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Company News

Please have a look at our Programme Status on Page 5, The numbers are starting to really stack up now; 60 people into work is really great news. The Programme is really working. Why?

We are working with some very committed clients, who really are interested in fulfilling their obligations to employment and training, not just ticking boxes.

The sub-contractors who are at the sharp end and actually deliver the on-site training, work very well with us, ensuring that we get the best out of the apprentices,. Often these same sub-contractors will be the organisations who will ultimately provide employment for the apprentices.

Another reason, I think, is the high level of support and mentoring we give our apprentices; this leads to much better communication between, apprentices, clients, sub-contractors, training providers and us.

We have attended several job fairs this year so far, but the standout one was [Peabody Housing Association's first-ever Apprenticeship Fair](#) which took place in Islington in March 16. The turnout was excellent with visitors from all over London. The Fair was extremely well organised and well worth attending. In fact, we have already placed an apprentice on site from the many expressions of interest we received at the fair. A big thank-you to Gallal Muflahi from Peabody for the invite.



I am due to attend a "Further Education Week" parliamentary debate hosted by the shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden and in partnership with OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examination Board). At the event, FE Week will reveal exclusive figures showing traineeships are failing to support many young people onto an apprenticeship. Leading figures from the FE sector will debate what can be done to improve this flagship employability programme. Anecdotally I have been aware of trainees leaving college based courses and traineeships simply not being apprenticeship worthy and / or employable on exit. I am therefore very interested to see the figures and more importantly to discuss what can be done to improve the situation.

Due to steady growth, we are moving to new offices in the middle of June 2016. We are moving back to Harrow next door to Harrow on the Hill Station.

Joe Brennan

In Praise of Orchard Plumbing Ltd



JBT like to give praise, where praise is due...

We particularly wanted to thank Orchard Plumbing, a sub-contractor working on some of [Countryside Properties'](#) developments where the JBT Construction Programme is running.

JBT conduct regular formal site reviews but informally we keep in regular touch and vice versa with those on site.

What we have noticed is that, the Orchard people, who are on the front line dealing with the apprentices on a day-to-day basis, are committed to the programme. Orchard's people have excellent mentoring and training skills and an understanding of the long-term benefits, not just for the apprentices under their wing, but also for Orchard themselves as well as the construction industry as a whole; they are a real pleasure to work with.

Particular thanks go to:-

Orchard Plumbing limited are mechanical site contractors based in Strood, Kent.

Starting out with 2 plumbers 17 years ago, Orchard has grown and currently have 110 plumbers working for them.



Glenn Ginn, pictured here (right) with Roberto De Spirito, plumbing apprentice at the Leopold Estate Site

Donal McHugh, pictured here (right) with Rupert Kellier, plumbing apprentice at the Acton Gardens 3.1 site



Jim Hayden, pictured here (right) with Sunil Dade, plumbing apprentice at the (rather too sunny) Acton Gardens 3.2 site

Once again, Thank-you Orchard and your "loverley" people...

Case Study – Nomsa (Titch) Ntuli

Titch is a Borough of Brent resident and at the time of her induction had achieved her Level 2 Diploma in Painting and Decorating at Barnet and Southgate College.

Titch's first placement was on [Durkan Ltd's](#) Electric House programme. This was the first big development site she had been on so she was nervous, however JBT reassured her that she would have full support during her apprenticeship.

A month into her placement, Titch was progressing well with her practical skills, but despite encouragement from site management and support from JBT, she still lacked confidence; she was still a little 'shaky' and finding the site environment a little daunting. JBT decided to move her to [Network Housing's](#) / [United Living's](#) South Kilburn programme upon completion of her placement at Electric House

Moving Titch to South Kilburn, under the direct on-site mentorship of Beverley Wilson, a JBT trainee painter & decorator in her 60s, proved a great success.

Titch's site manager Bob Jenkins (United Living) stated that Titch picked things up quickly. Piotr Sadkowski, her designated supervisor, said that if she continued to progress she will do very well in the future. Titch told JBT that she was really enjoying the work but that there was a lot more to painting and decorating than she first thought.

Titch, unfortunately, found herself in a difficult position financially, with demands for payment relating to her recently stopped housing benefits and the knock-on rent arrears. Titch struggled with communicating with the relevant organisations, and had become very stressed. Titch was wondering if she should leave the programme, so that the benefits would be re-instated. JBT were not going to allow this to happen, if we could possibly help it. We invited Titch into the office, contacted the organisations on her behalf and came up with a payment plan which would allow Titch to support herself and pay off her debts at the same time. JBT also analysed her income versus her outgoings, and advised her on how to manage her finances in the future.

