



Make informed decisions about your career path by learning about key labour market sectors in Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly

# CONSTRUCTION

SECTOR IN CORNWALL & THE ISLES OF SCILLY





**THE  
CONSTRUCTION  
SECTOR MAKES UP**



**OF THE CORNISH  
ECONOMY**

**AVERAGE SALARY IS**

**£32,978**

## Introduction to the construction sector

Construction is one of the most dynamic and forward-looking sectors for long-term career opportunities. Whether working in a traditional trade, in a construction managerial role, or as a professional consultant, the range of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) based opportunities within the sector is immense. With a wide range of job roles available for everyone at all levels of education, construction offers a hugely exciting career.

Construction is helping lead our digital revolution, with Building Information Modelling (BIM), construction robotics, 3D printing, drone and satellite technologies, autonomous plant, SMART buildings, Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), as just some of the new frontiers that a career in construction can offer.

Underpinning all of Cornwall's other progressive sectors, construction also stands at the forefront of our challenges with climate change, sustainable technologies, carbon reduction and retrofitting/repurposing our existing buildings for the 21st century.

The construction sector makes up 7% of the Cornish economy and the median average salary is £32,978, with salaries for different occupations within the sector showing significant variation.

Construction offers diverse, high-tech, STEM based career opportunities that can help the UK and world drive the changes we need. Meeting the challenges we have to create a low-carbon, renewable-energy based economy, that also requires continuation of traditional skills to support the built and natural environments of the future.



# Current Outlook

Demand for construction and construction skills continue to grow. Whether that's to create the homes we need, places we work, social infrastructure that underpins our world, or to support the growth of the natural environment and biodiversity improvements that's so important to our future.

Workforce capacity in the sector is an increasing challenge, with significant numbers of older skilled workers due to retire over the next 5-10 years. However, this also presents a significant opportunity for a new generation of specialists and alternative approaches to construction in the future.

There are about 32,970 employees in construction, and of these 72% are full time and 18% are part time in Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly. There are also high percentages of self-employed individuals working in the sector, and they may be subcontracted to larger projects or undertaking small works in the domestic sector.

The professional consultancy side of construction has never offered more opportunity or been more exciting from a career perspective. It includes careers in architecture, planning, environmental engineering, civil and structural engineering, mechanical and electrical engineering, building surveying, quantity surveying and project management.

Construction salary levels are amongst the highest of any sector in Cornwall, and long-term career prospects with sponsored degree, apprenticeships and professional body qualifications being offered by many consultancies - becoming a construction professional is now very much a career of choice.

Whether your passion is design, problem solving, procurement, planning, programming, environmental and biodiversity impact, administration, management, project coordination, economics or measuring and tracking carbon levels, you will struggle to find more diverse career opportunities and the potential for real progression than exist within the construction sector.

## Salaries in the construction sector

| Occupation Title                            | Median Salary (UK-wide) |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bricklayers and masons                      | £27,991                 |
| Carpenters and joiners                      | £27,886                 |
| Elementary construction occupations         | £23,922                 |
| Glaziers, window fabricators and fitters    | £22,421                 |
| Other administrative occupations            | £18,207                 |
| Plumbers, heating and ventilating engineers | £31,618                 |
| Production managers and directors           | £42,710                 |
| Quantity surveyors                          | £43,213                 |
| Sales related occupations                   | £21,268                 |
| Sales supervisors                           | £20,993                 |



**Key:**  
The current top ten occupations in this sector nationwide

**Proportion of jobs in the national construction sector and demand over the last year in Cornwall**

■ % of the industry in each occupation

**Demand for these occupations in Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly**

■ Number of Job Posting in 12 months<sup>2</sup>



**Number of employees recruited over the year by the top construction recruiters in Cornwall**



Many people who work in construction are not employed by these big firms. Smaller firms or those who are self-employed will often be subcontractors to bigger organisations. This means that the big employers have an important role in shaping the local sector.

