



Training Hub
MBC
Raising Standards, Protecting Homeowners
In partnership with REDROW

**EARN WHILE
YOU LEARN
AND BUILD
SKILLS FOR LIFE**



CREATING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Foreword by Karen Jones, Human Resources Director



Apprenticeships continue to be a fantastic route for young people, as they can gain nationally recognised qualifications alongside real work experience, whilst getting paid at the same time.

Our latest research shows apprenticeships are proving more popular than ever, with young people and parents alike, with two thirds (66%) of parents of 16–21-year-olds saying they have or would encourage their child into an apprenticeship, which is a hugely significant increase from 17% in 2022.

This demonstrates the progress that has been made to break down the stigma around apprenticeships as well as the impact of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. Many young people are currently reconsidering their career options as the findings show they are reluctant to take on university debts and believe apprenticeships provide more career pathways for them, as well as the ability to start earning more money earlier in their career.

Despite the tide turning on perceptions of apprenticeships, three in five (61%) young people still believe going to university is more encouraged at school. The career advice and support offered in schools is vital to inspiring young people to choose the career path that best suits them. We urge the government to take steps to improve the quality of careers education for young people and to make them recognise apprenticeships as an equally valid step towards a successful career.

The skills shortage continues to be a challenge for the construction industry, so there's a real drive to harness future talent across the sector. As a business we've undertaken more outreach in schools helping to inspire and support young people, particularly in areas of low social mobility. We have also maintained investment in our acclaimed national apprenticeship programme that offers trade, technical and commercial training, including a flagship hub partnership with the NHBC.

When it comes to raising the profile of construction as a potential career route, particularly among girls and young women, we have also seen some really promising signs, with over three in five (66%) women saying they have considered or are open to working in construction, up 17% from 2023 (49%). In 2021, just 20% of women said that a career in construction is a possibility for them.

However, women are still considerably underrepresented in the sector as a whole, so clearly there is more work to do to bring women into the industry and support them to grow within their chosen career paths. Having strong female role models in the construction sector really helps young people to envisage themselves in these positions as well as making them more aware of what opportunities are out there.

This is especially telling as our findings show over a third of young people believe gender-based stereotypes when they were younger have influenced their career choices, so we need to ensure these messages are coming through from a young age. In our bid to build a culture that is inclusive to all, we have set targets to increase the percentage of women recruited into graduate roles to 40% and the percentage of female employees in senior management roles to 28%, all by 2025.

As a platinum member of the 5% Club, we are committed to ensuring apprentices, graduates and trainees make up at least 5% of the workforce in the next five years. However, in practice, we go well beyond this with 15% of our total colleagues currently working towards qualifications or on the job training, such as apprenticeships.

This National Apprenticeship Week we are encouraging more young people to consider a career in construction with over 40 nationwide trade positions being released this year. To find out more, please visit: [Apprentices | Redrow PLC.](#)

Two thirds

of parents of 16–21-year-olds say they have or would encourage their child into an apprenticeship.

3 in 5

(61%) young people still believe going to university is more encouraged at school.

66%

of young women say they have considered or are open to working in construction.

40

nationwide trade positions available at Redrow.

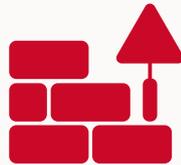
CAREERS IN CONSTRUCTION AND APPRENTICESHIPS

Top 5 benefits of apprenticeships vs university according to 16-24-year-olds

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1 Earn a salary whilst learning | 33% |
| 2 Gain practical work experience | 28% |
| 3 Earn money earlier on in your career due to cost-of-living crisis | 27% |
| 4 Avoid student debt | 24% |
| 5 Ability to learn from industry experts directly | 22% |

KEY FINDINGS

24%



Almost a quarter of young people believe an apprenticeship allows you more career pathways.

29%



of young people have / had no interest in attending university and would rather do an apprenticeship.

32%



32% of young people are considering or have considered a career in construction. This is a rise from 24% in 2023 who were considering or were currently working in construction and from 26% in 2021 who stated a career in construction is a possible choice for them.

60%



Over a third of young people believe gender-based stereotypes when they were younger have influenced their career choices.

40%



Two in five young people don't think degrees provide enough coaching and mentoring support.

- Over three in five (66%) young women currently work in / have considered working in or are open to working in construction. This is up 17% compared to 49% of young women in 2023 who said they have considered or are open to working in construction.

