

Apprenticeship programme falls short says BCIS chief economist

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BCIS, the leading independent provider of cost data to the built environment, has responded to the [government's announcement](#) to create 5,000 additional construction apprenticeships annually and establish 32 Homebuilding Skills Hubs across England.

Dr David Crosthwaite, chief economist at the [Building Cost Information Service](#) (BCIS), said: "On the face of it, the increase in available construction apprenticeships seems like a positive move, although it will take some time to make a material difference on-site.

"Indeed, halving the time taken to become "fully qualified" may reduce the dropout rate, which is particularly high in construction apprenticeships.

"However, one has to ask, how can what once took twice as long, now be delivered in half-the time? Are there going to be quality issues as a result of shortening the training period?

"In terms of the numbers, 5,000 apprenticeships a year will not be enough to cover those expected to retire/leave the industry annually, so at best, this is not adding additional workers to an industry that has seen close to 350,000 leave the sector over the last five years.

"In my opinion, this initiative will not have a major impact on the realisation of 1.5 million new homes over the next five years, as promised by the government."