

# BUILDING QUALITY

## Building quality of life

Brick and brickwork provide one of the most sustainable building methodologies available, one that will contribute to our urban landscape for centuries. The Association of Brickwork Contractors is committed to continuously raising materials and workmanship standards, ensuring a delivered product to the highest achievable quality levels.

Member Companies must demonstrate the desire and the expertise to deliver a quality product that enhances the use of all materials making up the total masonry package. It makes good financial sense: demonstrating high quality brickwork ensures Members increase demand from architects, specifiers and the public to use brick in future projects.

A quality plan and commitment to training that embraces the CITB modern apprenticeship scheme must be fundamental company disciplines. Only then can Members produce job-specific plans that underpin a quality product and interlock easily with other Contractors' quality procedures.

Whether it's a major public building or works, a private house or a landscaping project, the ultimate measure of quality for any brickwork contractor is to produce work eligible for the annual Brick Development Association's Quality Brickwork Awards.

This leaflet shows how the Association of Brickwork Contractors is supporting its Members and potential Members, their clients and staff in building quality.

## About the Association

The Association of Brickwork Contractors was formed by twelve of the UK's leading brickwork contractors to promote the role of the bricklayer and the brickwork contractor.

The Association focuses on four key areas:

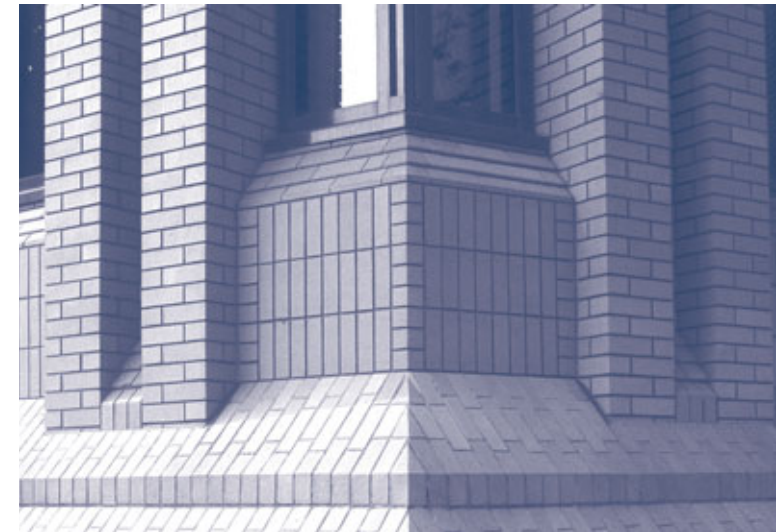
- Quality of Work
- Employment
- Health and Safety
- Training and Education

Membership of the Association is open to all brickwork contractors and subcontractors who use brick and who subscribe to these objectives. If, after reading this leaflet, you would like to know more about membership, please contact the Association.



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The objectives of the Association of Brickwork Contractors are supported by the Brick Development Association, the Better Brickwork Alliance, and the Construction Industry Training Board.



*The Association of Brickwork Contractors is driving for the highest quality standards of materials and workmanship to ensure brickwork continues to make a positive and growing contribution to our urban landscape.*



**A commitment to quality is essential in everything – whether its building a humble retaining wall or a high-status corporate headquarters.**

There's an old saying about recognising quality: "I'll know it when I see it." This approach is difficult to propagate across an organisation - and to pass on to new bricklayers. It is also impossible to audit and improve. A more formal approach is essential to creating the perception of quality to the construction industry as a whole and the public at large.

Association Members must have the will and the expertise to deliver a quality product, from basic materials through to finished product. Implementation of a full ISO, EN or BSI Quality Scheme can be very beneficial but may not be essential.



What is essential is Members have in position – or be willing to put in place – a formalised quality plan that is meaningful and auditable. From the quality plan, job-specific quality plans incorporating all the required checks and balances that deliver a quality product can be easily produced.

**Brick is a proven building material with a 5,000 year pedigree but new applications continue to be found and new brick technologies continue to appear.**

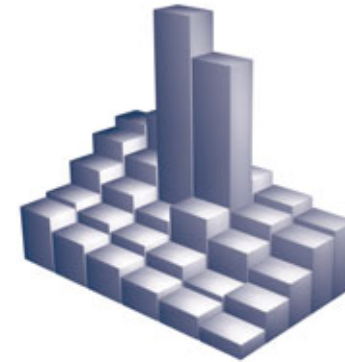
The fundamental measure of quality for the brickwork contractor is to produce work recognised as contributing positively to the built environment, whether it is for a major public building or works, a private house or a landscaping project.

To achieve this level of competence requires more than somebody who can lay brick; it requires bricklayers trained to the level where they can enhance the materials they use - be it brick, block or stone - to meet and exceed client, architect and main contractor expectations.

The Association requires all its Members to be working toward a point where a high percentage of the work force is in possession of CSCS skill cards. To embrace the principals of CSCS cards, Members need to instigate informal or formal NVQ and Apprenticeship training schemes that instil a strong quality ethic from the beginning.



**Knowing how much knowledge and experience each bricklayer has is a prerequisite to ongoing company-wide quality improvement.**



Each Association Member sets its own quality benchmark as part of competing with other brickwork contractors. These benchmark levels must be clearly demonstrated to

the company's bricklayers as a minimum requirement along with the steps that ensure these quality standards are maintained. By establishing recognized benchmarks, Member Companies can readily identify opportunities for quality improvement and benefits in new technology – and to better plan for their adoption in the workplace.

It is an objective of the Association to create an environment where all Members are striving towards a standard of the highest order. Only in this way can Members stand out from other brickwork contractors and ensure brick competes with other forms of exterior cladding. The establishment of tangible benchmark measures indicates very strongly to clients that Members are not just talking about quality but have systems in place that will ensure the best possible end product.