**Key:**

ⓧ Number of Job Postings in 12 months<sup>2</sup>

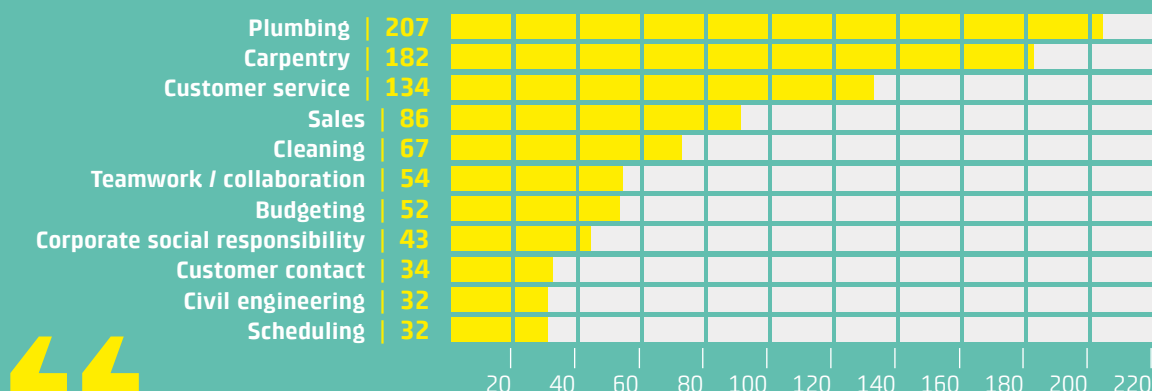
★ = equal



<sup>2</sup> Burning Glass Data from March 31 2021 to April 1 2022

## Employer demand for specialist skills in the construction industry in Cornwall

Job adverts listing this skill



A collaboration is a meaningful relationship in which all parties choose to work together to achieve shared or overlapping goals.



Corporate social responsibility (CSR, also called corporate citizenship or responsible business) is increasingly important in construction as firms are working in a more sustainable and environmentally conscious way.

## Employer demand for IT skills in the construction industry in Cornwall

Job adverts listing this skill

41

Microsoft Excel



30

Microsoft Office



15

AutoCAD



13

Microsoft Word



8

Microsoft Project



6

Microsoft Powerpoint



4

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)



4

Microsoft Access



4

Microsoft Outlook



3

Primavera



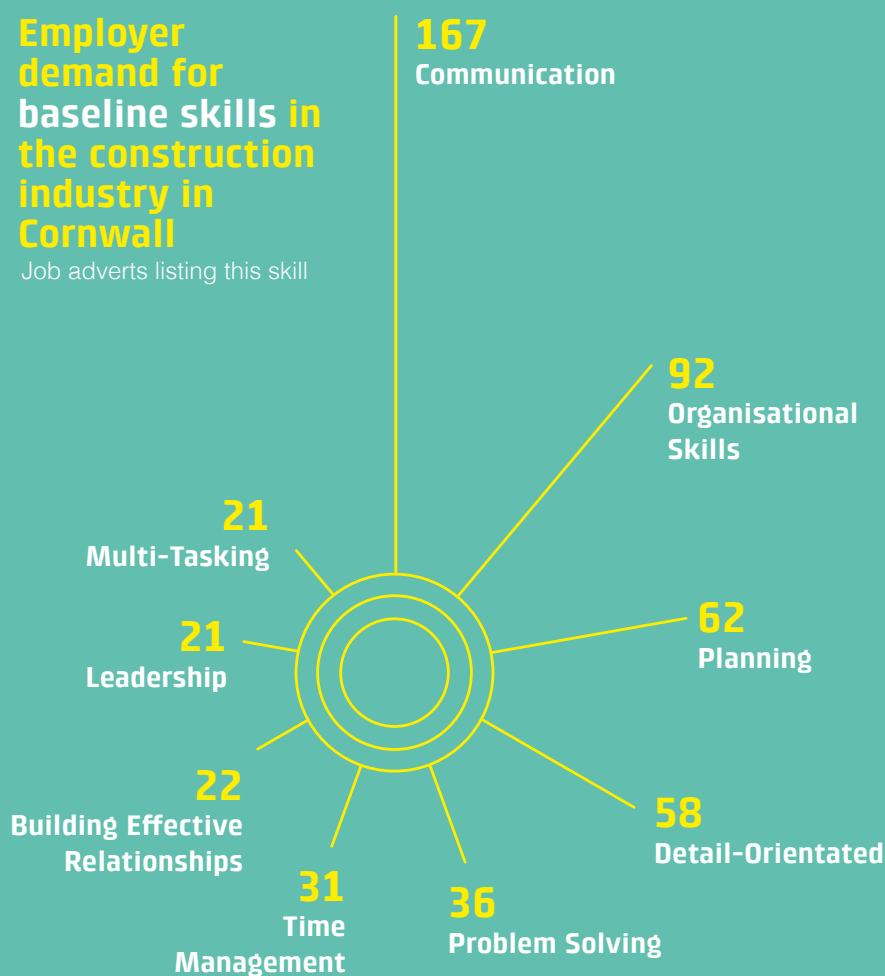
2

Accounting Software



## Employer demand for baseline skills in the construction industry in Cornwall

Job adverts listing this skill





## Useful things to know

Approaching employers directly can be helpful, especially if looking for an apprenticeship.

Many vacancies are 'hidden' – that is, not advertised through the usual channels. They might appear on social media or are often made available to workers who are known to the company. Having a good network – and reputation - is therefore really important if self-employed or in a small business.

