

# SUPPORTING JOBS IN CONSTRUCTION



## THE RESULTS OF THE PEOPLE SURVEY – SEPTEMBER 2020

### Introduction

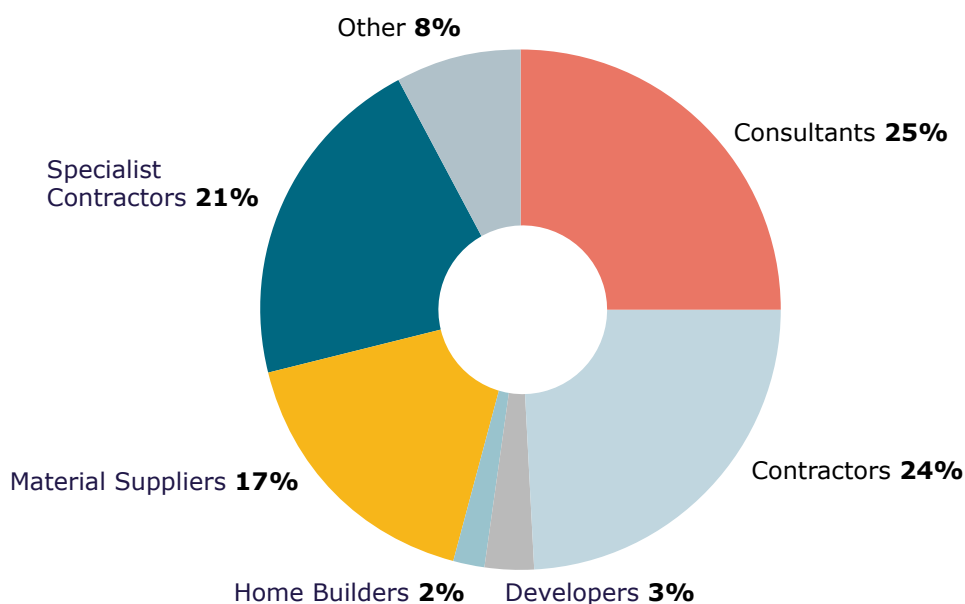
Building on the results of the first cross-industry People Survey, [Retaining Talent in Construction](#), Build UK carried out a second survey on behalf of the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) in September 2020.

This report summarises the key results, which provide an up to date snapshot of the ongoing impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the construction workforce and will help to prioritise support for employers in line with the industry's [Roadmap to Recovery](#).

### In particular, the data highlights the following:

- There are expected to be job losses over the next three months, particularly amongst self-employed and agency workers
- Specialist Contractors and Developers anticipate the largest reductions in their workforces
- Overall the number of apprentices employed is expected to increase slightly over the next three months
- The fall in the number of graduates in September was less severe than predicted in June
- Training will continue to be a blend of online and face-to-face, with the majority of training providers having resumed face-to-face training or planning to do so over the next three months
- Most companies expect to retain some level of working from home in the future.

