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*Denbre Ltd*

*Talbot House*

*204-226 Imperial Drive*

*Harrow. HA2 7HH*

**Phone:**

**+44 (0) 20 8429 5177**

**E-mail:**

**[denise@denbre.com](mailto:denise@denbre.com)**

**Website:**

**[www.denbre.com](http://www.denbre.com)**

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**@DenbreJBT**

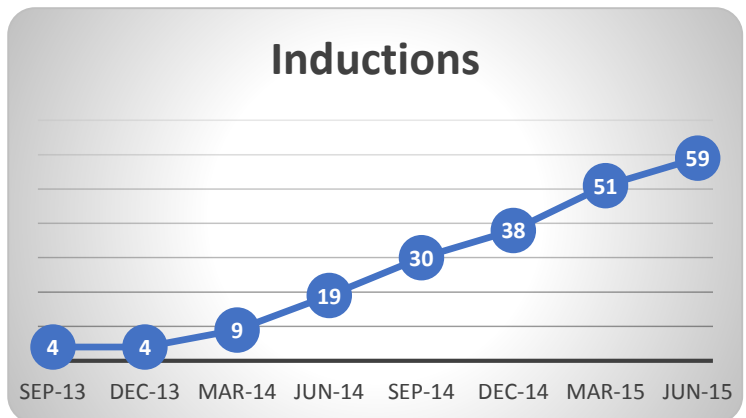
**DenbreJBT**

## Company News

*We are fast approaching the end of the second year of running the JBT Construction Programme and we have decided, in this issue, to update you all on the progress made over the last couple of years.*

*The programme has been used in 23 major developments spread over 11 London Boroughs.*

*We have, to date, inducted 59 apprentices, with our very first female apprentice, Rebecca, inducted in June 15.*



*Perhaps I should have done this sooner, but I would like to introduce our recently appointed Office Administrator, Joel Weir.*



*Joel is still settling in, but is helping to develop and strengthen our back office procedures as we grow. Joel is fast becoming our guru, linking the various strands of our operations, as the rest of us are invariably not in the office but out on site or with our clients and apprentices.*

*Joel leads our induction days for new apprentices and then subsequently keeps them on their toes, making sure they get in their timesheets, etc. in a timely manner. Not easy to do, I may add.*

*Joel tries to get on site as much as possible too, so he can gain first-*

*hand knowledge of our operations as well as manning our stands at Job Fairs and Events. Welcome Joel.*

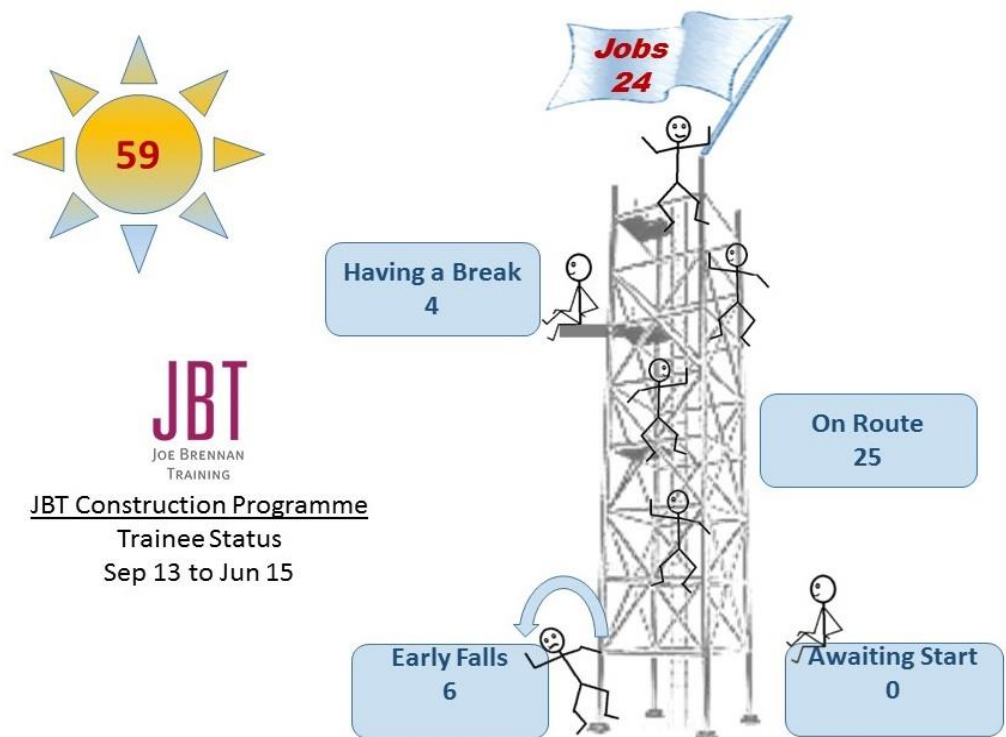
Joe Brennan

## Programme Status

We have had 59 apprentices inducted onto the scheme. We are happy to say that all 24 of the apprentices who completed the programme have all gone into employment; they are all qualified in their trades except for 2, who, as electricians have a longer qualification period.

