



# Apprenticeships in the historic environment sector

Examining employer interest and barriers to implementation

Aisling Nash

Alison James



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Volume 1 of 1

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## **MSDS Heritage**

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## Summary

Over a number of years, the Historic Environment Trailblazer group, chaired by Historic England, developed six Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards in response to the skills shortage reported by companies within the sector. However, to date, these apprenticeships have only been offered in low numbers.

In 2023, MSDS Heritage was commissioned by Historic England to investigate the reasons behind this low take up of apprenticeships by employers. Throughout the first quarter of 2023, MSDS Heritage conducted a survey of employers from across the heritage sector to determine the barriers to employers offering the apprenticeship scheme. In addition to employers, a survey of early career individuals was also carried out in an attempt to get the perspective of individuals within the first five years of their heritage career. Following the survey, a series of interviews were also held with employers to gain further details of their view of the apprenticeship scheme and what prevents their own organisations offering them.

The results of both the quantitative and qualitative data collection determined that while employers view apprenticeships in a positive light, there are a number of barriers which need to be overcome before companies, particularly micro and small to medium businesses, feel confident in offering apprenticeships. Many of these barriers can be regarded as relatively easy to overcome but there are some which can be viewed as more systemic and therefore more difficult to resolve.

## Contributors

The author is Aisling Nash with contributions from Alison James and Philip Pollard of Historic England.

## Acknowledgements

The assistance provided by Philip Pollard of Historic England is gratefully acknowledged. We would also like to thank those people who completed both surveys and the organisations and individuals who took part in the interviews.

Front cover image: The first ever cohort of Historic Environment Advice Assistant apprentices learning field survey skills with David Etheredge of Strode College. © Historic England

## Archive location

Historic England Archive.

## Date of research

Research was carried out between December 2022 and February 2023. Analysis and recommendations were compiled in April 2023.

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## Introduction

Historic England (HE) is the public body that helps people care for, enjoy and celebrate England's spectacular historic environment. The support they give to others in the sector is a core part of their work, and as such 'build/develop sector capacity and capability to make the most of the historic environment' is a key activity in their 2022-23 corporate plan.

As part of this work, Historic England have chaired the Historic Environment Trailblazer, which has developed six brand new formal Apprenticeship Standards for those working in heritage occupations; at levels 3, 4 and 7. These Standards were approved between 2018 and 2019; however, at present only four have seen take up by the sector with low numbers of apprentice starts (approx. 45 overall).

Historic England recently commissioned research into provision of formal training programmes for apprenticeships; to understand barriers and opportunities for increasing apprenticeship training provision. One of the outcomes of this research is that there was demand from training providers for promotion and awareness-raising activities, to bring apprenticeships to the forefront of employer consideration. This research also provided some suggestions from training providers as to why employers were not taking up apprenticeships; this included the impact of COVID-19 but also noted an overarching period of change for SMEs, and that larger employers to be more likely to express interest but consider the constraints of project and business workflows to inhibit their ability to commit to actual starts.

Historic England commissioned MSDS Heritage in November 2022 to carry out research to determine the reasons behind the low take up of the Historic Environment Trailblazer apprenticeship standards. The principal aim of the project was to build on the initial research carried out to date with a focus on the occupational areas of archaeology, conservation and heritage advice. Using a variety of methods, feedback from employers was gathered on their thoughts with regards to the current apprenticeship offers and the barriers that may exist which prevent a greater take up of apprenticeships within the sector.



## Methodology

The project comprised two main stages; data collection followed by analysis and reporting. The methodology for these is expanded upon below.

### Data Collection

The project employed a hybrid method of data collection which included both qualitative and quantitative data collection. The data collection focussed primarily on the three occupational areas of archaeology, conservation (built and object) and historic environment advice. The data collection did not specifically reference these occupational areas but rather gathered data from across all areas.

### Review of previous research and alternative training programmes

Previous research has been carried out on the formal training programmes for apprenticeships and also on the impact of the Kickstart Scheme. As part of the data collection phase, this previous research was reviewed to determine if any of the data collected could contribute to answering the aims and objectives of this project.

In addition, a rapid review of alternative training programmes in the sector was carried out. An audit of such training programmes was outside the scope of this project and as such, this review relied on accessing existing data held by professional bodies or other representative bodies.

### Surveys

To gather quantitative data, two short online surveys were run between 9th January and the 17th February 2023. These surveys were targeted at two key audiences within the heritage sector: employers and early careers archaeologists. While the focus of the project is on employers, the project team felt that it would also be beneficial to include early career archaeologists to get the perspective of this audience in relation to their experiences entering the profession via different pathways.

The surveys were created online using Microsoft Forms and were designed to be completed within a short period of time with a range of answer options including single answers, multiple choice and free text options.

Both surveys were promoted in a variety of ways as outlined in the communications plan to maximise the response rate. Links to both surveys were shared via a number of social media channels including:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- LinkedIn

The posts were shared by multiple accounts including those of MSDS Heritage, Historic England, the Historic Environment Forum, ClfA, ICON, the British Archaeological Jobs Resource (BAJR) group and the Mentoring Women in Archaeology and Heritage (MWAH) group, as well as by many individuals both connected with the project and externally.

The project design proposed to run a Twitter #HeritageChat session with the Historic Environment Forum (HEF) as an interactive way of engaging a wider audience. Just before the project commenced, the HEF suspended the #HeritageChat sessions to carry out a review of the way it is used and engaged with. This unfortunately meant that this could not be utilised during the project and additional social media posts were undertaken as a result.

In addition to using social media, a request to complete and share the employer's survey to existing heritage networks was sent to a range of organisations categorised according to the following groups:

- Employer representative groups
- Professional bodies
- Employers who expressed an interest but did not take up apprenticeships
- Historic Environment Advice Assistant apprentice employers
- Archaeology Level 7 apprentice employers
- Archaeology Level 3 apprentice employers
- Conservation Level 7 apprentice employers

## Interviews

The employer's survey included an additional question to ask if the organisation would be willing to take part in a follow-up interview. This provided a self-selected sample of interviewees from across the sector to facilitate the collection of qualitative data and proved to be reasonably successful in terms of providing a cross section of employers.

The employers who responded positively to this question were contacted after completion of the survey and interviews (unrecorded) were held online via Microsoft Teams from December 2022 through to February 2023.

In order to ensure consistency and transparency, each interview followed the same process:

- The interview questions were shared with interviewees at the beginning of the meeting using the Teams screen sharing facility.
- As the interview progressed, the member of the project team conducting the interview made notes of the answers provided which were shared in real time via the screen sharing function.
- After each meeting, the interview notes were checked by the project team and sent to each individual for review. Interviewees were requested to make any additions or edits to the notes as needed to ensure that they were a fair representation of their comments.
- Individuals were also asked to confirm if they wanted their comments to remain anonymous or if they were happy for them to be attributable where they have been quoted in the report.

## Data Collation and Analysis

Once the survey window was closed, the results of both surveys were downloaded as Excel spreadsheets. Extraneous information was excluded from the surveys such as the time and date of completion with the filters applied to the results. These filters were then used to create a series of statistics which could be presented in chart format to determine if any patterns or key findings could be made.

As the interview responses were qualitative in nature, a different approach to analysis was used which took the form of a thematic analysis. This type of analysis involved the identification of common themes for each question across all interviews which were collated within an Excel spreadsheet. This collation enabled key themes to be identified which are discussed in Section 8 below.

## Review of Previous Research

Previous research on the formal training programmes for apprenticeships has been carried out in addition to research on the impact of the Kickstart Scheme. A review of this research has been carried out to determine if any of the findings may be applicable to the outcomes of this project.

### Historic Environment Advice Assistant Apprenticeship Scheme

Historic England piloted its own Historic Environment Advice Assistant (HEAA) Level 4 Apprenticeship programme with recruitment of a total of 11 apprentices programme across all of the Historic England regions. Six of these were new-hire apprentices with five apprentices termed as 'Upskillers' i.e., existing members of staff.

Historic England commissioned Wavehill Ltd in February 2020 to carry out an evaluation of this HEAA apprenticeship pilot and also invited a Government Internal Audit Agency audit of the pilot project. While this evaluation focussed on key elements of how the apprenticeship programme performed internally at Historic England, there are aspects of the findings which bear a relationship to the findings of this report discussed in later sections.

Line managers and mentors for the apprentices were recruited from existing staff within each region in order to support apprentices. Training was provided to these line managers and mentors prior to the commencement of the apprenticeship which took the form of a webinar and a one-day training event taking place during the delivery period. Whilst this training was needed, it has been reported during the evaluation that the resource and specialist skills required to provide support to apprentices was greater than originally envisaged<sup>1</sup>. This is echoed in the findings of this report with some responses indicating a concern with not having the staff capacity to effectively train and support apprentices to provide a well-rounded experience.

