

## Building the future

If there is one area where the brickwork industry continues to change and evolve, for the bricklayer as well as the contractor, it's in the area of employment legislation. The Association of Brickwork Contractors has established an Employment Charter that takes into account these changes and looks to shape the industry in the future whilst continuing to ensure a competitive market.

Brickwork contracting is highly competitive with a highly mobile workforce. At the heart of the Association's charter is the drive for workforce stability, enabling Member Companies to reap the benefits of their training investment in each employee – permanent, temporary or subcontract – and ensuring employees benefit from this stability.

Member Companies, in cooperation with relevant Trade Unions and similar representative bodies, must ensure their employees are employed in accordance with prevailing legislation at rates that are consistent and competitive. Additionally, they must promote the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) and support the Scheme's aspirations towards full membership across the construction industry.

In return, the Association promotes member companies who have adopted and implemented this employment charter to preferred contractor status among developers and construction clients.

## 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.



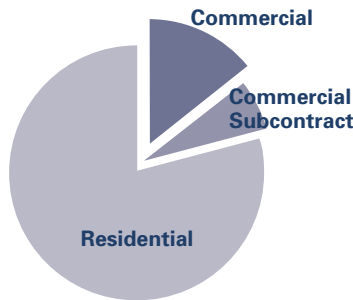
*The Association of Brickwork Contractors is building a level playing field for healthy competition and improving employment conditions to create a better workforce.*



**Association Member Companies employ some 20% of the UK's 117,000 bricklayers to build most of the country's prestigious commercial developments.**

Sustaining a competitive position in this uncompromising market requires maintaining the highest possible quality levels whilst continuing to drive down health and safety incidents. At the heart must be a stable workforce thoroughly trained in each Member's quality and safety benchmarks and corporate work ethic. To achieve these aims, Member Companies go beyond offering the minimum employment conditions.

Wage and overtime rates are driven by local market conditions and an individual's knowledge, training and experience. There is nothing to be gained by any Member driving rates down if the result is a reduction in delivered product quality. It makes poor business sense.



Every brickwork contract is different, requiring established quality and safety procedures to be reviewed to take account of new conditions. Relying primarily on temporary labour undermines this process. The key is a core of trained experienced staff that set and implement benchmarks with the temporary (PAYE), self-employed (CIS registered) and pricework subcontractors flattening out demand peaks.

**National and European laws set statutory minimum conditions that all bricklayers should expect.**



European law set out maximum working hours and the accrual of holiday entitlement.

The Association

believes holiday is a benefit to be earned – and enjoyed – and not an extra in the pay packet: temporary employees accrue holiday entitlement separate from the basic wages just as any permanent employee.

For many bricklayers, pensions and sick pay were never a major consideration; times are changing. Member Companies meet Government legal requirements. All employees, permanent or temporary are offered the option of establishing a stakeholder pension scheme. Benefits from stakeholder pensions can be transferred between schemes, and to and from occupational pension schemes.

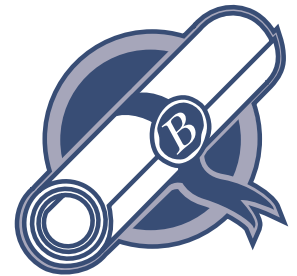
Similarly, all permanent and temporary employees are eligible for statutory sick pay; Members may go beyond this minimum depending on the circumstances.

**If it's not covered by legislation, it has to be covered by a contract of employment.**

Contracts of employment cover all the essentials identified above – wages, holidays, pensions and sick pay – as well as identifying with the aims and objectives of the Company. There are other subjects that are strictly the province of the employer.

Any new permanent employee is likely to be subject to an initial probationary period where his/her skills can be proven. At the other end, the contract of employment will also lay down a notice period and how it may change with length of service.

Nothing is ever perfect: an employee may fail to meet the expectations of the employer - and vice versa. Just like any business contract, a contract of employment must lay out the workings of the Company's disciplinary procedures for non-performance, and the internal grievance procedure for the employee who feels wronged.



Through its Employment Charter, the Association of Brickwork Contractors is building a level competitive playing field where employer and employee can benefit from stability.