### Responses by Sector



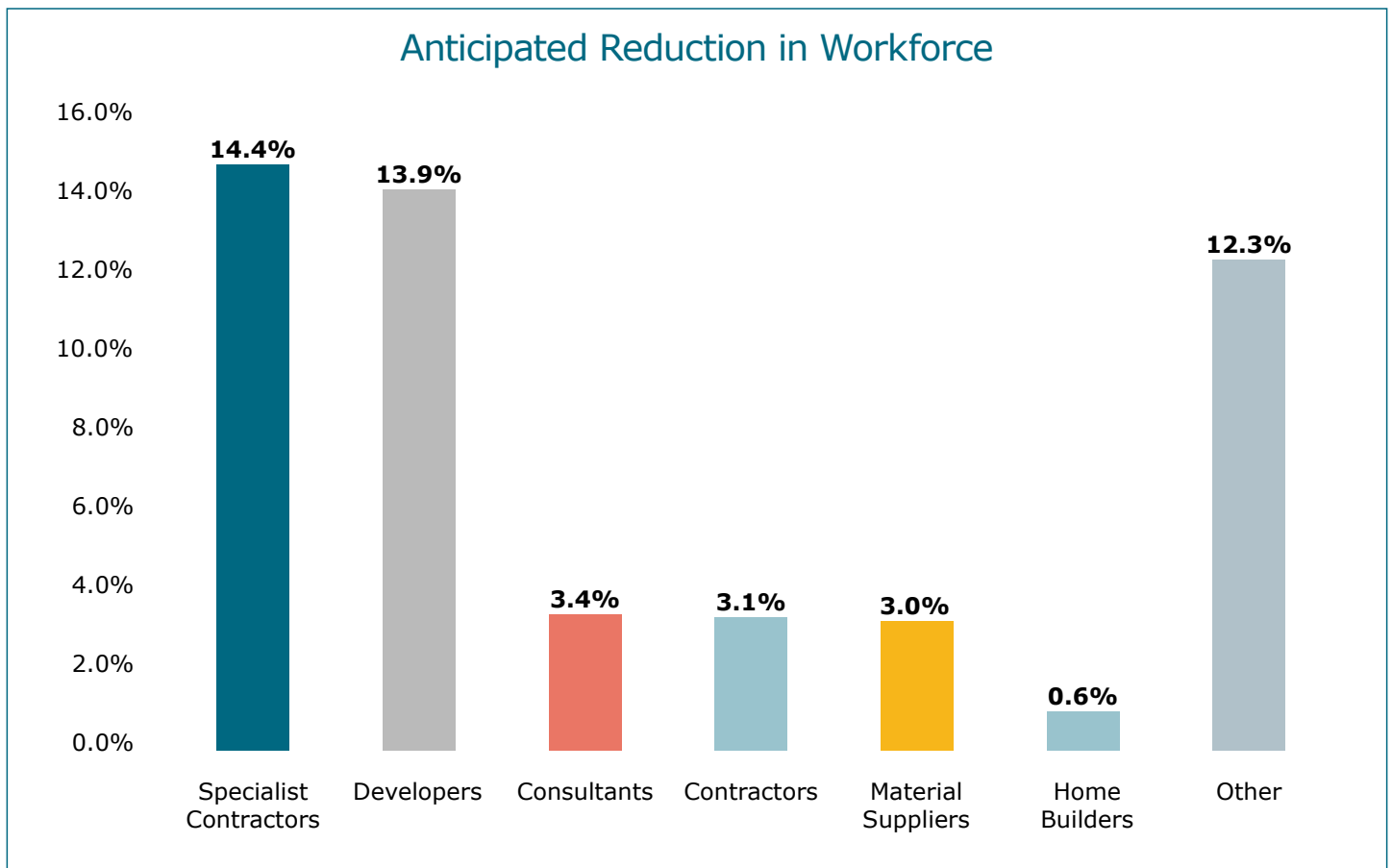
## Employment

To understand the ongoing impact of coronavirus on jobs, the People Survey collected data on current employment levels (September) and anticipated employment levels in three months' time (December).

Respondents currently directly employ 80% of their workers, with the remaining 20% being self-employed or agency workers.

- On average, 6% of direct employees remain furloughed, a significant reduction from the 32% reported in June.
- There is anticipated to be a **3.9% reduction in the number of directly employed workers** across the industry by December.
- In the longer term, **44% of companies anticipate making redundancies**, with 6% of their workforces being affected compared to 20% in June.
- There is expected to be a **5.3% reduction in the number of self-employed and agency workers** across the industry by December. Although significant, this is a substantial drop from the 26.7% anticipated back in June.
- Home Builders, Specialist Contractors and Contractors continue to be the most significant users of self-employed and agency workers. Whilst Home Builders anticipate increasing the number they use by 6%, **Specialist Contractors and Contractors are looking to reduce self-employed and agency workers by 32% and 5% respectively.**
- 48% of respondents are eligible for the Job Retention Bonus, and 80% of these are planning to claim it.

**Combining these figures shows an anticipated reduction in the construction workforce of 4.2% between September and December.**



## The Next Generation

The future pipeline of talent remains vital to the long-term sustainability of the industry. The People Survey sought to understand the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the number of apprenticeships and graduate programmes across the sector.

### Apprentices

37% of respondents employ apprentices. Only 3% of apprentices remain furloughed, down from 43% in June.

The total **number of apprentices employed is expected to increase by 4%** over the next three months, with Consultants looking to increase numbers by 23%, Contractors by 9%, and Material Suppliers by 3%.

Just **4% of companies are anticipating making apprentices redundant**, with two thirds of these citing a lack of work as the main reason.

**48% of companies took on fewer apprentices in September**, with 46% recruiting the same number, and 6% taking on more.

At the next intake in January, **55% of companies expect to take on the same number of apprentices**, with 38% looking to recruit fewer and 6% planning to take on more.

**28% of respondents pay the Apprenticeship Levy** and 74% of those employ apprentices. Just 23% of companies that don't pay the Apprenticeship Levy employ apprentices.

On average, those that pay the Apprenticeship Levy expect to **lose a third of their Levy pot** at the end of this year, due to not being able to spend it within the two-year timeframe.

### Graduates

Just 22% of respondents have a graduate scheme.

There was an **18% fall overall in the number of graduates** taken on in September. Although significant, this was much lower than the 32% reduction anticipated by respondents back in June.



## Training and Skills

Ensuring the industry continues to have the skills it requires will be key to its success, and the People Survey collected data on how learners were being taught in light of social distancing requirements.

**84% of respondents provide training for their workforces** and half of those expect it to take place online over the next three months, which is consistent with the response in June (49%).

Over the next three months, training providers anticipate 55% of their courses taking place online, which is also consistent with the response in June (56%). However, **two thirds of training providers and respondents report that face-to-face training has already resumed or will resume** over the next three months.

## Future Working Patterns

With lockdown restrictions having a significant impact on office working, the People Survey sought to understand the changes to working habits across the industry now and in the future.

Respondents reported that 63% of their office-based staff had returned to the office at least one day per week. However, just before the People Survey concluded, the Government reverted to its previous guidance that workers should work from home if they can.

In the future, **71% of companies expect the majority of their staff to continue to work from home** in some capacity.

