



# Scottish Borders Construction Forum



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# Calling Skilled Tradespeople in the Borders – Register Now for Local & UK-Wide Construction Projects

ScotWorkforce International Scotland is a UK-based workforce solutions provider specialising in the supply of skilled, compliant, and reliable tradespeople to construction projects across the Scottish Borders and beyond.

We are actively building strong relationships with Borders-based contractors, developers, and project teams to support upcoming local works, while also delivering labour solutions to major projects nationwide. From regional residential and commercial developments to large-scale infrastructure projects across the UK, we understand the importance of having experienced tradespeople on site, ready to deliver.

As part of our continued growth, we are expanding our register of skilled construction workers in the Borders region. We are currently recruiting groundworkers, bricklayers, joiners, electricians, plumbers, plant operatives, steel fixers, and general labourers. While supporting local Borders projects is a priority, registered tradespeople will also be considered for future opportunities on projects across the UK for those open to travelling.

By registering with Workforce International Scotland, tradespeople gain access to consistent work opportunities, competitive rates, and well-managed sites. Contractors benefit from a compliant, dependable

workforce supported by a responsive team with a clear understanding of site demands and workforce planning.

If you are a skilled tradesperson looking for upcoming work in the Borders or across the UK, or a contractor seeking reliable labour support, we would welcome the opportunity to work with you.

To register or find out more, contact Shane McDuling at [shane@workforceinternational.co.uk](mailto:shane@workforceinternational.co.uk) or call 07473 673 134

Visit our website at <https://workforceinternational.co.uk>

and follow us on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/workforceinternationaluk>

and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/workforceinternationaluk/>



# Cruden inspires next generation through bricklaying sessions at Borders high schools

Students at Kelso High School and Peebles High School have taken part in hands-on Built Environment Roadshows, delivered by Scottish housebuilder Cruden in partnership with Developing the Young Workforce Borders (DYW Borders) and Eildon Housing Association. Working closely with DYW Borders, Cruden delivered two Construction Skills taster days for S2 and S3 pupils, giving them the opportunity to explore careers in the built environment at a key stage before making subject choices.

A standout feature of the sessions was the introduction to bricklaying, delivered by Chris Hamilton Bricklayers, part of Cruden's subcontractor team. Marking the first time bricklaying had featured at a DYW Borders roadshow, the activity provided students with a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on experience of the trade.

During the workshops, pupils learned the basics of bricklaying, laid bricks themselves and heard directly from an apprentice about career pathways into construction. The sessions complemented wider activities showcasing traditional trades such as plumbing, joinery and electrical installation, alongside emerging technologies including drones and 3D scanning. Michael Palethorpe, Production & Community Benefit Manager at Cruden, said: "Introducing young people to bricklaying in a practical, hands-on way is a brilliant opportunity to show what a career in construction can really look like. The students were engaged, enthusiastic and keen to get involved, and it was great to see them taking pride in what they achieved.

"At Cruden, we're committed to supporting skills development and inspiring the next generation to consider careers in the built environment, and working with DYW Borders and Eildon has been a fantastic way to do that."

Alison Lowrie, Communication and Media Co-ordinator at Eildon Housing Association, said: "It's important that we support communities across the Borders not only by providing high-quality homes, but by helping to strengthen local communities and invest in their future."

Kevin Greenfield, Programme Director at DYW Borders, added: "The introduction of bricklaying was a first for the programme and proved extremely popular, with students enjoying the practical experience and learning directly from an apprentice."

Cruden recently supported Eildon Housing Association in delivering a new affordable housing development in Westruther, providing ten energy-efficient homes for social rent.

For more information, visit [www.cruden.co.uk](http://www.cruden.co.uk)



# Unlock More Opportunities with SBCC Membership

As the Scottish Borders Construction Forum continues to champion the growth, resilience and collaboration of our local construction supply chain, especially as energy efficiency and net-zero opportunities expand across the region, being plugged into the wider business ecosystem has never been more valuable.

That's where membership of the Scottish Borders Chamber of Commerce (SBCC) can make a real difference for tradespeople, contractors, installers, local suppliers and construction businesses. With flexible tiered packages tailored to organisations of every size, SBCC membership offers practical support, stronger connections and bigger platforms to help you grow locally and beyond.

