



CASE STUDY: Hobson and Porter – Foundations

Hobson and Porter is widely recognised in the construction industry as a company that gives back, both to the industry itself and to the communities it serves. The company's Foundations initiative has been designed to help create a sustainable workforce for the construction industry – educating, developing and upskilling the next generation in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire and benefitting students, employers, young people and adult re-trainers in equal measure.

A large part of this involves going out into the community in which the company works to engage with students of all ages, introducing them the wealth of career opportunities available across the industry, and the skills, qualifications and personal qualities required to succeed in this exciting and growing sector.

Engaging with the workforce of the future



Foundations has seen members of the Hobson and Porter team and its suppliers getting back into the classroom and bringing students to the construction site, visiting children of all ages to open their eyes to the wide variety of careers that are available in construction and engineering. Each visit aims to tie our team's work in with subjects such as maths and geography, inviting pupils to try out equipment such as levels and laser distance meters and apply construction skills

in their own classrooms. Some of these visits are aimed at specific groups underrepresented in the industry, such as aiming to address the shortage of women in STEM fields by introducing these careers to girls early on.

The company has also had opportunities to take school children on a tour of a real construction site in their very own school. Pupils at Driffield C of E Infant School were given a chance to see the work in progress at the school's new kitchen, giving them a hands-on experience of being on site and helping them to see the benefits the construction projects have for schools like theirs first hand.

Bringing the industry together under one roof

The initiative's associated trade and careers event, Foundations Live, is now going into its third year following two incredibly successful events. The event is held in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), building merchant Jewson and Bishop Burton College and hosts exhibitors, demonstrations and drop-in sessions to get learners of all ages – from primary school pupils to adult re-trainers – engaged with construction.



At Foundations Live 2017 over 50 exhibiting companies were organised by trade in the sequence of a typical construction project, from architects through to suppliers of paint and landscaping services. Hundreds of students visited from schools and colleges across Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, and as the event continues to grow, more attendees and exhibitors than ever are anticipated at the 2018 edition.

For the youngest attendees, the event aims to raise aspirations and broaden horizons, engaging children with the wide range of different careers in construction and the skills they require.

It is even more important to get this message across to attendees at GCSE age and older, considering the skills gap the UK construction currently faces. According to the CITB's CSN forecast, there will be over 9,000 construction jobs that need to be filled in Yorkshire and the Humber in the next five years, and so it is vital that young people in the region know how varied and rewarding a career in construction can be.

Upskilling the next generation

Foundations Live aims to benefit local businesses by ensuring there is a diverse supply of talented young people in construction and engineering. The annual event is also an invaluable networking opportunity for these businesses, fostering partnerships between local companies and encouraging new and innovative projects across the region.

Foundations Live helps students realise their own potential by introducing them to a wealth of career paths and apprenticeships. It is also great for adult re-trainers to meet employers face to face and gain first-hand knowledge of improving their employability to ensure they can reach their goals. The connections made at Foundations Live have played a key role in jump-starting several attendees' careers by breaking the ice and putting them in front of the people they need to talk to in order to pursue their career goals.



Foundations testimonials

David Blades, Business Development Director, Hobson and Porter: *“As the construction skills gap continues to grow, it is necessary that we address this and work with our partners and supply chain to inspire people from all walks of life to consider a career in construction.*

“Foundations is about the collaboration with our education partners to provide hands-on experience for construction students and people looking to take up a career, spanning the gap between education and industry.”

Jewson Hull Cluster - *"We are proud to support an initiative which aims to support and drive recruitment to fill potentially thousands of positions available in Yorkshire and the Humber.*

"It is unprecedented for Jewson to provide support for a cause such as this on a local scale, but it is one that will ultimately make a visible difference in the local economy and will benefit our community as a whole."

Janice Chattaway, CITB Advisor, Humber- *"CITB is proud to be partnering with Hobson Porter for Foundations Live in 2018, promoting construction careers across the county.*

"With 158,000 new jobs opening up in our industry over the next five years, we want to promote the industry's recruitment campaign Go Construct to make sure young people in the region know how varied and rewarding a career in construction can be. We'll also be using the opportunity to inform employers about what funding for skills and training CITB offers."

Jeremy Hara, Construction Course Manager, Bishop Burton College: *"Employability sits at the core of our curriculum so we're particularly proud to be part of the Foundations Programme and we are delighted to have hosted the first ever Foundations Live event.*

"By being part of this initiative, our construction and engineering students will benefit from hands-on, practical training alongside the major employers in the region; helping them to develop the skills needed for industry."

Rose James, Hull Children's University: *"We have had a fantastic response to the Foundations Live exhibition, which has led to a waiting list for schools wanting to attend being created for this year's event. This shows a real appetite for the event from younger attendees who are keen to learn more about the industry."*