



dti

CONSTRUCTION SECTOR UNIT

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

MARCH 2004

The Construction Sector Unit

How we can help you

Working for businesses,
employees and consumers to
drive up UK productivity and
competitiveness to deliver
prosperity for all

Construction Sector Unit is the lead unit within the DTI on construction issues. Our vision is for a construction industry that is consistently world class in delivering products and services and this underpins our priorities and activities.

This leaflet is intended primarily to help those organisations and firms with little or no knowledge of the work of the Unit, or the industry improvement agenda. More information details can be obtained from the sources (contacts and websites) signposted.

How we can help you

Building relationships between industry and Government

The Unit values and is keen to develop the open relationships it has with industry bodies, key companies, client bodies and Government agencies. We achieve this by keeping in touch and up-to-date, and as a 'critical friend' in discussing the opportunities and threats facing the industry. We can help industry in a variety of ways, – e.g. by promoting innovation and best practice, identifying research funding options, and effective contributions to policy making at both national and EU level.

Successful relationships help us to understand our sectors better and to develop high quality analysis. We will champion our sector's legitimate interests in Government and elsewhere, ensuring industry is consulted and its concerns taken into account, e.g. in the development of legislation. We will represent the legitimate concerns of industry on regulations and legislative issues within Government. We actively communicate with trade associations and other industry bodies, and members, especially small firms, might find it worthwhile checking with their contacts in these organisations about current live issues and action being taken. As 'critical friends' and partners, we will challenge and help our sectors to improve their performance.

The Unit contact points for information, advice and guidance are:

Contractors	020 7215 3719
Housing and regions	020 7215 0853
Clients and professional bodies	020 7215 1111
Quality Mark	020 7215 3708
Constructionline	020 7215 3708
Sustainable construction issues	020 7215 0995
Construction products and services	020 7215 3718
Innovation and research team	020 7215 0848

As partners taking forward the industry improvement agenda

The Unit is supporting the industry improvement agenda in partnership with the Strategic Forum for Construction, Constructing Excellence and others. The Strategic Forum is the pan-industry body driving forward Rethinking Construction principles. Its report, *Accelerating Change*, shows how building Integrated Teams, Client Leadership and Respect for People can add real value to your business.

Working in Integrated teams is about doing things differently, and more effectively. Delivering outcomes that better meet your needs, and those of your clients.

Effective client leadership lies at the heart of the delivery of the improvements outlined in Rethinking Construction and Accelerating Change. Clients are uniquely placed to drive improvement down the supply chain.

The role of clients is crucial to driving improvement by demanding better service to meet their business needs.

A commitment to better design by the whole supply chain, including safety aspects, is fundamental to successful project delivery. The Unit works with strategic bodies including the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Regional Development Agencies to improve the quality and functionality of buildings, the delivery of better business and services and the well being of local communities. The Unit is also supporting the rollout of the Design Quality Indicator (DQI) by the Construction Industry Council as a means of measuring the positive impact of better construction design. Further information is available from the DQI website.

The industry needs to attract and retain a quality workforce. That is why People Issues figure prominently in Rethinking Construction and Accelerating Change. The Unit works closely with CITB-ConstructionSkills, SummitSkills, the Construction Skills Certification Scheme and other industry bodies to address the actions proposed.

Respect for People is a business approach, not simply an initiative. People value decent and safe working conditions; rewarding and fulfilling jobs and careers; and opportunities for training and development. Contractors and clients both have a role making provision for this in their projects.

Constructing Excellence has a wealth of information on how construction companies and clients can become more productive by implementing Rethinking Construction and Accelerating Change. If you want more information, or want to get engaged either with Constructing Excellence demonstration projects, as a participant in the regional Clubs, or in one of the many other activities taking place in your region, contact either the Unit or Constructing Excellence direct. Details about the Respect for People and Integrated Team toolkits are also available (see contact list).

Providing support and guidance to promote research and innovation

We promote research and innovation and signpost industry to DTI and other funding sources wherever we can. We also work closely with the industry-owned Construction Research and Innovation Strategy Panel (nCRISP) to develop priorities for construction research, and to encourage research and innovation in the sector.