At Titch's site reviews, feedback suggested that Titch's "timidness" and possibly too heavy a reliance on Beverly may be holding her back; she does need to be more exposed to job opportunities and try not to shy away from putting herself forward so that her capabilities are obvious to others.



Titch seemed to still lack confidence so we spoke to her about going on an assertiveness training course, which she readily agreed to.

Titch attended her assertiveness course, successfully completed her NVQ, Maths & English in March 16; her apprenticeship will be completed mid-June and employment has already been lined up. Great News.

JBT would like to thank Durkan, Network Housing and United Living for giving this young woman the opportunity to change her life prospects. We would like to thank, Bob Jenkins (see pictured above with Titch) for his whole hearted commitment to the programme and his ability to build a relationship with each and every person on it. Thank-you also to Piotr Sadkowski, Titch's designated supervisor. Beverly deserves a mention for her mentorship of Titch and last but not means least, Titch herself, for being so brave.

Construction has a poor record when it comes to encouraging women, ethnic minorities, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) people, and those with disabilities into the sector, never mind allowing them to climb the career ladder.

But attitudes are changing and progress is being made, with good initiatives taking place at various firms.

To recognise the strides being made and the companies leading by example, [Construction News](#) have introduced a Diversity Champion of the Year category into this year's Construction News Awards.



Ma Grumble says

FUNDING for funding's sake...

Oh no, I hear you all groaning, not that old chestnut again.

You may find this article less of a grumble and more like a rant.

OK, if we leave the EU, what happens to all the European funding and Education & Training initiatives run by the EU? We do not know the answer. Switzerland were still allowed to be a part of EU initiatives despite their non-member status, but that was revoked when they voted to restrict EU immigration in their 2014 referendum.

Apart from whether we have EU funding or not, I am angry angry angry.

It is how the funding is actually applied, not what the statistics say, that really bothers me. I hear about and experience so much bad practice, an open secret I fear, that I despair.

On more than one occasion we have had people inducted onto the programme, who, on the face of it, are well qualified to diploma level 2 or 3 and have been given glowing references from their college. Within days of arriving on site, we and the site supervisors realise they are simply not at the standard you would expect, given their qualifications.

This begs the question, what have they been learning at college and exactly how did they achieve their diplomas. It is not fair on them, because they are so out of their depth. Often this results in them not turning up for work and losing interest; always a first indicator to us that all is not well.

What are they to do now, mostly they cannot go on with their apprenticeship, as they are not deemed site ready and could pose a danger to themselves and others. On the odd occasion, if they show enough commitment and their designated supervisor is a generous soul, who will continue to "baby-sit" them with very close monitoring, we can turn things around with the additional support that is inevitably required.

So what is happening at the college, we do not know for sure, but we hear, all too often, that to keep those old statistics looking positive, people who should be taken off a given course, because of non-attendance, lateness and good old fashioned, it is not what they are good at, are kept on. Why would you do this? Well, a more cynical person may bring up the fact that funding is awarded based on a positive "outcome".

Keeping someone on a course for the sake of it, can be so detrimental to them, they maybe better off learning something else. It wastes the precious time (2 to 3 years) they have for learning, which, is a long time spend to have nothing useful to show for it at the end.

I have heard about responsible people trying to do the right thing within colleges, to then be censured and told they cannot do it, students must be kept on the course. Go figure...

I do not know how to answer these issues, but do not understand why the monitoring bodies do not uncover such bad practices, which I believe have been going on for many many years.

Given the amount of time and effort spent in colleges preparing for inspections and audits from Ofsted and various funding bodies, the emphasis and priorities of college personnel is so skewed. As a lay person it seems as though the students get in the way; too much emphasis is placed on trying to stay a learning centre that students might want to come to and, to continue to receive the funding that allows them to stay in the education "business".

Do I blame the colleges? Well not necessarily, this is the position they find themselves in; with all these conflicting priorities what is a body to do?

The majority of funding for colleges and training providers is distributed by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Education Funding Agency (EFA). The SFA distributes European Social Fund (ESF) funding on behalf of the UK government, with 107 providers including colleges and independent training providers receiving more than £305 million collectively in 2014/15.

The European Social Fund (ESF) to promote employment and social inclusion, budgeted €80 million for the period 2014 to 2020, as well as an additional €3.2 billion allocated to the Youth Employment Initiative, which supports under 25s in areas of high unemployment, in particular those classed as not in employment, education or training

Programme Status

If you know of a young person who has overcome disadvantages to successfully train, and or gain, employment in the construction industry, then nominate them for an award from [YouthBuild UK](#)

[Applications for the 2016 Young Builder of the Year Awards are now open.](#)



JBT
JOE BRENNAN
TRAINING

JBT Construction Programme
Trainee Status
Sep 13 to May 16