The Considerate Constructors Scheme helps businesses that sign up to respect the community, care for the environment and value their workforce.

Alongside technological advances, heritage construction is also important in Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly – this is working on historic buildings with traditional skills.

## Future Outlook

The future for construction in Cornwall is exceptionally bright. Whether that's delivering renewable energy facilities on or offshore, together with the necessary maintenance and support infrastructure that will be required to support them. Or building the facilities and infrastructure that will underpin Cornwall's Spaceport and growing satellite and space industry, it will be the construction sector that enables it to happen.

From building new SMART energy efficient and sustainable homes, education buildings, healthcare facilities and workplaces. To developing our transport, agritech, tourism and leisure facilities of the future, none of it will happen without construction.

Construction workers of the future will be digitally literate, as comfortable with manipulating hi-tech autonomous plant, or robotic equipment via a tablet or a computer, as their predecessors would have been in using traditional tools. However, we'll still need to maintain sustainable skills in the traditional construction trades that will be necessary to support building maintenance, retrofitting and heritage skills for the future.

At the forefront of the future of construction will be the development of sustainable and regenerative practices, technologies, materials and values. Viability of buildings will no longer be assessed on their monetary cost, but on how much embodied carbon is accounted for within their construction and long-term use. Construction accounts for 35-40% of the world's carbon emissions, and if we are to meet the challenge of climate change goals, then we need to reduce these emissions by 50% by 2030. These challenges are significant and require a new perspective, technological approach and professional expertise; this is why we need you in construction.

## Automation and technological change

Automation and other drivers will change the way in which the construction industry works. We can expect to see automation changing both planning and physical onsite tasks. The growth of 3D printing technologies are also likely to influence the future of the industry. Many of these changes will take decades to completely change in the industry but their impact is being felt now.

Most of these technological changes are likely to increase productivity in the sector rather than reduce the number of jobs. The jobs where there is a high risk of automation are low skilled (elementary) construction occupations and administrative occupations. But these and many other jobs will see the skills that they use changing under the influence of technology.

All this means it is important for those entering the construction sector to continue to develop skills and engage with new technologies.



## More Information

If you want to find out more about the construction industry you may find these sources helpful.

- CITB <https://www.citb.co.uk/>
- Go Construct <https://www.goconstruct.org/>
- National Careers Service: Construction and trades <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-categories/construction-and-trades>

Building Cornwall was set up to help grow the skills, knowledge and capacity the industry needs to meet to challenges of the ever-increasing demand for a sustainable built environment in Cornwall. It encourages people from construction to become ambassadors to help inspire the next generation.

[www.buildingcornwall.co.uk](http://www.buildingcornwall.co.uk)

### Professional bodies:

Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) [www.architecture.com](http://www.architecture.com)

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) [www.rics.org/uk](http://www.rics.org/uk)

Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) [www.ice.org.uk](http://www.ice.org.uk)

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) [www.rtpi.org.uk](http://www.rtpi.org.uk)

The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) [www.ciob.org](http://www.ciob.org)

Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) [www.cibse.org](http://www.cibse.org)

Institution for Chemical Engineers (IChemE) [www.icheme.org](http://www.icheme.org)

The Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM) [www.ciwem.org](http://www.ciwem.org)

Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) [www.iema.net](http://www.iema.net)

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) <https://cieem.net>

## Routes into Construction

1. Direct employment into a job in the construction sector and receive training on the job. The [Find a job service](https://www.gov.uk/find-a-job) (<https://www.gov.uk/find-a-job>) can help you with your search for jobs and send alerts when new jobs become available.
2. Apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship with an employer. The [Find an apprenticeship service](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship) (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>) can help you with your search, send alerts when new apprenticeships become available and has advice on how to apply.
3. Undertake a relevant College course, or new T-Level qualifications are available for 16-18 year olds.
4. Graduates can enter the workforce after attaining a relevant degree.
5. Work experience can be a great way to find out what it's like working in the construction sector and gain valuable skills for your CV.

## For further support:

Contact the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly People Hub, they can help if you are:

- unemployed and wondering what options are open to you
- out of work and looking to retrain or develop new skills
- recently redundant and want to get back into work or training

**Call - 0333 0150699** (Monday–Friday, 9am–4pm)

**Visit – [www.peoplehub.info](http://www.peoplehub.info)**

**Email – [hello@peoplehub.info](mailto:hello@peoplehub.info)**

The National Careers Service provides free careers advice and guidance to individuals from the age of 14. Visit 'Get the Jump' for 14-19 year olds and the National Careers Service website for adults.

**Get the Jump: explore your education and training choices | National Careers Service** (<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-your-education-and-training-choices>)

**Careers advice - job profiles, information and resources | National Careers Service** (<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>)