- Three in five (36%) young people believe going to university is / was more encouraged at school.
- Two thirds (66%) of parents of 16-21-year-olds surveyed did / would encourage their child into an apprenticeship, a significant increase from 17% in 2022.

APPRENTICESHIPS ARE THE NEW WAY FORWARD

In the wake of wider concerns surrounding the cost-of-living and questions around the true value of a university degree, there has been a notable, positive shift in the way apprenticeships are perceived.

As industries demand a more hands-on, skill-centric approach, apprenticeships are an ideal solution, propelling individuals into sustainable and fulfilling careers.

In fact, our latest research shows **over a third (37%) of young people surveyed consider apprenticeships a more valuable pathway for their career versus attending university,**

and the financial benefits of this route are a key consideration when deciding what to do next.

Similarly, a student survey from the Office of National Statistics found that as the cost-of-living crisis truly hit the nation in 2022, half (49%) of students felt they had newfound financial difficulties which were having an adverse effect on their mental wellbeing. Likewise, a report from UCAS also found that one of the key reasons prospective applicants said they were less likely to go to university was due to the cost-of-living and instead chose education that pays for participation such as an apprenticeship.

With financial worries set to continue in 2024, it's encouraging to see a growing number of young people strategically opt for apprenticeships over traditional university paths, fueled by the desire to sidestep student debt and gain immediate financial independence.

“THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT YOU SHOULD GET OUT THERE AND DO AN APPRENTICESHIP. GETTING THAT INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE – IT’S JUST THE BEST WAY TO LEARN IN MY OPINION.”

Akbar Zaman –
Redrow bricklaying apprentice

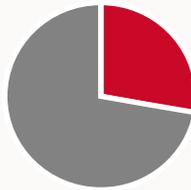


WELCOME TO A GENERATION WHO ARE MAKING THE BOLD CHOICE TO LEARN AND EARN SIMULTANEOUSLY



41%

Just over two in five (41%) young people surveyed associate earning money while studying and not incurring student debt with an apprenticeship.



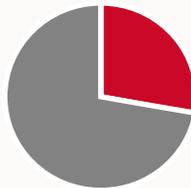
27%

27% feel they can achieve greater financial independence at an early age as well as having more career pathways or routes available for them (24%) thanks to the non-university route.



27%

Over two-fifths (27%) see apprenticeships as an opportunity for more mentoring and coaching opportunities.

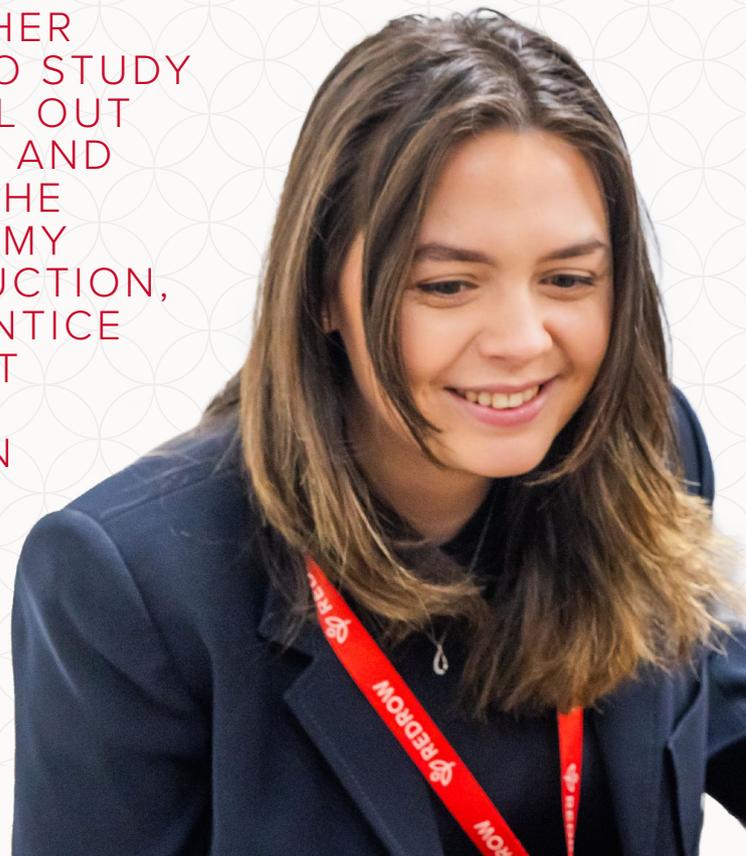


27%

Young people surveyed believe that apprentices are more likely than graduates to gain qualifications and learn skills that are relevant to their career path (27%).