Another issue which was identified during the evaluation was concerns raised by both line managers and mentors regarding the lack of guidance and timely information sharing from the training provider and the HEAA Apprenticeship Programme Team. This is linked to ongoing issues reported by the apprentices about the clarity and understanding that all

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<sup>1</sup> Government Internal Audit Agency: Historic England Heritage Apprenticeships, Final Internal Audit Report, March 2022 (unpublished)

involved had about the process, practice and coverage of the apprenticeship assessment.<sup>2</sup> This is reflected in some of the responses in both the employer's survey and interviews where organisations have employed apprentices. These responses are principally related to the lack of a clear definition of the role of both the employer and training provider and slow communication, particularly at the point of assessment.

## Historic Environment Apprenticeships – Training Provision Research

During the latter half of 2021, Drakon Heritage carried out research with stakeholders to examine the current training provision for heritage apprenticeships, to understand the barriers and opportunities for increasing apprenticeship training provision and to consider what Historic England might do to support apprenticeship take up either as a training provider or otherwise.

While this focussed principally on training providers, a number of key points identified during this research can be seen to be reflected in the responses collated in this project.<sup>3</sup> The conclusions which relate to this current project include:

- There is little appetite for Historic England to become a training provider although it was recognised that Historic England has specialist strengths which could be valuable to apprenticeship training should an appropriate model be developed to allow this expertise to be shared.
- Training providers would like Historic England to take more of a promotion/awareness-raising role in order to bring apprenticeships to the forefront of employers and highlight the commercial benefits of apprenticeships.
- Historic England should provide a hub of resources and guidance which aims to support employers in taking up apprenticeships. This would include creating networks and facilitating employer and training provider liaison.

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<sup>2</sup> Wavehill Social and Economic Research: Historic Environment Advice Assistant (HEAA) Apprenticeship Programme Evaluation, April 2022 (unpublished)

<sup>3</sup> Butterworth, J., Historic Environment Apprenticeships – Training Provision Research Summary, July 2022 (unpublished)

- The research found that the commercial archaeology sub-sector is undergoing a period of change which is related to an upturn in construction and linked to a shortage of skills. At the time the research was carried out, this increased workflow had not translated to apprenticeship starts.

## Historic England Kickstart Gateway: The Cross-Organisational Partnership Research Project

The UK Government Kickstart Scheme facilitated 6-month grant funded work placements for 16–24-year-olds on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment. As part of the scheme, organisations could apply to become Gateways to assist other organisations to access and recruit to the Kickstart scheme. In March 2021, Historic England was successful in becoming one of these Gateway organisations.

The Cross-Organisation Partnership research project was undertaken by a group of Kickstart participants within the Historic England Gateway to explore how young people currently find routes into employment within the heritage sector together with the efficacy of youth public engagement within the sector.

The research reached a number of conclusions which are relevant to this project<sup>4</sup> as the key findings echo, at least in part, some of the results of the early careers survey carried out as part of this project. These findings include:

- Lack of awareness of opportunities or guidance on how to take on a career in heritage.
- The issue of low pay within the sector has become even more significant with the cost-of-living crisis currently being experienced within the UK.
- The Kickstart placement scheme allowed people to enter the sector who otherwise would not have. The same conclusion could also be drawn for the Historic Environment apprenticeships.
- There is also an issue regarding the fact that young people from deprived areas are far less likely to engage with heritage than those in more affluent areas. While not necessarily directly related to this project, it does outline a systemic problem within the sector.

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<sup>4</sup> Sobolewska, K. Historic England Kickstart Gateway: The Cross-Organisational Partnership Research Project, May 2022 (unpublished)

## Alternative training programmes

Whilst not the main focus of this work it is necessary to consider the impact of alternative initiatives offered within the sector that align with one or more of the tiers of Historic England's employability and skills development model. It was outside the scope of this project to carry out a full audit of these training programmes, therefore, existing data held by professional bodies or other representative groups was accessed. A rapid review of this data was carried out to assist, where applicable, in answering the aims and objectives of this project.

Information publicly accessible and held by the following organisations was examined in undertaking this review:

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- ICON
- Heritage Alliance
- BAJR
- FAME
- SPAB

## Aware and Prepare tiers

The Archaeology A-Level was offered by exam board AQA until October 2016 when it was removed as an option from the following academic year. In terms of other courses which may be taken up by school leavers, there are notably not very many on offer. The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) runs the Young Archaeologists Club which have regional branches although it is uncertain how many of their members follow on to pursue heritage as a career. The CBA also offer a Dig School which was founded during the COVID pandemic and comprises a series of 21 free workshops with supporting resources such as teacher guidance documents, a workbook and an introductory video with additional support material and activities where appropriate.<sup>5</sup>

A number of organisations, notably DigVentures, offer paid for archaeological fieldwork training experiences. BAJR have also designed the Skills Passport which can be used to prepare an individual for a pathway to a career in archaeology and can be used at the

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.archaeologyuk.org/youth-engagement/dig-school.html>

various different levels of entry. In addition to paid for field schools, there are a number of introductory courses in other archaeological/heritage skills such as the Introduction to QGIS for Historic Environment Professionals offered by PTS Consultancy with Air Photo Services. At the time of writing, only nine such field schools and courses are advertised on the BAJR website.<sup>6</sup>

ICON offer a number of student resources on their website which comprises introductory resources on how to enter conservation as a career in addition to a student mentoring programme and internships. However, it is not clear if these are offered to school leavers in particular or are designed for academic graduates.<sup>7</sup>

SPAB offer a choice of resources for schools and young people which comprise a series of events which are designed for a range of individuals and cover a variety of topics relating to the conservation of historic buildings. They also have a section dedicated to careers advice which is offered to those interested in pursuing a career in built heritage conservation. Practical events such as working parties are also offered as a hands-on experience, designed for those wishing to enter the profession.

## Enter tier

### NVQs

The National Vocational Qualification in Archaeological Practice (NVQ) provides a route map to meeting the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Archaeology, guiding candidates to bespoke sets of new skills or competencies at junior level. NVQs are seen as a route to professional status by ClfA, who offer fast track accreditation at Practitioner (PCIfA) level to those with a Level 3 NVQ in Archaeological Practice. These are designed for those working within archaeological fieldwork and are assessed on a practical level through candidates undertaking workplace tasks. The NVQ consists of a series of core and optional units and are assessed by competent archaeologists who are accredited at ClfA member level. Assessors must hold relevant national qualifications in conducting assessments and must ensure that their skills are current.<sup>8</sup>

The State of the Archaeological Market report produced in 2020 by Landward Research on behalf of FAME showed that of the responses received, 36% no longer offer the NVQ as a training route with 36% currently using this training route. Only 27% responded that they

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.bajr.org/Employment/UKTraining.asp>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.icon.org.uk/careers/student-resources.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.archaeologists.net/careers/nvq>



intend to use the NVQ as opposed to the 64% of respondents who indicated that they intend to use the apprenticeship scheme.<sup>9</sup>

## Traineeships

For the purposes of this report, we have defined a traineeship as a skills development programme that includes a work placement. It can last from six weeks up to one year, though most traineeships last for less than six months.

MOLA currently offer two traineeships for people entering the profession. Trainee Archaeologist and Graduate Archaeologist training programmes provide the experience, skills and knowledge needed to work on site as a professional field archaeologist. In a mix of on-the-job training and classroom sessions, participants learn how to dig, record and interpret different types of archaeology, and learn about all the people and processes involved in a project.

CifA have a number of approved employer training schemes listed on their website with 16 Registered Organisations (including MOLA) offering such schemes.<sup>10</sup>

Historic England ran various specialist work-based traineeship schemes (under different titles) between 2002 and 2019, which provided 56 traineeships between 6 and 18 months long across a range of occupational areas; however, the last recruitment to this scheme was in 2018; with internal resource at Historic England redirected into apprenticeship development.

The traineeships have been very successful and could be a model that is developed by others in future to provide practical training for those entering archaeology that ensures the skills required by employers are taught.

ICON offer an Internship Programme which is a structured internship placement which offers a management package for intern hosts to focus on their strengths and provide interns with opportunities to develop practical knowledge and skills within conservation practice.<sup>11</sup>

## Short Courses

SPAB offer a wide range of courses, lectures and seminars. They currently have six short courses listed at an intermediary level for 2023 ranging from an introduction to ornamental

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<sup>9</sup> <https://famearchaeology.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/State-of-the-Archaeological-Market-2020.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.archaeologists.net/careers/employer-training>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.icon.org.uk/careers/icon-internship-programme.html>

lime plastering to repair of old buildings. Of the six, four are already fully booked which shows a clear demand for this type of training.

