

Withdrawal of The Construction Site Visitor card

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) is planning to withdraw the Construction Site Visitor card and stop issuing new cards from 28th February 2020. All Construction Site Visitor cards issued from 3rd September 2018 will expire on 31st August 2020. All cards issued before 3rd September 2018 will remain valid until their expiry date.

The Construction Site Visitor card was designed for workers who often did not perform a construction related role but visited site on a regular basis. Graham Wren, Chief Executive at CSCS said: "Following the closure of the Construction Related Occupation card in 2017, the Site Visitor card is now the only card issued without the need for the applicant to achieve a recognised qualification. The Construction Site Visitor card does not support industry's desire for a fully qualified workforce and as such it will be withdrawn."

Holders of the Construction Site Visitor card will not be required to obtain another CSCS card as such are intended for construction related occupations only while many people holding the card work in roles considered to be non-construction related, such as site cleaning and catering staff.

The Construction Site Visitor card was often required by the employer due to policies requiring sites to be 100% carded, as opposed to construction workers being 100% qualified. However, it is recommended that those with Site Visitor cards should move to the appropriate skilled card. Visitor card holders who do not take the necessary steps to replace their cards will find they will be unable to obtain another CSCS card.

Graham Wren added: "The withdrawal of the

Site Visitor card will see an increase in the numbers of individuals turning up to site without a card. We are not suggesting site supervisors and managers turn non-cardholders away from site. If a worker is there to carry out a construction related activity then a card is required as proof of their training and qualifications. If they are there to perform a non-construction related activity it then becomes the responsibility of site supervisors and managers to induct and supervise these people to ensure they remain safe at all times when on site."

How to replace your Construction Site Visitor card?

Many people holding the Construction Site Visitor card work in non-construction related occupations such as security guards and catering. If your occupation is not construction related then you do not need a CSCS card. For more information visit: www.cscs.uk.com/nocard. Moreover, you can find out if your occupation is construction related by using the CSCS Card Finder. Enter your occupation into Card Finder and follow the steps on the screen.

If your occupation is construction related then

you should have a nationally recognised construction related qualifications like for instance NVQ. Those working in construction related occupations without qualifications will need to register onto the appropriate qualification before their Construction Site Visitor card expires, otherwise they will not be able to obtain another CSCS card. To find out which card is appropriate for your occupation, use the CSCS Card Finder. Enter your occupation into Card Finder and follow the steps on the screen.

Cardholders in many specialist occupations, including demolition, plant and scaffolding occupations, will need to get a card from one of CSCS' Partner Card Schemes. Partner Card Schemes are based on the same standard as CSCS, requiring the holder to gain an N/SVQ and pass the Health and Safety Test. Partner Card Schemes can be viewed here www.cscs.uk.com/about/partnercardschemes

Visit www.cscs.uk.com/visitorcard to find out what steps you need to take to replace your Construction Site Visitor card.

Source: CSCS



CSCS announces Price Rise

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) will be increasing the cost of a card to 36 GBP (including VAT) from 1st September 2018. The 20% rise from the current cost of 30 GBP is the first increase since 2010.

This increase applies to all cards administered directly by CSCS. CSCS is the leading skills certification scheme within the UK construction industry. A CSCS card provides proof that individuals working on construction sites have the required training and qualifications for the type of work they carry out.

Graham Wren, CSCS Chief Executive said: "We have managed to maintain

the current card price for the last eight years however inflationary pressure, together with increased costs associated with combatting fraudulent activity, have pushed our costs up to the point where the current price is not sustainable. In addition, with our current contact centre provider CITB having served notice to exit the service contract the CSCS Board have agreed to invest in new technology and systems to ensure the application process is modernised."

CSCS announced the increase in price in advance to ensure the industry will be ready for it in September. Graham Wren continued: "Modernising the application process is a key priority for the CSCS Board and the additional investment will ensure the card continues to add value and play its part in improving standards and safety on UK construction sites."

(Source: CSCS)



■ London City Airport

OFFERS JOBS

London City Airport plans to appoint contractors who will plan and execute the development of the airport. Scope of works on offer refer to the terminal buildings and include piling, substructure and concrete works. These works will take place over the next 5 years and will provide additional aircraft stands, east and west passenger terminal extensions and associated baggage handling, security and other works. Between four and six firms will be shortlisted to submit tenders for the remaining substructure main build in August with a contract expected to be awarded before the end of the year.