“DESPITE STARTING MY FURTHER EDUCATION AT UNIVERSITY TO STUDY LAW, AFTER TWO YEARS I FELL OUT OF LOVE WITH THE INDUSTRY AND REALISED IT SIMPLY WASN'T THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR ME. WITH MY FAMILY WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION, BECOMING A REDROW APPRENTICE SEEMED LIKE THE PERFECT FIT AND I HONESTLY LOVE IT. NOT ONLY DO I GET TO LEARN WHILE BEING PAID, BUT I ALSO HAVE A WONDERFULLY SUPPORTIVE TEAM AROUND ME TOO.”

Emily Shaw – Redrow apprentice (commercial department)



BREAKING THE APPRENTICESHIP DIVIDE



Despite young people embracing the apprenticeship route, there remains a stark gap in the advice given by both schools and parents to young people when it comes to choosing their next education move.

Three in five (60%) of those surveyed admit going to university is / was more encouraged at their school, with 48% feeling there's a general stigma associated with being an apprentice rather than pursuing higher education.

Over 42% of those surveyed also say that their parents don't know much about apprenticeships and disagree that there is equal focus on apprenticeships and other routes vs university (35%).

THE CAREER GO-TO GURU

While unsurprisingly parents remain the main driver of influence on their children's career path, the ongoing cost-of-living crisis has led many parents to reevaluate their thinking on what constitutes a good further education choice for their children.

With a newfound understanding of how important it is for their children to earn money from a young age and get ahead of the curve in avoiding long term issues like student debt, parents' perceptions of careers in construction and apprenticeships have changed dramatically, and for the better:

- Two thirds of parents (66%) surveyed would encourage their child into an apprenticeship, a significant increase from 17% in 2022.
- Two in five (40%) parents surveyed say they did / would encourage their child into a career in construction, up 11% from 2023. This rises to 45% of fathers surveyed vs. 36% of mothers.
- Over half (56%) of parents associate apprenticeships with earning money while studying and not incurring student debt and greater financial independence at an earlier age (41%).
- Over two fifths (44%) would go as far to say apprentices are more likely than graduates to gain qualifications and learn skills that are relevant to their career path.

CHALLENGING THE CONSTRUCTION PERCEPTIONS

Whilst last year's research uncovered that nearly two thirds (62%) of young people agreed that careers in construction are often overlooked, this year's data demonstrated that perceptions are positively shifting. **In 2020, over two fifths (44%) of young people believed a career in construction was dominated by men and in 2024 this is now 39%, with just under a third (32%) of those surveyed saying they've considered a career in construction.**

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEYED THINK A CAREER IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR OFFERS

Being able to work on a variety of different projects	33%
Gaining new skills across different roles	31%
Fulfilment of getting to see their work develop in real time	25%
Competitive salary	25%
Good employment opportunities	24%

When it comes to choosing this industry, it's clear it is about much more than just earning a great wage. Young people surveyed think a career in construction offers the opportunity for gaining skills from a variety of roles.

"I'M REALLY PROUD OF BEING ABLE TO SAY I HAVE BUILT QUITE A FEW THINGS! FOR EXAMPLE, WALLS WITH LOTS OF DIFFERENT DETAILS. I HAVE HELPED CREATE BAY WINDOWS WHICH ARE QUITE CHALLENGING SO IT'S HARD WORK, BUT VERY REWARDING. SEEING THE RESULT OF YOUR WORK MAKES YOU REALLY PROUD OF YOURSELF. IT MAKES YOU WANT TO KEEP GOING TO SEE THAT FINAL PRODUCT."

Leeanna Smith – Redrow bricklaying apprentice



Our 2023 report found that three quarters (74%) of young people felt that construction is typically a male dominated industry, but this year there's been a sharp decrease to 39% believing this is the case. This showcases how the ongoing efforts of the industry and government are starting to make an impact to ensure construction is something to be considered by everyone. As always, there's still more that can, and should, be done such as improving careers advice and guidance, installing new site facilities on developments and updating PPE.

Darryl Stewart, Head of Commercial Services at the National House Building Council (NHBC), said: *"It's encouraging to see the number of younger people considering a career in construction is increasing, but we need to push ourselves to make this even higher. As a training provider, it's vital we attract the widest pool of talent and people from all backgrounds to take up an apprenticeship in the house building industry to help address the nationwide skills gap and housing shortage.*

In recent years, house builders have found it more challenging to recruit people for a range of reasons. Historically, it's an industry which has been perceived as being more male-dominated and currently it's also facing an ageing workforce.