## Sustain tier

### CPD Courses

CIfA offer a wide range of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training across all learning levels, held around the UK in person and digitally. In addition to this they also accredit other organisations training using the 'CIfA Approved Training & CPD' quality mark bearing the yellow logo, which means it has been assessed against a set of learning criteria. A range of organisations have CIfA Approved training & CPD, which includes CPD courses, field schools and excavation training, Registered Organisations in-house employee training and Historic England courses.

CIfA approved CPD providers currently include MSDS Marine, the Nautical Archaeology Society and Paleoimaging (as currently listed on the CIfA website).<sup>12</sup>

Although it does not appear that ICON offer regular CPD courses in and of itself, it hosts a section on its website for CPD with a Development Route Map for individuals designed to create achievement goals and plans for individuals working in conservation practice.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.archaeologists.net/careers/cpd>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.icon.org.uk/careers/cpd.html>

## Survey Results and Analysis

Following closure of the survey window, it was found that the employer’s survey had returned a total of 55 responses with 67 individuals completing the early career’s survey. This can be considered to be a reasonable response rate considering the relatively short survey window.

An analysis of each survey has been carried out with the results presented below for each target audience.

### Employer’s Survey

What is your role within the organisation?

This question received a total of 54 responses, with one respondent leaving this question blank. Senior Manager, followed by Director/CEO, are the two dominant roles within the survey responses, representing just over 76% of the sample. This is significant as people in these roles are typically responsible for decision making in both recruitment and training.

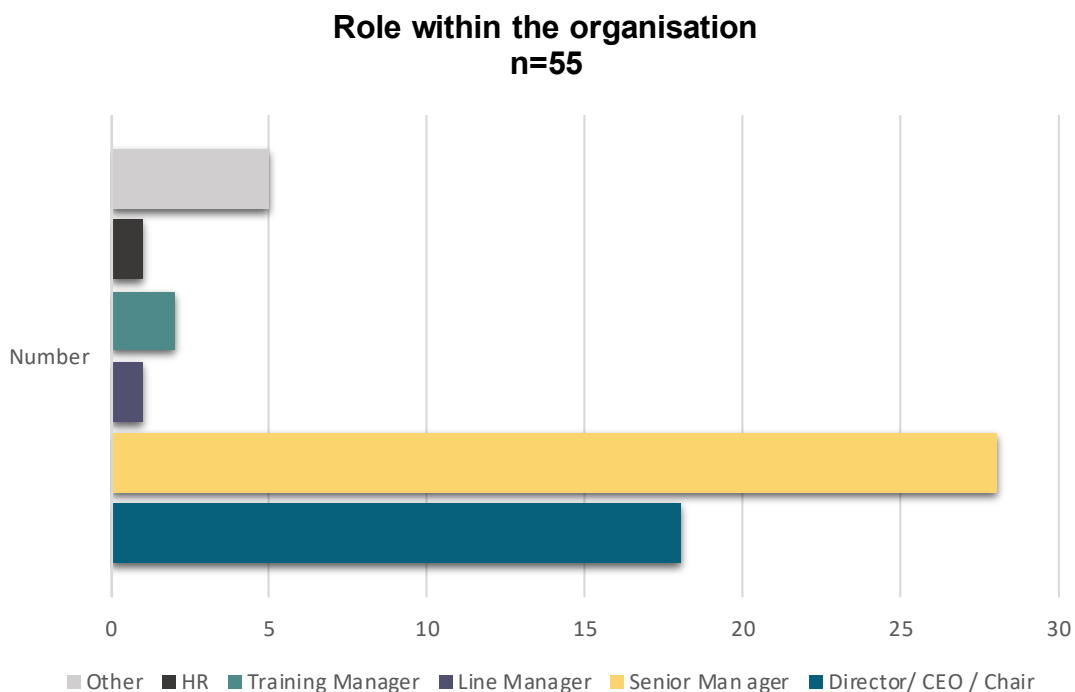


Figure 1: Role within the organisation

Other roles identified included:

- Archaeological Inspector
- Archaeologist
- Clerk of Works and Joiner
- Mentor
- Historic Environment Officer

Which sector of the industry does the organisation work in?

Archaeology was the dominant sector for responders, represented by 56% of the total number of responses. Practical building conservation was the next largest sector with 18% followed by historic environment advice (15%) and object-based conservation (11%).

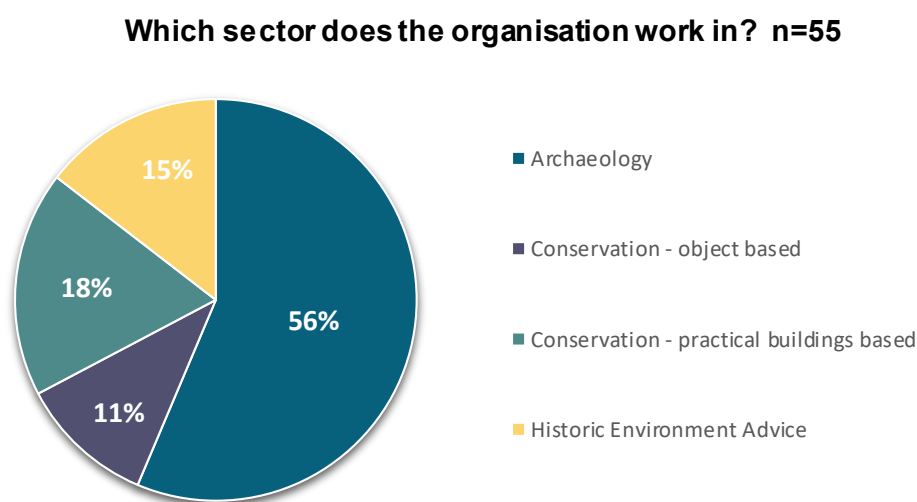


Figure 2: Which sector of the industry does the organisation work in?

Is your organisation accredited by a professional body?

This question received a full response with 35 of out 55 organisations accredited by a professional body. When asked to select which professional bodies from a given list, 28 organisations responded that they are accredited by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) with four responses indicating the Institute of Conservation (ICON). Two organisations selected 'other' with these specified as the Museum Association and Arts Council England.

No respondents selected the following professional bodies:

- Royal Institute for Architectural Technologists (CIAT)
- Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE)
- Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)
- Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE)

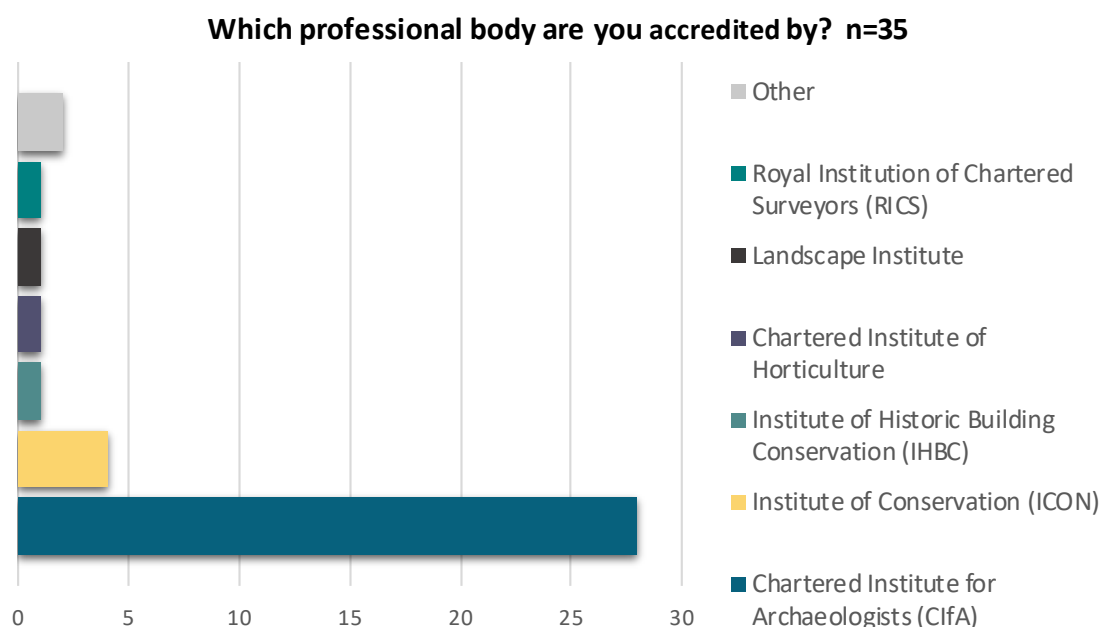


Figure 3: Which professional body are you accredited by?

