



# A GUIDE TO ORGANISING A CONSTRUCTION SITE VISIT



## OVERVIEW

This guide has been written with two audiences in mind: those who are intending to host a construction site visit and those who are intending to visit a construction site.

Construction companies are very experienced in receiving visitors on site, although some may not be as experienced in receiving visits from schools, colleges or groups of people outside of the industry.

This guide assumes it will be a group visit and sets out some

guidance for the host construction company (which is referred to throughout as the 'host' and the visiting organisation or group which is referred to as the 'visitor').

By understanding each other's roles and responsibilities during the planning and delivery stages, it is hoped that the site visit will be more meaningful for both parties and will strengthen links between them.

**Please note:** This guide does not cover every detail of a site visit but is intended to act as a vehicle for discussion between the host construction company and the visitor. It is the responsibility of both parties to ensure procedural and legal compliance.

## Why are site visits important?

Having a skilled and talented workforce is essential to the productivity and competitiveness of the construction industry. The sector needs to attract and retain a flow of people into the industry so that they have the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. Engagement with industry can inspire and raise the aspirations of the future workforce and those struggling to secure employment (see Appendix 3).

Site visits provide construction companies with a 'shop window' from which they can give visitors and potential new entrants an insight into the skills, attitudes and varied career opportunities that the sector has to offer.

## Who do I contact to organise a site visit?

Construction companies have different levels of personnel so it can be difficult to know who to contact to arrange a site visit. Job titles may differ but you could ask for the:

- education and community co-ordinator
- learning/training and development manager
- community engagement co-ordinator
- strategic inclusion and community manager
- construction director
- site manager.





## Who do I contact to offer a site visit?

If you would like to offer a construction site visit you could try the following people who might work in a school or college:

- the head/assistant head teacher
- the business liaison manager
- the careers adviser/teacher
- the employer engagement co-ordinator
- the enterprise and employability co-ordinator.

Other groups that may value a site visit include:

- teachers
- career information advice and guidance (CIAG) co-ordinators
- parents
- unemployed people (working with Jobcentre Plus)
- youth/Scout/Guide/cadet groups.

## Purpose of the visit

Both the host and visitor need to be clear about the site visit's:

- purpose
- expectations
- limitations.

## Planning

Each party should nominate a co-ordinator to ensure smooth and consistent communications throughout the planning, delivery and review stages of the visit.

Larger construction companies may have personnel that can meet the visitor face-to-face but telephone and email confirmation is often all that is needed for a successful visit. Ultimately, the site manager is responsible for all visitors to site and will therefore need to agree any plans.

Site managers will need to know:

- Who will be visiting, e.g. are they a group of adults or students from a college or school?
- What is expected of them, e.g. do they need to prepare a range of people to talk about their various roles on site?
- Where on site will the group need to be taken to best meet the objectives of the visit?
- When they will be visiting. Agree the date and times of the visit.
- Why they are visiting. Understanding the aims and objectives for the visit will help the host to meet the expectations of the visitor, e.g. the visitors may want to learn more about sustainable materials.

A site visit arrangements sheet (Appendix 2) can be copied and shared with the site manager.

## Activities

Onsite activities should be:

- agreed with the site manager
- safe
- relevant
- achievable in the time allocated.

If any individuals have special needs, their additional arrangements should be discussed and agreed before the visit takes place.

The maximum number of visitors, including group supervisors, should be specified by the host. This can sometimes depend on the amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) available; however most sites will accommodate approximately 10 to 15 visitors at a time.

Each company will have its own procedures for organising site visits, but we have provided a checklist of considerations that may be useful (see Appendix 1).





## Health and safety requirements

Health and safety legislation does not prevent site visits. Visitors are expected to comply with basic site rules and will be escorted by a responsible person throughout the visit.

Individual sites will refer to their own procedures but in most cases visitors to a site can expect to:

- sign in and out
- pay attention to any safety briefings
- wear appropriate footwear and PPE
- comply with all instructions given by the host
- maintain a level of courtesy and good behaviour.

For further information, visit the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Sometimes visiting groups will be able to provide their own PPE, especially if they are studying for a construction and built environment course, so it's worth clarifying from the outset who will provide PPE.

## Public relations and photographs

During the planning stage, arrangements and permissions for the use of photographs and media coverage can help the host to set up a suitable photo opportunity, and the visitor can ensure that photographic permissions are sought according to their own safeguarding policies. A public relations guide can be found in Appendix 4 and an example of a press release in Appendix 5. The visitor should seek permission from the host if photographs taken during the visit are to be used in the public domain.

