

Bricklayer shortage worsens UK housebuilding crisis

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A housing crisis in the UK is being exacerbated by a shortage of bricklayers. Britain needs to build more homes to enable young people to get on the housing ladder and to end the scourge of homelessness. Soaring rents and a lack of affordable housing have greatly increased rough sleeping. Successive governments over decades have failed to meet their housebuilding targets. The latest government's efforts are being hindered by a shortfall of qualified bricklayers and other skilled tradespeople. The UK needs an extra 25,000 bricklayers, 3,000 plumbers, 4,000 plasterers, 10,000 carpenters, and 3,000 new electricians to meet its pledge to build 1.5 million new homes.

The UK government has blamed the deficit in construction worker numbers on "years of underinvestment in skills". A housing ministry official said her department was doing its utmost to build 300,000 new homes a year. Another spokesperson added: "We will pull every lever to deliver on our commitment, which includes building a diverse workforce." However, Colin Brown, a housebuilding consultant, called the government's home construction pledge "unrealistic". He said training sufficient numbers of workers could take "a generation". He added that the current target of adding 5,000 new apprenticeships each year was "fanciful" and a "drop in the ocean".

Sources: crisis.org.uk / [express.co.uk](https://www.express.co.uk) / [msn.com](https://www.msn.com)

Writing

All houses should be built and sold by governments to keep prices low.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

housing crisis / bricklayers / the housing ladder / homelessness / targets / carpenters / deficit / construction / skills / new homes / a diverse workforce / a drop in the ocean

True / False

- 1) Bricklayers in the UK are helping to solve a housing crisis. T / F
- 2) Young people are using ladders to get into housing. T / F
- 3) Only the current government has failed to meet housebuilding targets. T / F
- 4) The UK needs tens of thousands of new tradespeople to build homes. T / F
- 5) There hasn't been enough investment in skills in the UK for many years. T / F
- 6) An official said the government would do its best to build new homes. T / F
- 7) A housing expert said the government's promises were unrealistic. T / F
- 8) The UK government wants to build new homes near the ocean. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. crisis | a. evil |
| 2. build | b. objective |
| 3. scourge | c. dearth |
| 4. lack | d. best |
| 5. rough sleeping | e. construct |
| 6. utmost | f. enough |
| 7. commitment | g. imaginary |
| 8. sufficient | h. promise |
| 9. target | i. emergency |
| 10. fanciful | j. homelessness |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What should governments do to invest in skills?
- c) How important is it to get on the housing ladder?
- d) Do you always believe government promises?
- e) What do you think of apprenticeships?
- f) What do you think of your home?
- g) What will homes be like in the future?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a bricklayer?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. exacerbated by | a. in skills |
| 2. enable young people to get on | b. workforce |
| 3. end the scourge | c. to build |
| 4. government's efforts are being | d. of homelessness |
| 5. meet its pledge | e. lever to deliver |
| 6. years of underinvestment | f. a shortage of bricklayers |
| 7. We will pull every | g. in the ocean |
| 8. a diverse | h. hindered |
| 9. training sufficient | i. the housing ladder |
| 10. a drop | j. numbers of workers |

Discussion – Student B

- What causes a housing crisis?
- What problems are there with housing in your country?
- How important are bricklayers?
- How can we end homelessness?
- What do you think of there being so much rough sleeping?
- How can governments get the numbers of skilled people they need?
- Would you rather be a carpenter or a bricklayer?
- What advice do you have for someone who cannot buy a house?

Spelling

- bcxataeedre by a shortage of bricklayers
- end the gesucor of homelessness
- a lack of adalfrofeb housing
- eivsseucsc governments
- 3,000 new isielectcran
- its elpedg to build 1.5 million new homes
- the efiicdt in construction worker numbers
- doing its uostmt to build
- pull every eelrv to deliver on our commitment
- building a eevisrd workforce
- training ntceifusif numbers of workers
- new apprenticeships each year was afcfiunl

Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. e	3. a	4. c	5. j
6. d	7. h	8. f	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Teacher

You think the job of a teacher is the most important job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): carpenter, farmer or soldier.

Role B – Carpenter

You think the job of a carpenter is the most important job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): teacher, farmer or soldier.

Role C – Farmer

You think the job of a farmer is the most important job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): carpenter, teacher or soldier.

Role D – Soldier

You think the job of a soldier is the most important job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't as important. Also, tell the others which is the least important of these (and why): carpenter, farmer or teacher.

Speaking – Jobs

Rank these with your partner. Put the most important jobs at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| • Teacher | • Chef |
| • Carpenter | • AI coder |
| • Soldier | • Farmer |
| • Nurse | • President |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	T	7	T	8	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.