Do you currently offer any form of training programme for entrants into the profession?

In answer to this question, 34 out of 55 organisations responded that they currently offer a training programme which represents 62% of the overall response. When asked what type of training, 26 organisations indicated that they offer an in-house training scheme, with 16 of these listed as not externally accredited.

Eight organisations responded that they offer an apprenticeship scheme with one responder specifying the NVQ. Two organisations chose 'other' as their answer to this question which these specified as a student placement year in industry and work-based training.

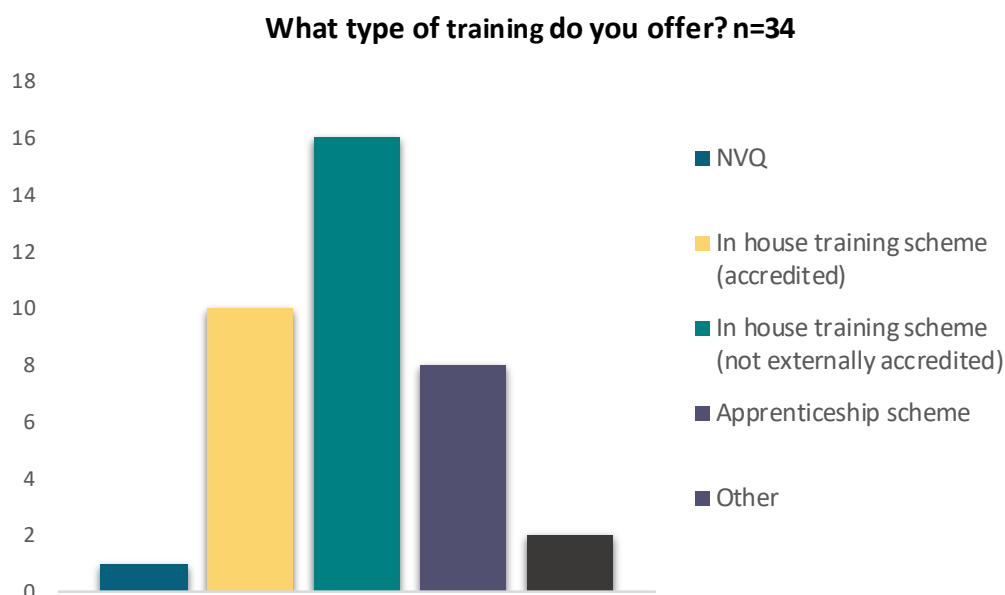


Figure 4: What type of training do you offer?

The 21 organisations who responded with 'No' to this question were asked to select what specific barriers prevent them offering training. The overwhelming majority of responses to this question was that of time, closely followed by cost. Interestingly, only one organisation specified internal resistance as a barrier to offering apprenticeships which perhaps demonstrates that other, more practical considerations, are more likely barriers to providing training.

Of the total responses, 26% chose 'other' as an option which were specified as:

- Lack of suitable apprenticeship
- Predictability of workload
- Availability of supervising staff
- Organisation's priorities are elsewhere
- Lack of interest and discipline
- Very small team with rare need to recruit
- Small team with limited capacity
- Difficulty of establishing apprenticeships within the profession
- Relevant standards

Are you aware of the six formal Apprenticeship Standards produced as a result of the Historic Environment Trailblazer?

Encouragingly, 65% of organisations responded that they were aware of the six Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards.

**Are you aware of the six Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards? n=55**

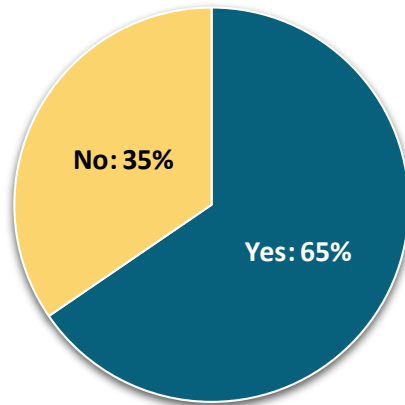


Figure 5: Are you aware of the six Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards?

Does your organisation currently offer an apprenticeship?

When asked if they offer an apprenticeship, 38 out of 55 organisations responded that they do not offer an apprenticeship which represents 69% of the total responses. This is a disappointing outcome considering that the majority of organisations were aware of the apprenticeship standards.

Those organisations who indicated ‘yes’ to this question, were asked to choose which apprenticeships they offer. As can be seen in Figure 7, the top two options offered by responders are the Archaeological Technician Level 3 and Historic Environment Advice Assistant Level 4 apprenticeships. These are followed by the Archaeological Specialist Level 7, Cultural Heritage Conservation Technician Level 4 and Cultural Heritage Conservator Level 7 apprenticeships. The Historic Environment Advisor Level 7 apprenticeship is not currently offered by any of the responding organisations.

Five responses to this question indicated that they offer other apprenticeships not focused on the historic environment. These apprenticeships are listed as:

- EIA Apprenticeships

- Levels 3 - 5 Apprenticeships in Team Leader, Project Management and Accountancy
- Business Administration
- Building Surveyor

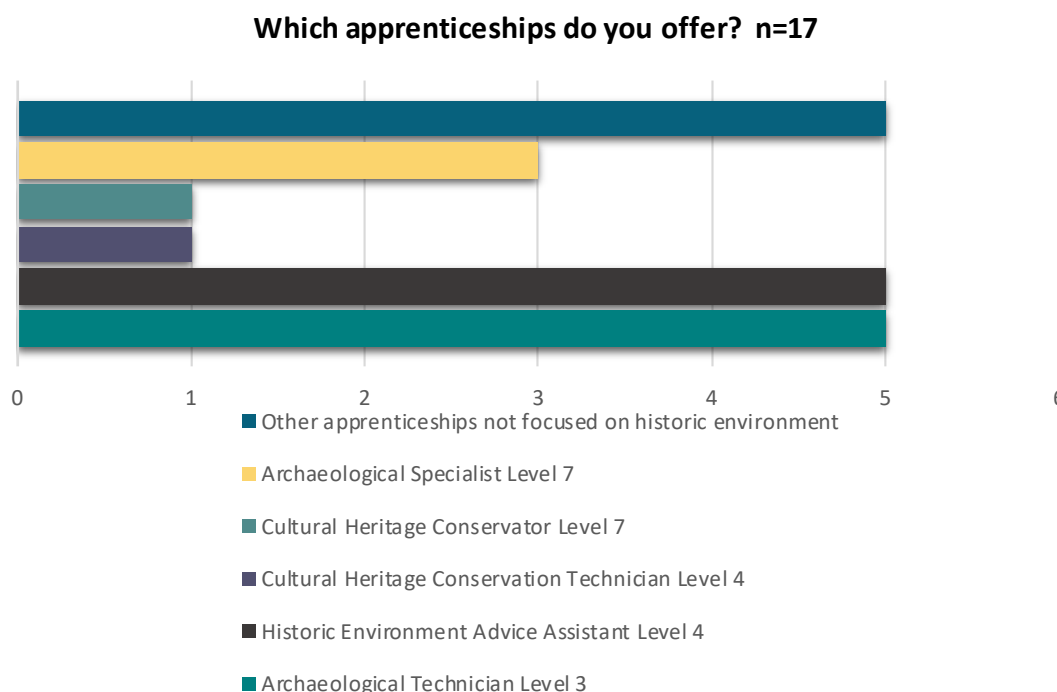


Figure 6: Which apprenticeships do you offer?

### Would you consider offering an apprenticeship based on one of the current Apprenticeship Standards?

When asked if organisations would consider offering an apprenticeship based on one of the current Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards, an encouraging majority of 82% responded positively. The 45 organisations who indicated ‘yes’ to this question were asked why they have not offered an apprenticeship to date.

Based on previous research, it is perhaps predictable that the top three barriers (>10 responses) to providing apprenticeships were the cost involved, the length of time needed to set up the apprenticeship and the location of training providers. The length of time to train an apprentice also featured highly in the responses with more than five organisations also specifying that the process was unclear. Other barriers such as concern over the apprenticeship content standard and delivery method of training providers were also chosen by more than five organisations. The full breakdown of barriers is shown in Figure 7.