There are 25 apprentices at various stages currently on site and 4 between sites (one of whom is recovering from a knee injury from an off-site accident).

Let me explain about the early leavers. 1 could not go on site on the advice of his doctors, whom we consulted. 1 simply stopped turning up in the first week, and we were unable to contact him again. The remaining 4, despite good references from their diploma studies tutors attesting to their abilities in their trade and, despite our best efforts to support them, simply did not have the innate basic skills required. We feel it is unfair on the apprentices and the sub-contractors training them, to allow their apprenticeships to continue; it may be they are not suited to the trade or they may require further basic hand skills training off site.



We are indebted to the developers, contractors, housing associations, and local councils, who have adopted the JBT Construction Programme, as they provide the funding and the wholehearted support, the scheme requires.

We are grateful to the site managers, and supervisors, who ensure the safety and well-being of the apprentices, and who freely collaborate with the programme, allowing time for JBT site reviews, NVQ assessments and college commitments

Last, but not least, are the sub-contractors who actually provide the on-site training, whose patience and training abilities (remember, they are builders not teachers) are to be applauded.

We keep in regular contact with all the team supporting the apprentices as well as the apprentices themselves, to ensure all is going smoothly.

Not everything goes well on site and it is this regular contact with all involved, which enables us, to identify problems early. It is then a team effort, between the site team, the main developer management team, and us to get any issues resolved.

We believe that it is the good pastoral care given to our apprentices, which accounts for their ultimate success. Granted the apprentices must learn how to handle the real world of work, and construction is certainly no easy option, but often they may be young, disadvantaged, never had a job, have little or no work ethic; we have to get past these barriers to get them to achieve success, often, despite themselves.

## How we work

The JBT Construction Programme is based on Joe's Brennan's years of managing construction training programmes. Joe took all the elements of best practice from those schemes and added in a couple of new initiatives. The 2 main initiatives are:-

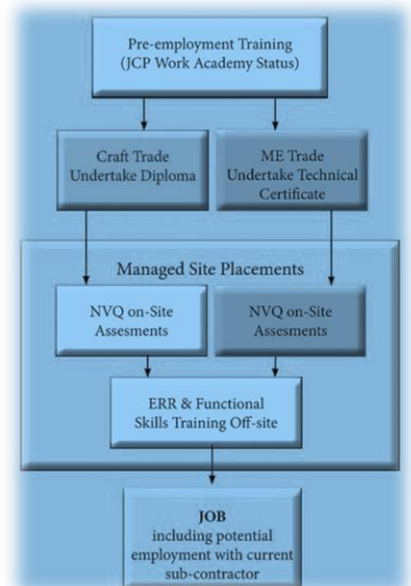
1. Employing the apprentices directly, thereby removing the Human Resource and payroll administration burden from the developers / contractors. In addition, we can ensure that the apprentices are paid the correct amount and on time, as a matter of course.
2. Often schemes, due to their parochial nature, e.g. apprentices must be borough residents, meant that apprentices, who had not completed their qualification when the site work completed, fell off the edge and were back at square one again. Our scheme endeavours to move the apprentice on to another site, until they have completed their on-site qualification period.

Our model is not just about the site placement, although this is of course the central element and what we receive payment for from our clients. We also advise and guide interested people from before diploma/ technical studies, right up their ultimate qualification and employment, and further, if our former apprentices still require support.