## Evaluation

It is advisable for both the host and the visitor to review and evaluate the site visit when it ends to determine if the aims and objectives were met and to discuss areas of improvement.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1 – Pre-site planning checklist**

**Appendix 2 – Site visit arrangements sheet**

**Appendix 3 – Benefits of a site visit**

**Appendix 4 – Public relations guide**

**Appendix 5 – Example press release**

**Appendix 6 – Suggestions to make the most of a site visit**

# APPENDIX 1

## PRE-SITE PLANNING CHECKLIST

This checklist should be used in conjunction with, and not as an alternative to, your own policies and procedures.

### HOST

Nominate a co-ordinator

Where possible, arrange a pre-site meeting with the visitor to discuss planning arrangements

Agree that you can meet the visitor's aims and objectives for the visit

Agree the site visit date and time with the visitor

Discuss appropriate risk assessment documentation with the visitor

Agree a time plan/itinerary for the site visit

Identify the relevant people to assist during the site visit

Discuss any publicity arrangements with the visitor

Check permissions from the principal contractor/client and write a press release if applicable

Agree provision of PPE

Agree refreshment arrangements if applicable

Arrange branded promotional freebies if appropriate

Evaluate the visit

### VISITOR

Nominate a co-ordinator

Where possible, arrange a pre-site meeting with the host to discuss planning arrangements

Discuss your aims and objectives for the visit

Agree the site visit date and time with the co-ordinator and/or site manager

Discuss appropriate risk assessment documentation with the host

Agree a time plan/itinerary for the site visit

Check location and parking details

Discuss any publicity arrangements with the host and write a press release if applicable

Provide the host with written permissions for photographs to be used

Agree provision of PPE

Agree refreshment arrangements if applicable

Prepare a letter of thanks

Evaluate the visit



# APPENDIX 2

## SITE VISIT ARRANGEMENTS SHEET

This sheet can be copied and an editable version is available on the Go Construct website.

Construction (host) co-ordinator:		Site details:	Site manager:		
Name:		Project name:	Name:		
Position:		Address:	Tel:		
Tel:			Email:		
Email:		Location map/parking details available? Yes/No			
		Sat Nav postcode?			
Visitor co-ordinator:		Visitor details:			
Name:		Organisation:			
Position:		Address:			
Tel:					
Email:		Location map/parking details required? Yes/No			
<b>Date of visit:</b>		<b>Total number of visitors:</b>	<b>Additional access arrangements:</b>		
<b>Time of visit:</b>					
<b>Purpose of visit:</b>					
<b>Itinerary and route details:</b> (Use separate sheet if necessary)					
Host co-ordinator checklist:		Site manager checklist:	Visitor checklist:		
Refreshments organised	<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk assessments completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Names and boot sizes obtained	<input type="checkbox"/>
PR permissions obtained	<input type="checkbox"/>	PPE ordered	<input type="checkbox"/>	Photo consent forms completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photography arrangements made	<input type="checkbox"/>	Site people identified	<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk assessments completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Branded freebies available	<input type="checkbox"/>	Route/agenda of site visit planned	<input type="checkbox"/>	Travel arrangements made	<input type="checkbox"/>

# APPENDIX 3

## BENEFITS OF A SITE VISIT

### BENEFITS TO INDUSTRY

Demonstrate corporate social responsibility and raise your profile in the community

An opportunity to help address skills shortages and workforce requirements

Engage with the visitors. Help influence their interests and future career

Reach out to under-represented groups who may not consider a career in construction

An opportunity to dispel myths and challenge negative views of the industry

Better understanding of the community from which you may be recruiting

Staff development in communication and presentation skills

An opportunity to showcase new technologies and processes in the industry through your project

Gain publicity for your company, which could include newsletters and features in the local or regional press

### BENEFITS TO VISITORS

Better understanding of the construction process and new technologies in the industry

Better understanding of the range of career opportunities through positive role models

Develop a greater understanding and positive attitude towards the construction industry

Bringing learning to life for schools and colleges. Showing how subjects are applied and valued in the workplace

Enriching learning experiences and making links to science, technology, engineering and maths

Adding a 'real life' context for those interested in a career in the industry

Adding value to schools and colleges offering construction and built environment courses

An opportunity to see the development of the local area via a 'live' construction site

Improved links and contacts for work experience or other support such as mentoring

# APPENDIX 4

## PUBLIC RELATIONS GUIDE

A good local story is one that features a place, individual, group or event that is directly relevant to the area that the paper or radio station covers, and that tells them something their audience doesn't already know. Remember that the most crucial part of the word 'news' is 'new'.

Reflect on what is newsworthy. For example is this the first time this type of construction has taken place in the community. Is this construction project generating jobs/apprenticeships?