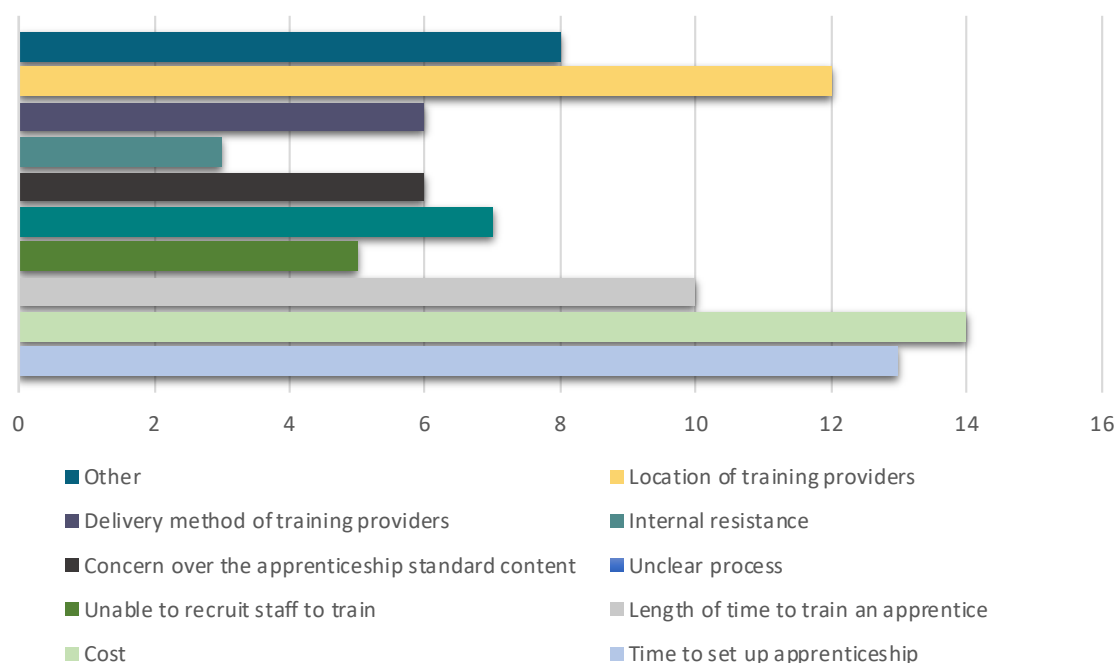


Eight organisations specified 'other' in their answer selection. These other barriers were expanded on and included:

- Age of apprentice, requirement to interview.
- Capacity issues
- Virtual, mobile and flexible working style not suitable for training
- Lack of internal systems
- Inability to join a scheme at any time of the year
- Lack of ability to integrate internal training
- Lack of training providers
- Other internal priorities/pressures
- No time to plan properly for apprentice and career pathway
- No Level 7 training provider available
- Unclear funding situation

Of these, three organisations cited the lack of training providers as one of the barriers to their organisation offering an apprenticeship.

**If yes, why have you not offered an apprenticeship to date? n=45**



**Figure 7: If yes, why have you not offered an apprenticeship to date?**

Those organisations (no.10) who indicated that they would not offer an apprenticeship based on one of the current Apprenticeship Standards were also asked what barriers prevented them from doing so. The results were similar to those of the 'yes' cohort in that the time to set up an apprenticeship, the length of time to train an apprentice and the cost involved featured highly in the responses. The location of training providers, their delivery method and also concern over the apprenticeship standard content were also raised as barriers with >2 responses. The full breakdown of barriers is shown in Figure 8.

Three organisations indicated 'other', and specified the barriers as:

- Volunteer heritage advisory organisation and can't offer an apprenticeship
- Lack of senior time to commit to decent supervision and learning
- Finding work for them that is reliably developmental

The results of the employer's survey provides evidence that the principal barriers to offering apprenticeships are related to the time to set up the apprenticeship, the length of time to train and the cost involved. As demonstrated above, these are the barriers which were consistently raised by organisations regardless of whether they would offer an apprenticeship or not. Other considerations are linked to training providers and the content of the Apprenticeship Standard. The location of training providers, or the lack of them, are issues which have been raised in other forums and also in some of the interviews held as part of this project.

While not chosen by a large number of organisations, an interesting barrier which has been raised is that of internal resistance both in offering training and apprenticeships. The survey did not capture the nature of what this resistance is formed of, but this could be associated with the relative new introduction of apprenticeships to the heritage sector, an industry which has historically not offered such a route. As such, there may be an element of misconception of the exact nature of apprenticeships and how they fit within the wider training pathways within the sector.

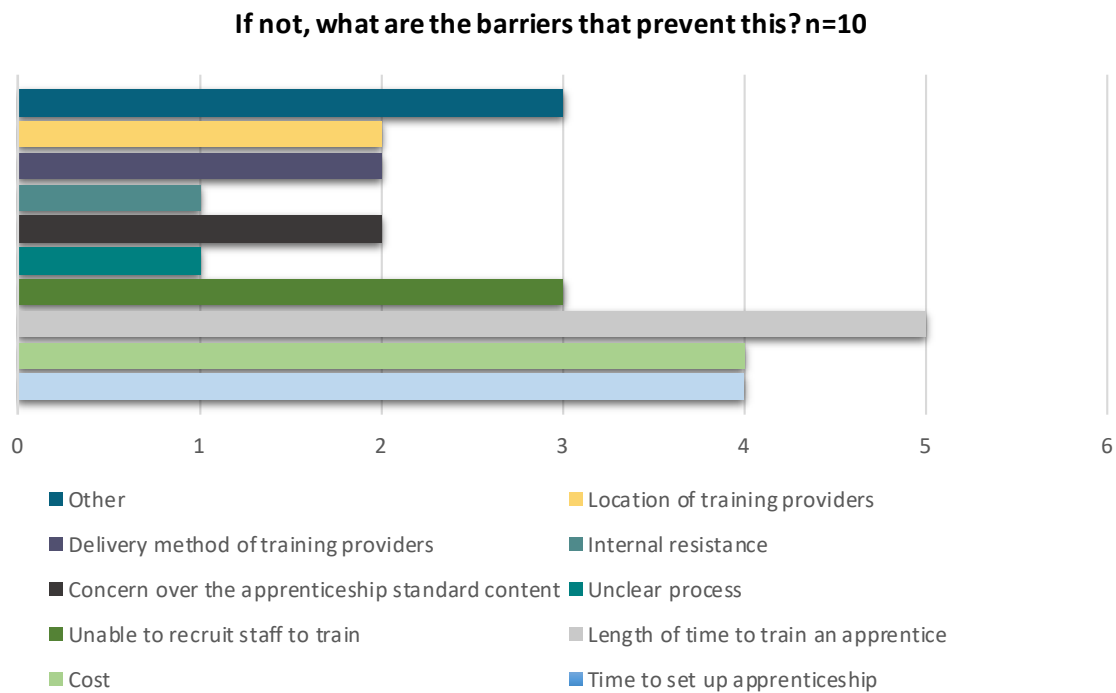


Figure 8: If not, what are the barriers that prevent this?

### Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your view of apprenticeships in the heritage sector?

Responders to the survey were given the opportunity at the end of the survey in the form of a free text box to provide any additional comments relating to apprenticeships. 32 organisations provided responses to this question and a selection of these comments are provided below.

Some organisations expanded on cost as a barrier:

*‘They could be a really valuable way of addressing the skills shortage and lack of diversity in the profession. However, it may need to be more condensed to fit with commercial pressures faced by the sector. The burden on already stretched departments may be too great, particularly within medium sized units.’*

*‘I don’t feel they are suited to smaller and medium sized archaeological organisations even where they are located (as we are) within a larger organisation such as a County Council. The duration of contract required, and the circumstances of most developer funded teams make the initial commitment hard/risky to make and other routes of training such as the*

*NVQ or CfA accredited In-House schemes are currently more adaptable and timely (certainly for training operatives (the Level 3 Apprenticeship)'*

*'I am very keen to run apprenticeships and my museum is part of an organisation that pays the apprenticeship levy so is supportive in principle. The barrier for us is raising funds to pay a fair wage to the apprentice - we are looking to philanthropy as the most likely source of funds.'*

The comments also expanded on concerns relating to training providers and the content of the Apprenticeship Standard:

*'We have a staff member waiting for the Level 7 HER apprenticeship to have a training provider - this lack of provider is the only thing stopping us from using the scheme. Council money may dry up before we get this sorted if nothings happens at Historic England to push this on.'*

*'I think internal training schemes should be adoptable as an accepted part of course content (assuming they are good enough quality). Schemes should be adaptable enough for the employer to shape deliverables rather than the educational provider.'*

*'Working with a Level 4 for the last year plus has been an incredibly rewarding experience though the level of support and quality of training from the training college has been uninspiring and rather negative. Luckily the apprentice has taken this in their stride where it could have easily derailed the whole approach very easily.'*

*'We are timber structures fabricators and conservationists. Nothing fits our requirements, and we refer our carpenters to the timber conservation MSc at the Downland Museum at Singleton nearby.'*

Other comments expressed positivity about apprenticeships being an important pathway to solving the skills shortages within the sector:

*'With the reduction in bench time for remedial conservators and fundamental problem-solving skills required in the profession that takes time and experience to develop, apprenticeships may offer the best pathway for training future conservators'*

*'They are vital to ensure heritage craft skills are maintained for future generations. Regrettably not enough education programmes are available to support apprenticeships. For example, there is no heritage craft science programme offered in the UK at either under or post-grad level.'*

*'They are fantastic, and much needed. Our engagement with them has been overwhelmingly positive. They need to be more widely adopted across the sector. There needs to be more support for sharing apprentices between organisations (to manage costs, to introduce non-heritage land management orgs - like Woodland Trust? - and ensure a rounded experience for apprentices).'*

*'We received a huge amount of interest in our Archaeological Technician Apprenticeship (Level 3) when we advertised the role and the standard of applications was very high. There is definitely appetite within Cornwall for this type of training.'*

## Early Career’s Survey

Please confirm that you identify as someone in the early stages of their career?