**What SBCC membership brings to the construction sector:**

- Expert HR, employment law, health & safety and tax support

- Access to events at preferential member rates
- Inclusion in the SBCC member directory
- Jobs & events listings through the Chamber's Marketplace
- Quarter-year members only news and promotional opportunities

As you move up the tiers, benefits grow, with increased visibility through editorial features, exclusive business mentoring, targeted funding alerts via GrantFinder, and discounted sponsorship and event opportunities. Gold and Platinum members also enjoy bespoke support including tailored funding searches and strategic promotion at high-profile Chamber events.

Whether you're a sole trader looking to strengthen your local network, a small contractor gearing up for retrofit work, or a larger business seeking strategic partnerships, SBCC membership helps you connect, grow and thrive in the Borders.

To explore which membership tier best suits your business goals and start taking advantage of the resources and connections on offer, visit the <https://borderschamber.com/sbcc-membership-packages/>



**Join the Scottish  
Borders Chamber of  
Commerce**

# CITB Employer Networks Funded Training

CITB have now rolled out 'Employer Networks' in the Scottish Borders which makes it much simpler for CITB registered employers to access funded training (no form filling or grant claims is required).

Organising training through the Employer Network is heavily subsidised by CITB (70%) and employers are required to make a contribution towards the cost of training (30%).

If you have any specific training needs as an employer, please contact Stuart Tolmie  
Stuart.Tolmie@citb.co.uk

Employer Networks are currently funding a wide range of activities.

Examples of courses which are being supported through Employer Networks (where CITB currently contribute 70% towards the cost) are as follows:

- First Aid
- Health & Safety (e.g. SMSTS, SSSTS, H&S Awareness etc.)
- Manual Handling
- Confined Spaces
- COSHH
- Fire Marshall
- Working at Height (including IPAF (mobile boom, scissor lifts), PASMA, Rope Access, etc.)
- Plant
- And many others...

More information on Employer Networks can be found here: <https://www.citb.co.uk/levy-grants-and-funding/grants-and-funding/employer-networks/>



Sustainable  
Borders



by SelkirkRegeneration



Helping households save energy, save money and save on emissions, with our **FREE Energy Advice Service.**

**Offering FREE Home Energy Visits, impartial expert advice**  
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Identifying ways to **save energy**, save **money** and **save emissions.**



**Energy bill** review and support.



**Advice** on energy **efficiency** and home renewables.



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**Using heating controls** effectively and **efficiently.**



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 [info@sustainableborders.org.uk](mailto:info@sustainableborders.org.uk)

# Get your BE-ST Low Carbon Passport

Free training programme launched to upskill 1,200 construction workers for Scotland's low carbon future

Scotland's construction sector is facing a critical skills gap as it works to meet decarbonisation targets.

To help bridge this gap, Built Environment – Smarter Transformation (BE-ST) is launching the Low Carbon Passport – a course to train for the current and future the skills and competencies needed to deliver high-quality, low carbon, efficient buildings.

Funded through the CITB Industry Impact Fund the programme will train 1,200 construction workers by December 2026.

The Low Carbon Passport course is free to take part in and combines online modules and hands-on, in-person training to give construction operatives, college learners, and more, the knowledge and practical skills to deliver low energy, high-quality buildings.

The training is open to people working across the supply chain – from those new to the sector to experienced professionals looking to upskill. Participants will receive a certificate on completion with the long-term aim for the course to be CPD certified by 2026.

**The first online course is now available.** Sign up for and take part in Low Carbon Passport 1a: Introduction to Low Energy Buildings here

<https://bestlearninghub.talentlms.com/plus/catalog/courses/220>

## What the course covers

The course is designed to improve understanding of energy efficiency and construction quality, helping to close the gap between design intent and actual building performance. So far, the available learning modules include:

- Low Energy Building Technology: Fabric – online and in-person training, covering low energy buildings principles including insulation, airtightness, thermal bridges, moisture control and construction quality.
- Low Energy Building Technology: Building Services – online and in-person training, exploring how building systems contribute to low energy performance, including the factors involved in ensuring systems are installed and operating correctly.

Training will be delivered by BE-ST and hosted at affiliated colleges including Borders College.



**BE-ST**



Many local businesses are upskilling in green technologies such as heat pumps, EV charging and domestic retrofit.

If you're interested in learning more about the courses available at Borders College or would like guidance on selecting the right one for your goals, Borders College are there to help.