This means we must find ways to encourage people from all walks of life to join the sector. It is an industry which offers a fantastic range of careers and an apprenticeship in the house building industry is a pathway into a rewarding and well-paid career that can make a real difference."



MAKING CONSTRUCTION A CAREER FOR EVERYONE

One of the most promising stats from this year's research is that more than **three in five (66%) women already work in, have considered working in or are open to working in construction**, up 17% from 2023 and 14% from 2020.

Despite decades of construction being heavily male dominated and a belief that gender-based stereotypes or norms when they were younger have influenced their career decisions (40%), the latest generation of female young adults surveyed are increasingly looking to enter the sector.

In fact, young women surveyed not only find the potential high salary appealing (39%), but also the opportunity to have a long-term career (26%) and the ability to set up their own business later down the line (25%). With such positive opportunities from this career choice, it's no wonder that in this societal climate, women are bravely challenging the norm and exploring new industries altogether.

Karen Jones, HR Director for Redrow, comments: *"The construction industry is such an exciting one to be in and there needs to be more women coming into the industry.*

To achieve this, there needs to be more education to promote the fact that construction doesn't just mean being a bricklayer or out on site, there are so many opportunities for women to succeed, do well and make a difference to communities.

In our bid to build a culture that is inclusive to all, we have set targets to increase the percentage of women recruited into graduate roles to 40% and the percentage of female employees in senior management roles to 28%, all by 2025.

As part of this, we are constantly looking for ways to make our workplace more inclusive, whether that's on site or office based roles."

Redrow apprentice data shows prior to joining, 17% thought the industry was heavily male dominated but since working at Redrow this figure fell to just 7% who still found the industry to be heavily male dominated.



Zara Barrow
Group Construction Director

Interestingly, our data also found that **two in five (38%) young people surveyed want to work for a company that has female or LGBTQ+ leaders**, highlighting the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion for young people when considering their chosen career.

Karen Jones, said: *"We're extremely proud to have been awarded the Platinum membership for our commitment to employee development. In light of national skills shortages, our role as an employer and trainer has become even more important. With the future pipeline of talent always in mind, we undertake outreach to schools, inspiring and supporting youngsters particularly in areas of low social mobility. The Platinum membership is also great recognition for our colleagues who have sought to embrace diversity in all aspects of the business; creating an environment where employees can fulfil their potential."*

Darryl Stewart, Head of Commercial Services at NHBC, said: *"Apprenticeships are for everyone and we're delighted to see people from all backgrounds coming through, including women, career changers, diverse cultures and school leavers wanting to work in house building. It's never too late to learn a new skill!"*



ASK AN APPRENTICE , WHO GOT INTO BRICKLAYING BY CHANCE

“I ACTUALLY GOT INTO BRICKLAYING BY CHANCE THROUGH AN OPEN DAY AND ENDED UP REALLY ENJOYING MY CRAFT AND AS SUCH STUCK WITH THAT ROUTE”

Akbar Zaman – Redrow Apprentice working at The Maltings, Haddenham



What were you doing before becoming a Redrow apprentice?

I actually got into bricklaying by chance through an open day and ended up really enjoying my craft and as such stuck with that route. I was doing Level 1 and Level 2 [bricklaying] at Bucks College Group in Aylesbury and did this for two years.

Did you ever consider going to university?

Well, my first year of college I did accounting and finance but hated it. So, when I went to my college opening day, I tried out everything and fell in love with bricklaying and have never looked back.

What is it about bricklaying that you love?

I love building in general, but with bricklaying, I love building people's homes as it is heartwarming to know I am contributing to helping people build their own memories in a new home.

Have you enjoyed working on the Maltings site?

It's been great! The site manager is really nice, helps me out a lot. The brickies there are top brickies and have taught me a lot. They have been putting me through my paces making sure I get the most out of my experience.

Would you advise this as a route for others similar to you?

100%. There is no doubt that you should get out there and do an apprenticeship. Getting that industry experience – it's just the best way to learn in my opinion. The getting paid aspect is just a bonus on top of all of the learning benefits that come with this opportunity.

What are your short-term/ long-term aspirations?

My short-term goal is to finish the apprenticeship and gather as much experience as possible in order to make sure I use the apprenticeship well. In terms of my long-term future, I would love to be a project manager or even a site manager. If that doesn't happen, it would be great to have my own gang of bricklayers and run my own business.