Here are some examples of types of stories that would work well:

- New construction projects being announced in the town or city.
- An unusual school class or activity.
- One-off activities happening in the area.
- Awards received by college or school pupils.

### Photographs for media – hints and tips

A good photograph can often be a key factor in deciding whether or not a story gets published, so it's important to get photography right.

- Local newspapers do not favour photos of big groups. They want their readers to be able to see everyone in the images clearly. Photos featuring more than 15 people will stand less of a chance of being published than a smaller group.
- Action shots are preferable to people standing in a line up – try to introduce some movement or action into the image.
- Try to make your photos look as natural as possible.

In addition, there are also some technical points you will need to bear in mind:

- Photos for local newspapers must be accompanied by captions that give the names of everyone in the picture, or they may be rejected. Job titles are helpful too.
- Make it clear to people at any event that photos taken there may be sent to the media or used on social media.
- You will need to get consent for print and/or digital publication from the people in the photographs.
- Local media usually prefer digital images rather than prints. If you are taking the pictures yourself on a digital camera, set it to the highest resolution setting.
- For newspapers and magazines, photos need to be at least 1800 x 1200 pixels; however, 2400 x 1600 pixels is preferred. You will need to use at least a three megapixel camera. Images for websites do not need to be high definition.
- Save your photos as jpeg ('filename.jpg') or tif files ('filename.tif'). These are the two main types of digital images used by newspapers and magazines.

# APPENDIX 5

## AN EXAMPLE OF A PRESS RELEASE

### Joe Blogg's Homes opens its doors during National Apprenticeship Week

Joe Blogg's Homes, an independent house builder in the North West, is giving local college students a fantastic opportunity to see its Craig Close housing development on Tuesday 14th March.

As the construction industry gears up to deliver more homes, schools and offices, it needs to build a smarter and greener infrastructure. More than ever, construction needs to inspire and win over the most talented young people to help meet these challenges.

During the site tour the students will learn at first-hand about some of the practical and specific ecological considerations at this site. They will also have the opportunity to see the construction journey from groundworks through to a completed show home. The students will see many of the different job roles in action and learn about the skill requirements on this development.

**Jane Doe, construction director at Joe Blogg's Homes, said:** *"We're hoping the site tour will be a great success for the students who come. I've been in the business for over twenty years and had a really successful career in the industry so I'm looking forward to sharing my story with them. As the demand for house building is growing, we are starting to see skills shortages emerge and that's definitely not going to be good for business or the economy. We want to show these young people that construction is open for business and can offer them a secure and financially rewarding career."*

Careers advisors from Career Aid will also be on hand to give advice about trade apprenticeships, higher level apprenticeships and sponsored degree programmes within the construction industry.

**Sarah Moon, careers advisor at Career Aid, said:** *"We're really looking forward to the event; National Apprenticeship Week is always a great time to educate people on the value of apprenticeships. We recognise that parents have a big influence in the choices young people make, so by inviting them along to the site too, we hope to show them what great career prospects are available to their sons and daughters."*

***Inserted date, time and address of the site visit***

***-ENDS-***

***Additional inserted information about Joe Blogg's Homes***

***Additional inserted information about National Apprenticeship Week***

# APPENDIX 6

## SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE THE MOST OF A SITE VISIT

**A live site is a busy site, so onsite activities may not be possible. These suggestions are not age specific.**

### Design/technology

- Identify the different materials being used on site.
- How many things are made from wood, concrete, steel etc.?
- Identify plant (machinery) and equipment being used.
- Sketch or draw plans, elevations, layouts etc.
- Study the programme of works to see the order of construction tasks.
- Find out what building information modelling (BIM) is.

### Maths

- Count the number of bricks, tiles, window frames etc.
- It may be possible to measure things onsite.
- Calculate the quantity of bricks, blocks, skirting board, pipework etc.
- Find out the value of the project.

### Environmental

- Find out what environmental surveys were done before planning.
- Find out what measures have been taken to protect the local natural wildlife habitats.
- Find out about the benefits of any renewables being used.
- Find out how the company disposes of its waste.
- Identify materials that come from sustainable sources.

### Careers

- Identify different job roles on the site.
- Find out which job roles take place in an office environment, and which have a mix of office and onsite responsibilities.
- Conduct short interviews with people in key roles in professional, management and craft occupations.
- Find out about the qualifications needed to become a [job role].
- Find out if there are apprentices being trained on site.
- Find out how the company recruits new staff.

### Health and safety

- Identify items of PPE and the people who wear it.
- Explore the difference in safety signs (e.g. warning, mandatory, hazard, safe procedure).
- Identify hazards and the control measures taken to mitigate them.

Please also see the [Go Construct Site Visit Workbook](#) for ideas.

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