Email your enquiries to:

[enquiries@borderscollege.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@borderscollege.ac.uk), and a member of the team will be happy to assist you.

or to find out more and book your course go to:

<https://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/greenskills>

## Courses available:

- Domestic Retrofit – an Introduction
- Domestic Ventilation – an Introduction
- Electric Vehicle Charging (City & Guilds)
- Heat Pump Installer (BPEC)
- Heat Pump – an Introduction
- Renewable Technology – an Introduction
- Sustainable Construction and Ventilation
- Understanding Domestic Retrofit (NOCN)
- Unvented Hot Water (BPEC)
- Water Byelaws (BPEC)

# LET'S BUILD YOUR FUTURE

Access FREE  
business support  
to think bigger

SOSE IS  
HERE TO  
HELP!



#### TAILORED SUPPORT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

We can help you with business advice and guidance, training, mentoring and even help you access resources and funding. Get in touch today!

0300 304 8888



# Energy Saving Trust Support Hub

The hub is for small businesses across Scotland working on energy efficiency, heating systems and micro generation. Here you will find research, case studies and online tools to help your business.

## Installer toolkits

EST have created a Heat Pump Installer Toolkit and Insulation Toolkit to help you get started on your upskilling journey.

You can find information on college courses, funding, installation considerations and the latest government legislation.

Start your journey today

<https://greenheattoolkit.energysavingtrust.org.uk/>



## Get MCS Certified!

Heat Pump Installers (air, ground or water source) **can apply for a 75%/£1,000 Grant** to become MCS Certified

The Scottish Government's MCS certification fund provides heating engineers with an interest in installing heat pumps (either air, ground or water source) with a grant to become MCS certified on heat pumps.

The grant will pay 75%, up to a maximum of £1,000, of the certification fees until the end of March 2026.

To see if you qualify go to:

[https://  
energysavingtrust.org.uk/  
grants-and-loans/mcs-  
certification-fund/](https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/grants-and-loans/mcs-certification-fund/)

**energy  
saving  
trust**



## FREE Retrofit Resource List

Designing Buildings have put together this amazing resource for anyone working in retrofit.

Its packed full of articles and guides and its all free.

Check it out here:

[https://  
www.designingbuildings  
.co.uk/wiki/  
Retrofit\\_open\\_resources  
\\_list](https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Retrofit_open_resources_list)

## Use your own home installation to gain MCS certification

Are you a heating engineer aiming to become MCS certified for heat pumps? One way of getting certified is to install a heat pump in your own home using funding from the [Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan Scheme](#).

This hands-on approach helps you learn how to design, install and set up systems, whilst also giving you the evidence you need to apply for MCS accreditation.

### What you need to know

You'll receive the same support as any Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan customer, if you meet the following requirements when you apply:

#### 1. Installer declaration

You must sign a statement confirming you understand the risk: if the installation doesn't achieve MCS certification, funding won't be released. No upfront payment is available. Full funding is only paid once the MCS certificate and all claim documents are submitted.

#### 2. Proof of intent to gain MCS certification

Make sure you have evidence that links this installation to your MCS application, such as a letter from your certifier.

#### 3. Consumer code membership

You must be a member of a recognised consumer code, such as:

- [RECC](#) (Renewable Energy Consumer Code)
- [HIES](#) (The Home Insulation and Energy Systems Quality Assured Contractors Scheme)

If you want more information contact the Green Heat Installer team at [greeninstallerscotland@est.org.uk](mailto:greeninstallerscotland@est.org.uk)

# Become a Scottish Borders Trusted Trader!

As construction regulations and guidelines change, businesses that are part of a quality assurance scheme could well be ahead of the game. Scottish Borders has joined a growing number of Local Authorities across Scotland by endorsing a local Trusted Trader scheme. Business that wish to be a part of the scheme go through a vetting process to ensure quality and consistency.

## Boost your business profile



### Become a Scottish Borders Trusted Trader:

- ✓ Members vetted by Trading Standards
- ✓ Scheme backed and promoted by the Council
- ✓ Scheme supported by Police Scotland

To learn more visit: [www.trustedtrader.scot](http://www.trustedtrader.scot)

Tel: 0333 444 1283 or email: [info@trustedtrader.scot](mailto:info@trustedtrader.scot)



If you have a news item you'd like to include in the next SBCF Newsletter please email

[bordersconstructionforum@gmail.com](mailto:bordersconstructionforum@gmail.com)



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