The project defined Early Career as an individual within the first five years of their working life in a heritage occupation, or someone studying for a career in heritage. Of the 67 individuals who responded, six indicated that they did not fit the definition of Early Careers as set out by the project. Two of these individuals went into further detail in the free text field at the end of the survey to confirm that while they did not meet the Early Careers project definition, they were within seven years of starting their career. It is assumed that all six of these responses were in a similar career situation and therefore, their responses have been included across the whole of the survey.

Which sector of the industry do you work in?

As with the employer’s survey, the majority of individuals responded that they work in archaeology with the next largest sector being historic environment advice.

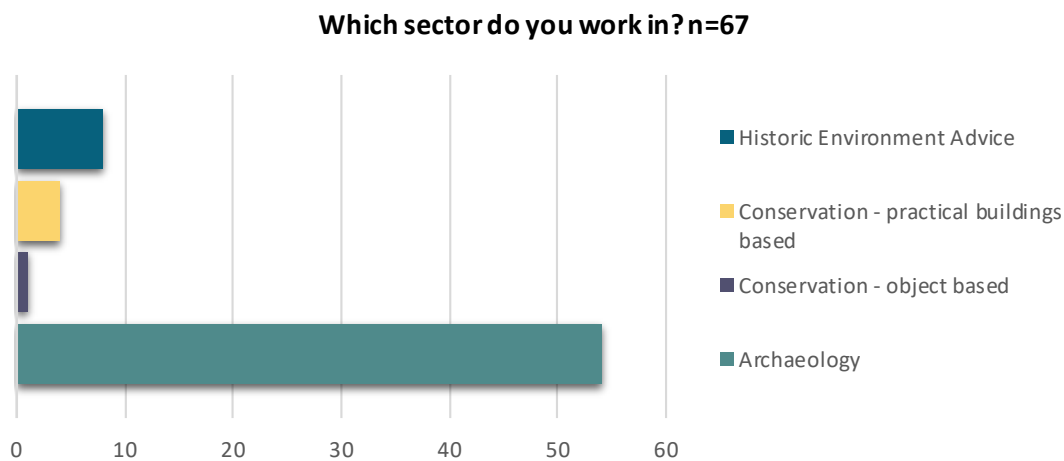


Figure 9: Which sector do you work in?

A small number of responses to this question included one or more training schemes e.g., CSCS card plus a Master’s degree, therefore, the total number of responses shown in Figure 11 is 69. Of the 69 responses, 43 either responded ‘No’ or left this question blank. Of the remaining 24 responses, 10 indicated that they had taken part in a non-externally accredited in-house training scheme, 6 specified that they had undertaken an accredited in-house training scheme and five that they had undertaken an NVQ.

Five individuals chose 'other' as their answer option. These were specified as:

- Degree
- Masters
- CSCS card
- Secondments
- Placements during studies

Three individuals chose a degree or Masters as their answer to this question. While these are not traditionally work-based, it is assumed that these were listed because part of the undergraduate/postgraduate degree involved a work-based placement.

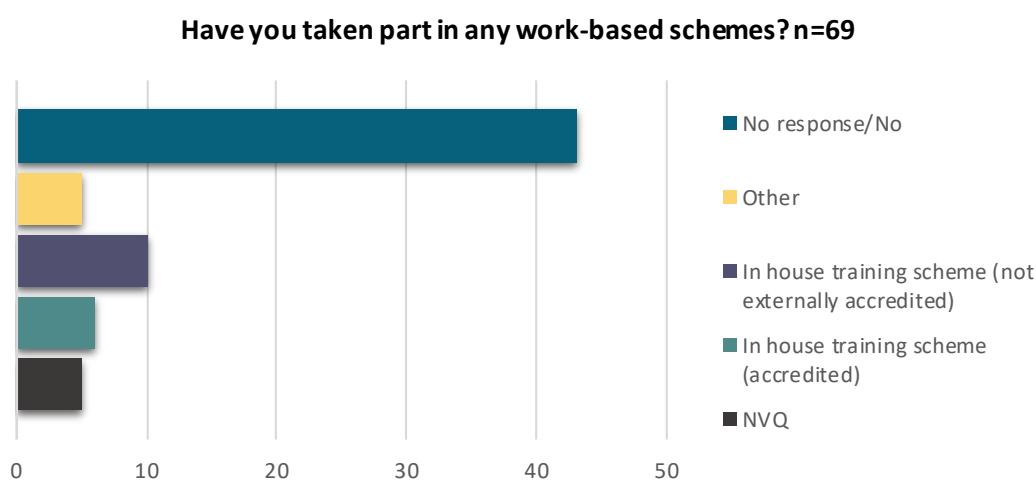


Figure 10: Have you taken part in any work-based training schemes

### Have you taken part in an apprenticeship scheme?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, 97% of the 67 responses to this question indicated that they had not taken part in an apprenticeship scheme. Just two responders had taken part in an apprenticeship scheme. The low availability of apprenticeships, an apprenticeship may be unsuitable for the individual in question together with the perception that only academic degrees are appropriate qualification within the sector, can all be regarded as factors in this response. The successive questions in the survey have helped to delve a little deeper into this.

## Are you aware of the six formal Apprenticeship Standards produced as a result of the Historic Environment Trailblazer?

When asked if they had heard of the six formal Apprenticeship Standards, 50 responders indicated 'No' to this question, representing 75% of the overall responses. Two individuals did not record a response with 15 indicating that they had heard of the Apprenticeship Standards.

**Are you aware of the six Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards? n=67**

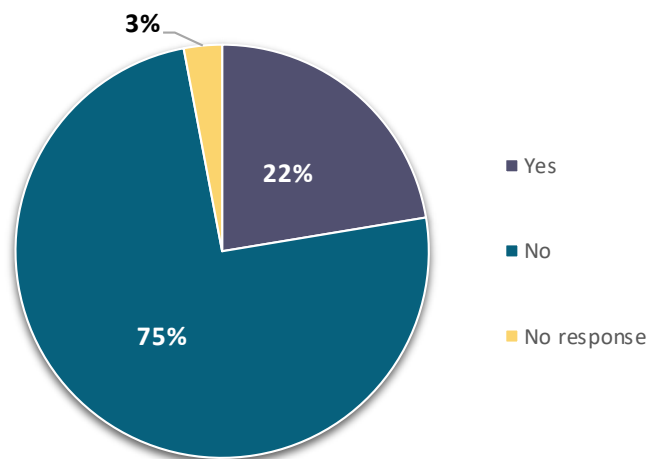


Figure 11: Are you aware of the six Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards?

## Would you have considered entering the profession via an apprenticeship based on these standards?

The previous question included a link to information on the apprenticeship standards as hosted on the Historic England website. It is assumed that responders visited this link before replying to this question.

Of the 67 responses, two of these were left blank and of the remaining responses, 10 individuals indicated that they would not consider an apprenticeship based on one of the current Apprenticeship Standards. Perhaps encouragingly, the 'Yes' and 'Maybe' options were relatively evenly split with a combined 82% of responses.

The 28 individuals that indicated that they would consider an apprenticeship based on one of the current standards, were asked to provide the reasons why they did not choose to. Predictably, the answer with the highest number of responses was the lack of apprenticeships available with a total number of 16 responses. The next option with the



highest number of responses is the location of training providers which does echo the results of the employer's survey.