What challenges have you faced on site?

I had never been on site before, but the site manager was welcoming, and the other bricklayers were great to work with when I first started. I really enjoyed the learning experience especially with Redrow as they are incredibly inclusive. Whilst it was a challenging start, the way in which Redrow works means that I have felt welcome. There are a lot of different people on site, whether that is women or ethnic minorities, I was treated with respect as is the case with everyone else which is great to see.

What are you most proud of so far?

I have been really lucky to work on stone houses which is valuable but also rare for someone of my skill level. This is a completely different brick and therefore it has been valuable that I have been able to learn as there are very few bricklayers who are able to work with stone. This is one of the great aspects of Redrow and the opportunity I have had.

ASK A FEMALE APPRENTICE WHAT IT'S REALLY LIKE BEING ON SITE

“AT THE START YOU DO FEEL A BIT INTIMIDATED, BUT AS THE DAYS GO BY YOU REALISE EVERYONE’S JUST GETTING ON WITH THEIR JOB AND ARE REALLY NICE”

Leeanna Smith – working at The Sycamores, Canterbury



What made you choose an apprenticeship?

I prefer being outdoors instead of being indoors and I wanted to make some money. My brother also works in bricklaying, so it made sense to follow his path.

How does it feel being a female on site?

It was a bit awkward at first because some people don't know how to approach you, and I didn't know how to approach them. But once I broke the ice, it was all fine. I feel supported by my manager Allison who I can call up at any time and she'll come and help me. Everyone is nice.

Did anything put you off doing the bricklaying apprenticeship?

I came in confidently and wasn't too worried, I just went in head first.

Would you recommend construction for women?

Yes, I would. At the start you do feel a bit intimidated, but as the days go by you realise everyone's just getting on with their job and are really nice.

What are your short-term and long-term goals?

I would like to work my way up and become a site manager and ultimately run my own business. Once you know how to do everything, it makes sense to run your own company.

What has been your favourite part of your apprenticeship?

I'm really proud of being able to say I have built quite a few things! For example, walls with lots of different details. I have helped create bay windows which are quite challenging so it's hard work, but very rewarding. Seeing the result of your work makes you really proud of yourself. It makes you want to keep going seeing that final product.

What advice would you give to people thinking about an apprenticeship?

I would say to just go for it – you'll never regret it!

ASK AN APPRENTICE WHO CHANGED CAREER PATH

“FOCUS ON THE CURRENT LIFE YOU HAVE AND DECIDE WHAT MATTERS TO YOU – ASK YOURSELF DO YOU WANT TO BE IN A SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT, OR DO YOU WANT TO START WORK?”

Emily Shaw – working in The Midlands commercial department.



What were you doing before becoming a Redrow apprentice?

I was studying law at university.

What made you move from law to construction?

After spending two years at university, I fell out of love with law and decided to change paths. My whole family is in construction, so it seemed like the logical next step for me. It was a tough decision but was worth it.

What made you choose an apprenticeship?

I wanted to get paid and learn – so it was far more suited to my lifestyle.

What do you think are the key skills for those wishing to start an apprenticeship?

Definitely communication – whether it's speaking with your coworkers or various people across the business, it's key. And computer skills! There are tools you'll need to know how to use, such as Excel.

What advice would you give to those contemplating university versus an apprenticeship?

Focus on the current life you have and decide what matters to you – ask yourself do you want to be in a school environment, or do you want to start work?

What do you enjoy the most about your apprenticeship?

So far, I enjoy being paid to learn and also having a nice team around me that supports my learning.

What have you achieved so far?

I have been doing the tender for some sites and I'm proud I've been able to communicate with subcontractors and do things that I didn't understand before joining a construction company.

What are your long-term and short-term goals?

Short term, I would love to be fully qualified and long-term I would like to be a senior quantity surveyor.

50 YEARS OF NURTURING TALENT AT REDROW



As we celebrate our 50th anniversary this year, we look back at the history of nurturing young talent across the business.

Redrow was founded on entrepreneurial spirit, at the age of just 21 Steve Morgan borrowed £5,000 from his father to start a civil engineering company in North Wales. Since then, we've grown to be one of the largest homebuilders in the UK, building over 120,000 new homes.

Back in the early 1980s we started recruiting and training teenagers as Construction Industry Training Board apprentices, industrial trainees from local colleges or via the old Youth Opportunity Programme and subsequent Youth Training Scheme (YTS).