Innovation, whether involving construction techniques, products or approaches to business, is something for all companies, large and small, to embrace. The Constructing Excellence demonstration projects give excellent insights into what can be achieved.

DTI supports research relevant to industry needs and in line with the objectives of sustainable construction. Information on DTI's support schemes (company R&D, collaborative R&D, and Knowledge Transfer activities) is available from the Business Link website. Further information about DTI research projects, and contact details, are available from the DTI construction research project website. Results are available from Constructing Excellence.

Improving quality in the industry

Quality Mark is aimed at consumers to give them an informed choice - the advantages of contracting for quality, against the potential consequences of cash-in-hand business. Essentially it is a database of quality construction firms working in the domestic home repair, maintenance and improvement market. It is the only Government-backed scheme of its kind in the trade and provides a single, recognised standard 'seal of approval'. QM construction firms are independently assessed, membership requirements reflect

industry-accepted technical standards and common sense customer care principles. The Scheme is also helping address the industry's poor reputation, by demonstrating to the public that there are many decent firms operating in construction. See the QM website for more information about registration.

Quality Mark offers peace of mind for consumers and an attractive business package for domestic contractors.

Constructionline is a register of local, and national pre-qualified construction services, designed to save firms time and money, and reduce their administrative burden. Instead of firms having to supply information to each prospective client or contract, and repeatedly completing pre-qualification questionnaires, this information is made available from one central online location. Constructionline offers commercial gains to public and private sector procurers and the construction industry as a whole, by improving efficiency, streamlining procedures, and supplying clients with centrally maintained data about firms for use at the start of the procurement process. Contact the Constructionline website for more information.

Driving Sustainable Construction

The Unit encourages more sustainable construction throughout the industry supply chain. The Energy White Paper aim of a low carbon economy has added impetus to this process. The Unit works with key partners to highlight the business case for action, develop sector sustainability strategies, and promote best practice. For more information about the Construction Lean Improvement Programme (CLIP), and other issues including the Better Buildings Summit (BBS), see the website details below.

Construction has a huge influence on our environment, embracing design, mechanical and electrical systems, products and site management. It is essential that industry tackles the challenges, and grasps the opportunities that are emerging.

Other useful contacts and website addresses

Construction Sector Unit

www.dti.gov.uk/construction

Businesslink

www.businesslink.gov.uk/support

CABE

www.cabe.org.uk

Quality Mark

www.qualitymark.org.uk

Constructionline

www.constructionline.co.uk

Design Quality Indicator

www.dqi.org.uk

Industry improvement

Constructing Excellence

www.constructingexcellence.org.uk

Strategic Forum for
Construction

www.strategicforum.org.uk

Accelerating Change report

www.strategicforum.org.uk/report.jsp

Integrated Teams toolkit

[www.strategicforum.org.uk/
sfctoolkit2/home/home.html](http://www.strategicforum.org.uk/sfctoolkit2/home/home.html)

Skills and people issues

CITB-ConstructionSkills

www.citb.org.uk/citb_home.htm

SummitSkills

www.summitskills.org.uk

Respect for People toolkit

[www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/
resourcecentre/publications
az.jsp?azID=17181](http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/resourcecentre/publications/az.jsp?azID=17181)

Construction Sector Unit

www.dti.gov.uk/construction/respect

Sustainability

Waste Resources Action
Programme

www.wrap.org.uk

Waste Strategy

www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste

Minimising energy

www.dti.gov.uk/energy

Energy Saving Trust

www.est.org.uk

Carbon Trust

www.thecarbontrust.co.uk

Sustainable government
procurement

www.ogc.gov.uk/index.asp?id=37

Sustainable communities

www.odpm.gov.uk/communities

Construction Lean
Improvement Programme
(CLIP)

[www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/
service/clip](http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/service/clip)

Construction Sector Unit
(including Better
Buildings Summit)

www.dti.gov.uk/construction/sustain

Research and Innovation

DTI construction
research projects

[www.constructionresearch.info/
dti/projects.asp](http://www.constructionresearch.info/dti/projects.asp)

nCRISP

www.ncrisp.org.uk

also see Businesslink

www.businesslink.gov.uk



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