**Would you have considered entering the profession via an apprenticeship based on one of these standards? n=67**

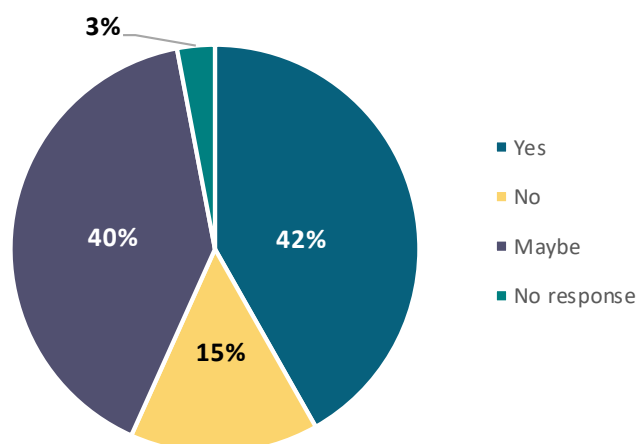


Figure 12: Would you have considered entering the profession via an apprenticeship based on one of these standards?

Other barriers with responses <10 are an unclear process, cost and length of time to train via the apprenticeship route. Again, these responses mirror those of the employer's survey.

12 responders chose 'Other' as their answer with these specified as:

- Didn't know that they existed
- Applied but unsuccessful
- Previous experience deemed sufficient
- Level 4 apprenticeship available but no strong support from management to apply
- Wages too low
- Age
- Lack of employers offering positions to non-degree holders

A full breakdown of the reasons for not taking up an apprenticeship are shown in Figure 13.

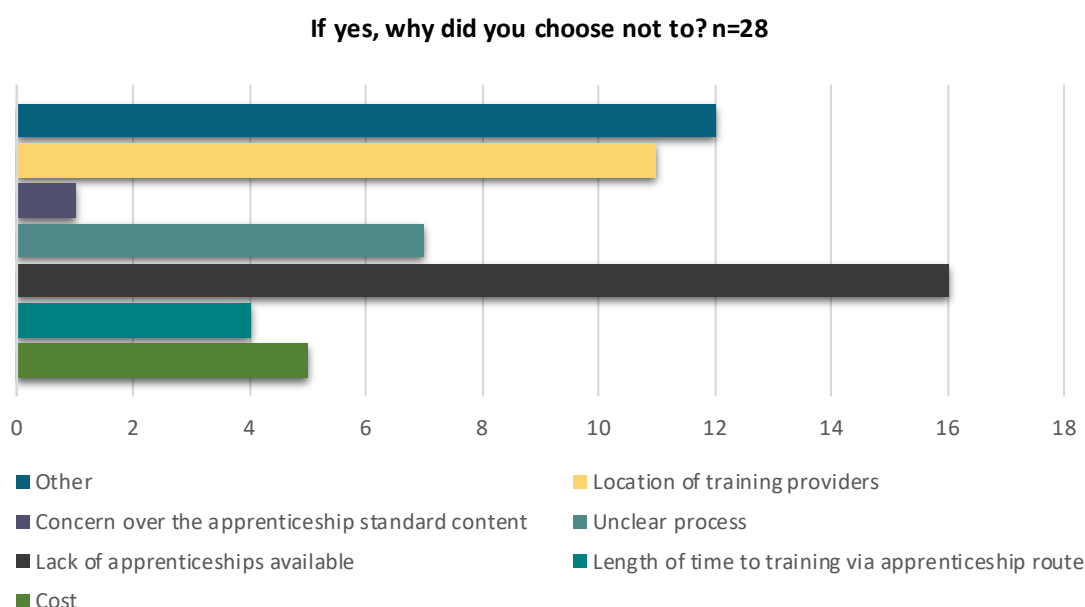


Figure 13: If yes, why did you choose not to?

The 37 individuals who indicated ‘No’ or ‘Maybe’ were asked what the barriers were that prevented them from considering an apprenticeship. Both the lack of apprenticeships and location of training providers gained >10 responses which is similar to the ‘Yes’ cohort. However, cost and unclear process both gained 10 or more responses, which could be considered a result of the higher number of individuals within this sample. In contrast to the ‘Yes’ group, the delivery method of training providers was raised as an issue with a total of three individuals choosing this option.

A total of 12 individuals responded with ‘Other’ which are specified as:

- Wanted to go to university
- Didn’t know that they existed
- Not from the UK
- The number of degrees in archaeology makes it impractical not to have one
- Stigma of apprenticeships within the industry
- Apprentice wages are too low

Two of the ‘Other’ options, the number of degrees in archaeology and the stigma of apprenticeships while not statistically significant, could be deemed as potentially important.

The traditional view that academic degrees are the most suitable qualification within the industry may be hindering the adoption of apprenticeships by both employers and their target audience. Such barriers are related to behavioural change, rather than more practical considerations and will therefore take an unspecified length of time to happen.

A full breakdown of the responses is shown in Figure 14.

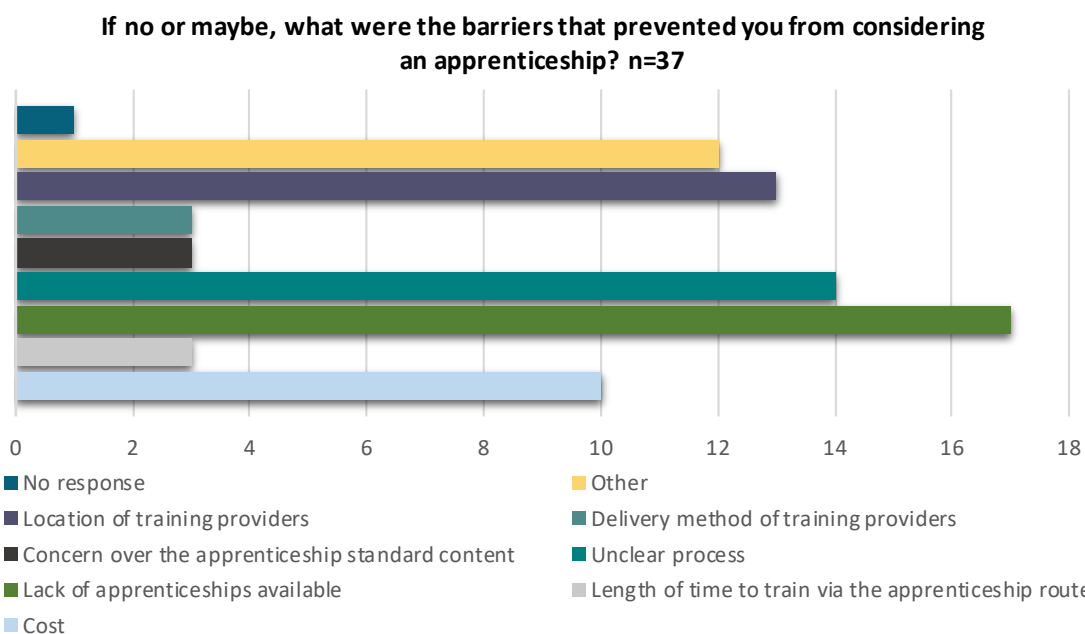


Figure 14: If no or maybe, what were the barriers that prevented you from considering an apprenticeship?

With the lack of apprenticeships available being cited as one of the main reasons for not taking one up, it is predictable that the overwhelming response to this question was ‘No’ with 52 out of 67 choosing this response. Three individuals did not record an answer to this question, while one individual replied that they were ‘unsure’.

Four individuals responded to this question by choosing ‘Other’ as their answer. These individuals had seen apprenticeships advertised or promoted and used the ‘Other’ option to provide more detail. These were specified as:

- Word of mouth
- Saw adverts but didn’t feel that they were relevant to me
- Saw write ups of the first Historic Environment Advice Assistant Apprenticeship

- Saw some advertising in the USA (it is unclear if these were UK based adverts)
- Promoted by Careers Advisor

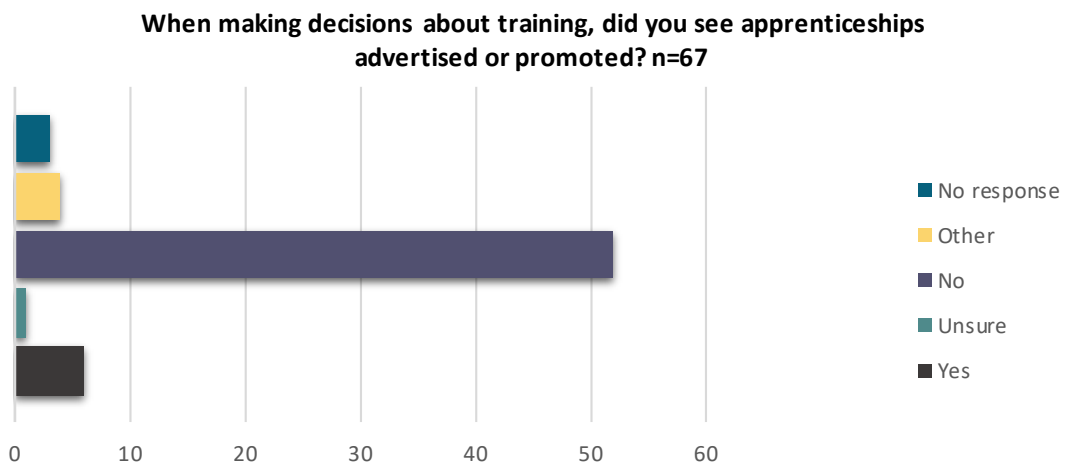


Figure 15: When making decisions about training, did you see apprenticeships advertised or promoted?

