

1. Myth

Working in construction is dangerous and bad for your health.

Buster

- The UK construction industry is the safest in Europe. Everybody has a role to play in taking responsibility for Health & Safety.

Supporting evidence:

- *Standardised rates of fatal injury across the EU-15 and GB/UK show a downward trend over the period 1998-2011.*
- *The UK consistently has one of the lowest rates of fatal injury across the EU.*
- *In 2007, 1.8% of UK workers reported an injury occurring at work that resulted in sick leave.*
- *In 2007, 2.9% of UK workers reported a work-related illness resulting in sick leave. This is lower than Germany.*

Data Source: hse.gov.uk/statistics/European/european-comparisons.pdf

- Everybody's health and safety is the most important priority at all times. Noise, dust, dirt and dangerous materials are all carefully controlled by safe working systems, safety signs and risk assessments. Data Reference - *Safety Signs and Signals Regulations*
- Most jobs in construction will require health and safety training. For example, anyone going onto a 'live' construction site must go through a health and safety induction including visitors. Data Reference - *(Construction (Design and Management) regulations)*

2. Myth

Working in construction means doing a practical job, working out in the cold.

Buster

- There is a wide variety of careers in construction which can involve working in a whole range of different locations and workplaces including a 'live' construction site, an office, a workshop or working from home.
- There are hundreds of careers in Construction & the Built Environment involving design, management and engineering that don't involve getting your hands dirty. (This can also link to the next buster).

3. Myth

Construction is a dirty industry that is bad for the environment.

Buster

- Many construction careers are focused on green technologies and sustainability, making sure the environment is protected during the construction process.
- Modern buildings can have a positive impact on the communities that use them. For example, a new housing estate might feature a community playground gym that all housing estate residents can use.
- Energy use, use of harmful materials, ecology, pollution, waste management and water management are just some of the considerations that go into the design of a new building. For example, use of solar panels to reduce energy bills or a bridge across a newly constructed motorway to allow wildlife such as hedgehogs and badgers to cross safely.

4. Myth

Construction is just 'jobs for the boys'.

Buster

- Over 320,000 women work in construction in the UK.
- Females working in construction are employed in lots of interesting and varied roles including Civil Engineers (12% of all Civil Engineers) and Architects (18% of all Architects).
- 92% of all females in the construction industry work in professional careers e.g., Architects, Civil Engineers, Quantity Surveyors.

All data above from: *Labour Force Survey Construction 4 quarter average 2013 – 2014.*

5. Myth

All construction workers wolf-whistle passers-by.

Buster

We are no longer a dinosaur industry! Modern construction sites encourage everybody to behave respectfully and treat everyone fairly. If anybody acts in a way that is not appropriate; for example, wolf-whistling, many construction companies will deal with this seriously.

6. Myth

The industry is dominated by cowboy builders.

Buster

- Public and private construction contracts can be worth billions of pounds. There's nothing cowboy about that!
Image Reference: Coinford, Zenith House, New Hendon Village, London.
- Smaller responsible companies will register with federations and associations such as checkatrade.com, Federation of Master Builders, National Federation of Builders that have strict membership criteria and assess the quality of the work of their members.

7. Myth

I did well at school, so construction is not for me.

Buster

- There are lots of well-paid career opportunities for successful people who are educated to degree level in the construction industry. Once you have your degree many employers have a recognised development graduate programme.
- Many construction employers sponsor undergraduates whilst they are gaining a degree, so you can earn and learn!
- Managing a multi-million pound construction project or a construction business requires high levels of skill and ability.

8. Myth

Construction sites have a disruptive effect on local communities.

Buster

- Construction projects make a positive contribution to our communities and the way in which we live, whether that's a new hospital, school, road or bridge.
- The 'Considerate Constructors' Scheme' ensures that construction companies working in communities have a commitment to the local residents. For example, allowing local residents to visit the construction site or renovating a local community garden.
- Many construction companies employ 'Community Liaison' staff tasked with addressing the concerns of the community both before and during the construction process of a construction project.
- Disruption to the local community is considered by planning officers at the local Council before planning permission is granted for a project.

9. Myth

Construction is an old-fashioned and very traditional industry.

Buster

- Modern construction develops and uses some of the latest technology including Building Information Modelling (BIM), Computer Aided Design (CAD) and even nanotechnology.
- New building methods and materials are constantly developing; although traditional methods of building (heritage skills) are essential to maintain older maybe listed buildings. These heritage skills are very specialist and require a great deal of training.
- Even old and historic buildings are expected to meet new low carbon and waste reduction targets. So, it's a big job to maintain the aesthetics of a building but ensure they meet modern standards!

Image Reference: Glasgow Cathedral, Scotland, credited to © Crown Copyright Historic Scotland.

10. Myth

Construction only benefits the people who work or invest in it.

Buster

- Society benefits from construction because it builds infrastructure to supply clean water, waste management, flood defence systems and improved transport systems.
- The construction industry provides us all with places to live, work, and enjoy leisure activities.

11. Myth

Construction apprenticeships only offer a limited career potential.

Buster

- Many Construction Managers and other construction professionals started their careers as apprentices.
- Apprenticeships can be a route into Higher Education or University.
- You can study Higher Apprenticeships or Degree Apprenticeships. Some companies may even pay the tuition fees.
- Apprenticeships are a great way to start in the industry if you want to earn while you learn.