Piling works includes:

- CFA piling (varying diameter, mainly between 300-600 mm on land with a number of steel sleeved 1200 mm diameter in water) with pile caps
- Casting of Holding down bolt assemblies (provided by others) Substructure includes:
- Ground beams
- Lift, escalator and service Pits
- Basements (secant piles & walls)
- Ground slabs and precast planks
- Existing concrete deck demolition and reconstruction
- Existing ground beams and pile caps demolition Concrete works include:
- Grouting for Holding Down bolt assem-

blies (provided by others)

- In-situ reinforced concrete works to metal decking (installed by others)
- Masonry block walls
- Adaptation / local demolition of existing concrete structures to tie in new works

Contractors are expected to have:

- relevant experience
- financial strength
- health & safety record
- skilled labour
- commitment

The winning contractors will have to liaise with BAM Nuttall who was awarded a contract

for a new 75,000 m2 concrete deck extension. Martin Bellamy, BAM Nuttall Executive Director said: "We are delighted that BAM have been selected to deliver such a major marine civil engineering project that draws on our relevant expertise and experience. This scheme will play a significant part in the overall Airport Development Programme and will support the planned infrastructure such as the aircraft stands and new world class passenger terminal extension. We are looking forward to successfully delivering this prestigious project, working alongside London City Airport and Bechtel."

More details on pre qualification and procurement is available here <https://public.huddle.com/a/vgMONyz/index.html>

Rules

Prompt Payments

There is a significant improvement in payment performance but problem still exists. Late payment practices put pressure on small businesses every year. One council only process over 150,000 invoices a year and trade with thousands of suppliers. Best practice on prompt payment compliance ensures projects profitability and resources efficiency.

Local councils are required by law to ensure suppliers are paid within 30 days. However, accord-

ing to the recent research by Freedom of Information (FOI) submitted by the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA), a majority of local councils were in breach of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 – the directive that sets out the payment standards by which public bodies are expected to abide by.

The law requires the construction industry employers to pay within 30 days while all contracts awarded by a council have to contain suitable provisions. According to the research, approximately 59 per cent of all local councils have no monitoring that would help to ensure this limit was being met. Moreover, over a quarter of all local authorities "have not and will not" be building in contractual requirements to supply chain processes to ensure prompt payment to businesses.

Late payments impact heavily the small busi-

nesses and according to the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in England and Wales the payment disputes cost SMEs about £11.6bn every year.

Paul Reeve, the ECA's director of business and external affairs, comments: "Our survey shows that many local authorities continue to ignore the legal requirements for prompt public sector payment along the supply chain. It's particularly disappointing when one considers that doing so would support small businesses in local areas.

Reeve added: "We have seen next to no improvement among many local councils since the ECA conducted a similar investigation last year. The government has issued regulations to help smaller businesses, but they are being viewed as optional by far too many councils, and too many are opting out."



The UK government directs efforts to create more prospects for SMEs for instance by boosting the public procurement opportunities for small firms, with a target to spend £1 in every £3 with small businesses by 2020. Due to the collapse of the construction giant Carillion, many of SMEs lost work and funds. The Government introduced the new measures to fine companies who do not follow the fair payment practices. If the company will fail to pay its subcontractors or supply chain on time, it will be excluded from procuring on public projects. Small businesses will have an access to report poor

payment performance of their employers.

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) chairman Mike Cherry said: "Responding to the release of the Central Government spend with SMEs data, Federation of Small Businesses National Chairman, Mike Cherry, said: "Government is wasting taxpayers money when just hiring big firms. The latest drop in Central Government small business spend shows urgent action is needed."

"These figures are unacceptable and reaffirms the belief that small businesses face a fixed procurement system which is preventing them getting

a fair share of public contracts. Government must do more to reach its promise of increasing procurement spend with SMEs to 33% by 2020."

"Every Government department must increase value for money through opening up public procurement to more small businesses. Smaller firms need to be given every chance to compete and secure public contract opportunities. Opening up the public service market is a win-win for everyone involved in the supply chain because when small businesses are used effectively, they are able to create jobs and growth."

(Source: FSB)



Building materials stockpiling

The UK Government has recently took measures to stockpile on essential food supplies, medicines and blood products in order to be able to provide the essential services in case of no deal Brexit. The negotiations on trade are still ongoing but their results are not clear and as the deadline is closer the preventive steps are taken by some of the construction companies. Building industry is preparing to stockpile materials to ensure the continuity of their services and projects delivery.

The building industry has been volatile and might suffer from material shortages. The no deal Brexit might cause huge shortages of materials imported from the EU. Currently the UK orders approximately 60% of building supplies from the EU.

The CEO of United Living has recently shared his concerns about the probability of hard Brexit with blocked borders and no supply from the EU, saying that the construction giant will stock up

materials to be prepared for the worst scenario. The UK Government is starting the preparations for major disruption at UK borders if Britain leaves the EU on 29th March 2019 without a deal. There will be a transition period till 2020 but it is not clear if trade agreements will be honoured after March 2019. The weaker pound is already making importing materials more expensive, but no deal Brexit might affect the availability of supplies

for builder's merchants. Most of the UK building materials manufacturers are part of international groups what will have impact on the materials supply after Brexit. For instance, approximately 85% of all imported clay and cement comes from the EU.

