

[News story: New high-skills jobs open up as UK construction sector transforms](#)

The UK's construction industry has hardly changed in 40 years. It is not as efficient as it could be, and faces a looming skills gap brought on by an ageing workforce.

A new £72 million Core Innovation Hub will help to lead a transformation in construction, make it more productive and importantly create new, high-value jobs at the same time.

By supporting research and development in digital and offsite manufacturing, the hub will advance new knowledge and approaches in construction, bring forward new jobs and build the supply chain.

New skills and a more diverse workforce

Introducing more standardised modular components, construction techniques and processes will remove some of the risks and create safer, more efficient work.

This will require a brand new skill set and help to diversify the available workforce. It is anticipated this could open up job opportunities with new groups, including the unemployed and people who are homeless or have disabilities.

As one of the largest sectors in the UK economy – [estimated to employ around 9 per cent of the total UK workforce](#), equating to 3.1 million people – there is potential for even more people to enter the profession from a range of backgrounds and benefit from the opportunities.

Better places to live and work

The Core Innovation Hub will develop digitally-driven, standardised approaches that improve the whole-life performance of built assets and create higher-quality, cost-effective buildings that are more comfortable to live and work in.

The investment is through the £170 million [transforming construction challenge](#), part of the government's Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund that is being delivered by [UK Research and Innovation](#).

Sam Stacey, Challenge Director, UK Research and Innovation, said:

We need to transform construction so that we can create affordable places to live and work that are safer, healthier and use less

energy.

By taking a lead in the UK, we can increase our ability to export. Global demand for efficient buildings is rising rapidly, driven by the pressures of urbanisation, affordability and the need to cut emissions.

Delivering homes and buildings the nation needs

The Core Innovation Hub is a partnership between the [Manufacturing Technology Centre](#), [Building Research Establishment](#) and the [University of Cambridge's Centre for Digital Built Britain](#).

The hub was announced last week by Business and Industry Minister Richard Harrington during a visit to the Building Research Establishment.

He said:

From the introduction of virtual reality to off-site manufacturing, our [modern Industrial Strategy](#) is helping the UK construction sector to develop new techniques and skills – modernising the sector and delivering the homes and buildings our nation needs.