By 1989, at least 30 school leavers had been given a start in their working life through one of these routes, among them was Caroline Thompson-Jones, who joined as part of the YTS in 1987 and is still with Redrow today as an area sales manager in the North West division:

“Starting as a teenager on the YTS, which is similar to some of the office-based apprenticeships Redrow offers today, was a solid grounding for my career. It taught me the value of a strong work ethic and I was fortunate to have some instrumental role models I was able to learn from at a young age. I was working from 8am to 5.30pm every day, which could be a shock to the system for a lot of young people. But I already had a strong work ethic instilled in me by my dad, who was a farmer. Even on days when it snowed, he would take me to work on his tractor to ensure I made it in. I remember he was so surprised to find out we got holiday pay, as that was a new concept to him.

Since I started everything has evolved. Back then every sale was processed manually. We had a word processor, but no internet, and all reservations were recorded over the phone. It was very hands-on, but again that helped me to gain a real understanding of processes.

From day one my time at Redrow has been brilliant, everyone is just lovely and I don't have a bad word to say.



The approach from my senior managers has always been firm but kind. It's an amazing company to work for; the training and progression on offer is second to none. My experience as a trainee has given me the skills to mentor others over the course of my career. Although I like to think I can still learn as much from the younger generation as they can from me. Having young people come up through the business certainly means we can all keep learning, especially when it comes to advances with technology and social media, having that diversity of age groups in the workforce is important.”

Karen Jones said:

“Since 2014 Redrow has been a member of the 5% Club, a national movement to encourage companies to ensure at least 5% of their workforces are trainees. Last year, we were

awarded the top tier Platinum accredited membership to the 5% Club to mark our significant contribution to the continued development of all our employees through “earn & learn” schemes. In fact, we were one of only 30 employers who met the Platinum standard, meaning we're in the top 3% of members of the 5% Club.”

We're also proud to hold a place in the Top 100 Apprentice Employers 2023 list, recognising our outstanding commitment to apprenticeships. The Top 100 are ranked not just on the number of trainees taken on, but for commitment to diversity and apprenticeship achievements. We understand the vital role apprenticeships play in boosting the skills and career opportunities of people from all backgrounds, while helping address a national skills shortage and boosting the economy.”



“FROM DAY ONE MY TIME AT REDROW HAS BEEN BRILLIANT, EVERYONE IS JUST LOVELY AND I DON'T HAVE A BAD WORD TO SAY.”

Caroline Thompson-Jones



About Redrow

Redrow was established in 1974 and today is one of the most successful and acclaimed homebuilders in the country. For the year to 2 July 2023, the company built more than 5,400 new homes across England and Wales.

Over Redrow's history, spanning 50 years, it has earned a unique reputation for delivering high quality, award-winning homes that are built in well-chosen locations with excellent place making.

Redrow's purpose is to create a better way to live. It has a robust strategy in place to deliver on this aim, which is based on three core pillars: Building Responsibly, Thriving Communities and Valuing People.

Redrow was included in the FT's annual listings of both Europe's Climate

Leaders 2022 and Diversity Leaders 2023 for achieving significant reductions in its greenhouse gas emissions and leading in workplace diversity and inclusion respectively. It was also included in the FTSE4Good Index Series, for demonstrating strong Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices.

Redrow is consistently rated as 'excellent' on Trustpilot and once again achieved the Five Star Customer Satisfaction award from the Home Builders' Federation (HBF). Visit redrow.co.uk for more detail.



About NHBC

NHBC (National House Building Council) is the UK's leading independent provider of warranty and insurance for new homes.

Our core purpose is to raise standards by championing high-quality homes and protecting homeowners. We do this by setting NHBC Standards that define the technical requirements to which homes registered with us must be built.

We inspect the quality of construction work through an on-site inspection

regime and technical risk management activities. Protection for policyholders is provided by our Buildmark and Buildmark Choice warranty and insurance products. We also provide a range of construction quality and training services to our registered customers, all designed to support our core purpose.

METHODOLOGY

For the eighth year running we asked parents, young people and our own apprentices about their perceptions of apprenticeships and careers in the construction industry.

WHO WE SURVEYED	NO. OF SURVEY RESPONSES
YOUNG PEOPLE (16-21-YEAR-OLDS)	1,004
PARENTS OF 16-21-YEAR-OLDS	1,002
REDROW APPRENTICES	116