Currently, SMEs are experiencing the increasing prices but trying to secure the best deals for their projects by stockpiling materials.



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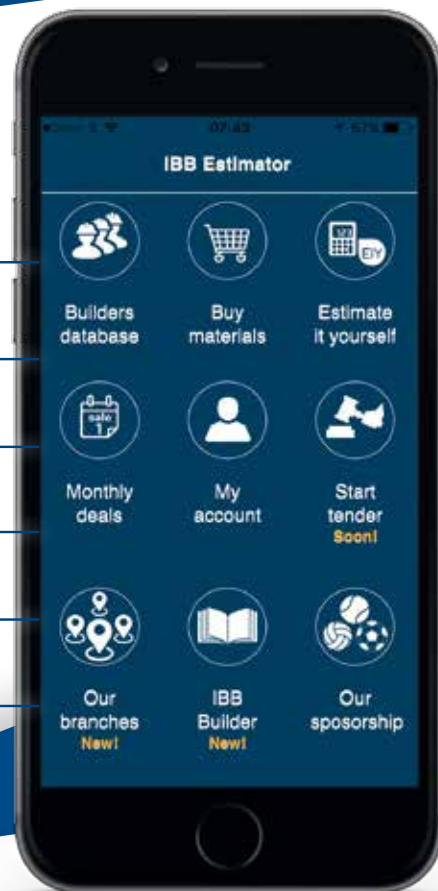
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National Planning Policy Framework

The revised National Planning Policy Framework sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

On the 24th July, the Government published the revised National Planning Policy Framework. It replaces the previous edition from March 2012.

The new NPPF focuses on:

- promoting high-quality design for new homes and places
- protection of the environment
- building the right amount of homes in the appropriate places
- requiring greater responsibility and accountability of councils and developers

It is the result of the consultation launched by Prime Minister Theresa May in May 2018 with the aim to maximise the use of land, increase Green Belt protections and convert planning permissions into built homes.

The updated framework will empower councils to promote better design and quality. Councils will be able to refuse planning permission for any development that does not priorities design quality and fits to its surroundings. Councils will be able to use the new 'rulebook' to calculate the housing need for their community, and deliver more housing when it is most needed. In November 2018, a Housing Delivery Test will be available to help increase the number of homes delivered in the area. This new framework will put impact also on the environment protection by aligning the planning system with De-fra's 25-year Environment Plan.

Secretary of State for Communities, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said; "Fundamental to building the homes our country needs is ensuring that our planning system is fit for the future. This revised planning framework sets out our vision of a planning system that delivers the homes we need. I am clear that quantity must never compromise the quality of what is built, and this is reflected in the new rules."

On the other hand, the NFB chief executive Richard Beresford commented that; "The government has missed a golden opportunity to put this country on the road to addressing its housing crisis and solving the broken housing market."

The revised NPPF is available here https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf





Relaxed lending terms for construction sector

Barclays decided to double the maximum amount of unsecured business loan for SMEs in the construction sector from 50,000 GBP to 100,000 GBP.

This option might allow business owners to avoid using their business premises or homes as a security. This unsecured loan is easy to apply and available in the account within days. The faster access to finance allows for quicker investment decisions what will also boost the economy.

The expansion of unsecured lending adds to Barclays' already class-leading unsecured lending offering, whereby 250,000 Barclays SME clients can see pre-assessed lending limits of up to £25,000 via mobile and online banking, which they can apply for digitally, often receiving the cash that day. It is more



than 40,000 of these businesses that have been identified as eligible to apply for up to £100,000.

The recent survey of SMEs carried out by Barclays resulted in the following findings:

- 12% of those construction businesses surveyed said that they had lost out in the past because they could not get a loan or funding fast enough.
- 13% of construction business owners admitted they'd be more likely to apply for a loan if they could get a decision within 24 hours.

- 52% of construction business owners said they would be deterred from taking a substantial loan out against their home
- 27% admitted they would rather pay a slightly higher interest rate than have to use their home as security.

Loan applicants will be able to get the decision within 24 hours and have the money in their account within 5 working days.

Ian Rand, chief executive of Barclays Business Banking, said: "Many people think taking a business loan is stressful, or are put off by the per-

ceived bureaucracy and time involved. At Barclays, we are tackling this head-on, making small business lending faster, simpler and easier. Finance can be particularly valuable in the construction sector, allowing firms to take on larger contracts or invest in equipment, for example. It can help them compete and grow."

Moreover, Barclays is increasing the maximum unsecured overdraft for business lending from £25,000 to £50,000, what will help firms take on larger projects or deal with unexpected increases in business.