The payment we receive is split 70% for wages and 30% for managing the programme

The programme management covers the following:-

- Finding apprentices that fit the criteria specified, for a given project, which involves visiting local colleges, attending local job fairs, etc. Interviewing, checking references, etc.
- Inducting the apprentices into the programme
- Supplying a full set of good quality hand tools.
- Providing initial pay advances, as most are unemployed and may not have the funds to attend site in the early stages
- Introducing the apprentice to site staff and assisting site staff with site induction.
- Enrolling apprentices into selected colleges / training providers for them to undertake their NVQs
- Paying college fees, when necessary.
- Ensuring that colleges undertake the relevant on-site assessments, which can be a bit of a hit and miss factor with colleges.
- Ensuring that the apprentices attend college and perform the on-site requirement to satisfy their assessors, e.g. keeping their site diaries, taking portfolio pictures of their work, etc.
- Carrying out apprentice site reviews with their supervisors, to check their technical progress as well as their commitment levels.
- Meetings with site management, to fit in the apprentices of the given trades into the overall scheme of works.
- Providing monthly site reports, including case studies, to client developers and their partners.
- Preparing any adhoc management information the client may need.
- Get involved in PR that the client would like us to do e.g. attending events, facilitating photoshoots, preparing in-depth case studies, being interviewed for or preparing copy for articles for publication on-line, in newspapers, magazines, etc.
- Carrying out Human Resource duties, following up on time-keeping, attendance, commitment to the programme, time sheet submission, etc.
- Payroll administration.
- Subsidising Fares.
- Providing Pastoral care (possibly the key factor for successfully getting apprentices through the programme, qualified and into work).
- Automatic enrolment into the employee assistance programme (a confidential 3<sup>rd</sup> party service which apprentices can contact 24 / 7 for any personal issues, which they may not wish to discuss with us.
- Dealing, immediately, with any issues, which may arise with the apprentices, site incidents, etc.
- Following disciplinary procedures when necessary
- Working with the site sub-contractors and external firms to try to secure employment for apprentices, nearing the end of the programme.
- Assisting those who want to go self-employed, with HMRC requirements, etc.



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*We are not, it must be stressed an ATA (Apprentice Training Agency). The SFA (Skills Funding Agency) investigated our model at length and concluded that the way our model works, does not come under the ATA umbrella, but stated we should carry on what we were doing as it works.*

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## In Praise of City Brickwork



Our fledgling programme has reached the stage where apprentices are regularly completing the programme and going into work.

This is where sub-contractors, having provided the on-site training, look to take the apprentices on. Sometimes sub-contractors express an early interest, but we always make them aware that they are training potential future employees. If, as in some cases, the supervisory sub-contractor is not in a place where he can take on someone new, we go further afield to other building companies.

One such company is City Brickwork, who, in the last month, has taken on 4 of our bricklayers, namely Darcy, Paul, Wayne and Mishca.

City Brickwork, based in Colney Heath, Hertfordshire was founded in 1992 by Scott Stevens. City Brickwork have over 100 skilled operatives and over the years have successfully completed numerous projects across London and the South East.

Contracts Manager Jason Bedford contacted us to see if we could supply good quality "improvers". We of course did. Jason has since said he is very pleased with them and described them as "mustard" which we took to mean good.

Site manager Tony Harris, for Croudace Homes kindly invited us on to their Bromley site in order for us to interview and photograph Jason and Mishca.



L to R; Tony, Denise, Jason, Mishca and Joe

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*If you know of a young person who has overcome disadvantages to successfully train, and or gain, employment in the construction industry, applications for [Youthbuild UK](#), [The Young Builder of the Year Awards 2015](#) will close on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015*

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Mishca thanking Jason for the opportunity.

Mishca said "the lads on site are brilliant and I'm loving it"

Mishca doing all the work, while Jason and Tony stand at the back pretending to read the site plans.



**Once again Thank-you to City Brickwork...**



## Ma Grumble says

Politics versus real life...

Hmph, where to start. The general election is over and it is business as usual, or is it?

Should we be concerned that the conservatives are trying to push through, some might say, the more controversial reforms; trying to lift the ban on fox hunting, possibly getting shot of the Freedom of Information act, lifting some planning restrictions, not to mention the "slimming down" of the Construction Industry Council. A more cynical person might think the timing of these efforts may coincide with the fact that the main opposition party are distracted with their leadership electioneering.

From the building industry's point of view, the good news is that the government are promoting the building of new homes in a big way, hurrah. The building industry is saying, however, we do not have enough skilled workers to build them, oh dear. It is a bit like the supervisor telling his brickie to build a wall, despite knowing that his supplier has stopped supplying him with bricks. How did we not know this? Well, we all did.

The government are very proud of their apprenticeship statistics, even though, it seems to me, that the overall figures gloss over the fact, that the big rise is in business administration and care apprentices and that the construction trades are significantly down from their peak in 2007.

We all know that when council houses were sold off, they were not sufficiently replaced, even though the high demand was and is still there (1 house built per 10 sold, is what I read somewhere). So now we are going to sell-off housing association stock, saying the same thing. It didn't happen last time, so why will it this time?

Perhaps I am just being over simplistic and a bit thick, because, maybe behind the scenes, the politicians and what is left of the Construction Industry Council will work together to pull off this seemingly impossible task of providing decent housing for all.

Bad luck you slum landlords, you are all going to be out of business very soon, or will you?

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*The construction industry, accounts for around, a not insignificant, 7% of the UK's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)*

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