

showhouse

Mayor of London launches construction academy



Sadiq Khan, has officially launched his new Construction Academy in a bid to tempt more people into the sector and arm them with the right skills to tackle London's housing crisis.

Concurrently, the Mayor also published London's first ever Skills and Adult Education Strategy – Skills for Londoners – which aims to ensure all Londoners have the skills, education and training they need to succeed and help the capital's economy to thrive.

Sadiq believes London's housing crisis is the single biggest challenge facing the capital and risks leading to an exodus of talent, as increasing numbers of young Londoners find themselves unable to afford to live and work in the city.

The Mayor is aiming to deliver 116,000 genuinely affordable homes by 2022, while in 2017/18 more than 12,500 new affordable homes were started – the highest number since City Hall took on responsibility for housing.

The Mayor also announced a £1.4 million extension to the London Enterprise Adviser Network (LEAN) – which matches volunteer business advisers with school leaders to help them offer better careers advice and work more closely with businesses.

This will triple the size of the existing Network meaning up to 700 volunteers will work with at least 470 schools and further education colleges across London.

The Mayor's Construction Academy has been developed with the support of construction employers, industry experts and skills providers to close the gap between the need for more homes and the shortage of skilled construction workers. Rather than a single centre, the Academy is a network of construction skills providers across London which will work closely together and with construction employers.

The Academy is partly funded through the London Economic Action Partnership's (LEAP) Growth Deal with central government, which included £8 million allocated to the programme. The Mayor committed to publishing the strategy and launching the Academy in his manifesto.

A Mayor's Construction Academy 'quality mark' has been created to identify high-quality construction skills training provision. The Mayor has announced which skills providers have been awarded the quality marks and will join councils, housing associations, homebuilders and construction companies in being eligible to bid for funding to better coordinate skills training with employers' needs, as well as engaging with local schools to promote construction careers.

Later this year, quality-marked providers can also apply for investment from the LEAP's Skills for Londoners Capital Fund to develop state-of-the-art construction skills training facilities.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said, "London is home to some of the most exciting and dynamic talent but there's no denying we face a shortage in construction skills and that this is hampering our ability to tackle London's housing crisis.

"To make matters worse, we risk an exodus of talented Londoners, who could leave the city in large numbers because they can't afford a good quality home.

The Mayor also launched his Skills for Londoners Strategy at the King's Cross Construction Skills Centre, where he met Londoners training in carpentry, plumbing and other construction skills.

The strategy places social mobility, inclusion and diversity at its heart, focuses on post-16 technical and vocational education, adult education and employment support, and considers pathways from school into further learning and work.

The strategy also aims to tackle the fact that women, young Londoners, disabled Londoners and those from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds are under-represented in the labour market.

Human Resources Director at Redrow Homes, Karen Jones said, "The development of the Academy will help London's construction sector access the skills it needs to deliver the capital's housebuilding targets and to train the workforce in new and emerging construction techniques."

Martin Bellinger, executive chairman of London-based contracting and property development group, Guildmore, added, “It is high time that more investment was made in increasing the number of skilled construction workers in London as the industry seeks to find ways to solve the housing crisis facing the capital.

“The reality is that we need to educate more people in skilled construction craftsmanship, while ensuring that new entrants to the sector also acquire digital and manufacturing led skills that will be more and more relevant as the industry evolves.

“With Brexit looming large on the horizon, the UK – and particularly London – will face a shortage of skilled construction workers so the formation of this academy is great news for the construction industry and the wider London region.