costs for eligible under-twenty-five year olds in small and medium-sized businesses, expand foundation apprenticeships, and introduce new short courses in priority areas such as engineering, AI and digital skills.

The funding announced today includes a £140 million for a pilot where Mayors will be able to connect young people - especially those not in education, employment or training (NEET) with thousands of apprenticeship opportunities with local employers.

Commenting, CECA Director of Policy & Public Affairs Ben Goodwin said: "Today's announcement is another important step towards the long-term skills settlement our sector needs.

"Construction and infrastructure offer high-quality, well-paid careers in every part of the country, but we can only deliver the Government's ambitions on growth if we bring many more young people into our industry every year.

"We particularly welcome full funding for apprenticeships for young people in SMEs, the expansion of foundation apprenticeships, and more flexible technical training in areas such as engineering and digital

"Taken together with recent investments in Technical Excellence Colleges, Skills Bootcamps and the new Construction Skills Mission Board, this package can help close the skills gap - provided it is delivered at pace and in partnership with industry.

"CECA has consistently campaigned for sustained investment in construction skills, better support for further education and apprenticeships, and a skills system that reflects regional labour market needs.

"Our members - a majority of whom are SMEs - stand ready to work with DWP, Skills England, local government, and training providers, to ensure these reforms translate into real opportunities on site - particularly in those communities that need them most."

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Notes to editors

1. The Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) represents over 300 contractors of all sizes, covering approximately 80% of the civil engineering market in Great Britain. Our members build infrastructure that provides the basis for economic sustainability and quality of life in communities across the country.

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