Would you be interested in progressing your career and receiving further training via an apprenticeship e.g., Level 7?

Individuals were asked if they would consider undertaking an apprenticeship at this stage in their career. Two individuals left this question blank resulting in a sample of 65 responses. Of these, 16 individuals responded 'No' while the remaining 49 responses were relatively evenly split between 'Yes' and 'Maybe'.

**Would you be interested in progressing your career and receiving further training via an apprenticeship e.g., Level 7? n=67**

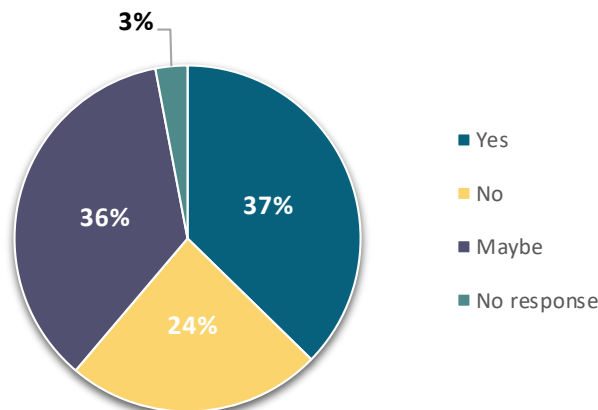


Figure 16: Would you be interested in progressing your career and receiving further training via an apprenticeship?

The 40 individuals who responded 'No' or 'Maybe' were asked what the barriers are that would prevent them from considering an apprenticeship in the future. Unlike the previous questions which related to barriers, the option with the highest number of responses was that of cost. It is likely that factors such as the cost to undertake an apprenticeship in addition to potentially having to take a pay cut from their current salary to an apprentice wage is why this barrier is significantly higher than others.

Other barriers which feature highly in responses are the lack of apprenticeships available, the length of time taken to train via the apprenticeship route and the location of training providers. All of these echo the results of previous questions relating to barriers.

Eleven individuals chose 'Other' as an option in answer to this question. These were specified as:

- Already have degrees so ineligible for apprenticeships
- Don't feel that it is relevant to me
- Level (no further detail provided on this)
- Not needed
- Not appropriate for me at this time
- Further studies
- Stigma
- Health
- Suitable apprenticeships not available
- Age limitations
- Pay

Again, stigma is raised as a barrier within this category although only one individual raised it as an issue. Despite this, it should be considered as an important barrier as it has been consistently raised across the survey.

The full breakdown of the responses is shown in Figure 17.

**If no or maybe, what are the barriers that would prevent you from considering an apprenticeship in the future? n=40**

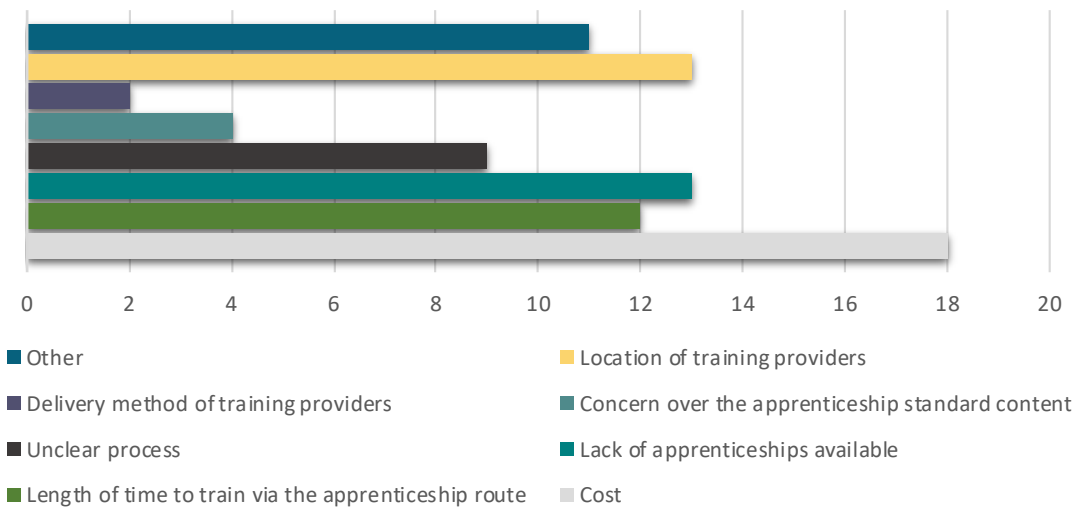


Figure 17: If no or maybe, what are the barriers that would prevent you from considering an apprenticeship in the future?

Responders to the survey were provided with the opportunity in the form of a free text field to provide feedback on their apprenticeship experience if they had undertaken one. Two individuals provided feedback and their comments are included below.

*'I did not complete the apprenticeship (L7 Archaeological Specialist)- while it was incredibly generous of my then employers to put me on the course, the course content was not particularly applicable to my work, and I did not feel very challenged by it. The course was enjoyable, the teaching was interesting, and the apprenticeship and MA would have looked great on a CV, however, I was uncertain whether the scheme at L7 was fit for purpose, at least for me. The apprenticeship was meant to prepare candidates for MCIfA which seemed rather unachievable and was supposed to directly upskill candidates in the context of their specific work area; I was not confident that the scheme was working for me in either regard. The apprenticeship scheme is a fantastic idea; however, I feel that it needs to adapt to ensure that candidates are learning applicable and appropriate skills for their career goals.'*

*'After completing three years at university studying Archaeology and Heritage Studies, I can say that I have learnt valuable skills and experience by taking part in the HEAA apprenticeship scheme. Though I feel my degree gave me a lot of the skills to do this role, a lot of skills that*

*are required for the current climate of the sector was not provided in my degree. Therefore, I have gained lots of valuable knowledge, skills and experience both on and off the job training to prepare me to work in the sector.'*

A free text field was also provided if responders wished to provide any further comments on their views of apprenticeships. A total of 27 individuals commented in this field and a section of these are provided below.

*'Apprenticeships have always felt like a path for people leaving school, not university'*

*'There is a lack of apprenticeships in general and when opportunities are available, they are at the cost of the individual or offer an incredibly low salary which is not possible for an early careers individual to subsist on, although they would commit themselves to it full time.'*

*'I'm due to start the MA in February next year and have been really looking forward to it. However, I have been disheartened by the lack of take up, which has pushed my course start date back. It was supposed to start October this year. I'd love to see more promotion for the course collectively by ClfA, Historic England, UAUk, Fame, Prospects, CBA and any other heritage organisation. I think the university hasn't pushed or promoted the course enough.'*

*'From what I have researched recently, there doesn't seem to be many apprenticeships for those who have an undergraduate degree and want to further their skills. For example, I want to pursue a career in historic building conservation and I'm having difficulty finding an apprenticeship or programme that would put me on the "right path" so to speak. I have an undergraduate degree in archaeology and I'm currently working in commercial archaeology but there doesn't seem to be much of a chance for me to start a career in building conservation and I think an apprenticeship, whether it's a short-term placement or something longer, would be beneficial.'*

*'Would an apprenticeship replace the trainee period in field arch? How would this work and be reflected appropriately with pay. Apprentice pay is*

*much less than current trainee pay and this would be bad for the sector if the pay was even lower.'*

*'The pay for apprenticeships aren't sustainable in the long term'*

*'Please take more account of barriers to entry for disabled people, apprenticeships should assist disabled people too'*

*'Please make it fairer for those who are older and career changing. If we are supposed to go into archaeology with a degree or experience than why are so many of the jobs and traineeships going to those just out of university. It leaves no accessible way for those who wish to study, train or career change with a way into these professions. Also when I applied for the level 7 archaeology apprenticeship course at Cirencester with WA the entire process took over 5-6 months to have my decision and 5 months for an interview. Very painful and slow and even though I asked for feedback from WA none was given. This experience had put me off applying again.'*

*'While apprenticeships would be fantastic, historic environment records are beyond stretched resource wise at this time. They don't have the capacity to either offer an apprenticeship to new entrants or to allow existing staff members to progress onto an apprenticeship in order to enhance their skills. More support from Historic England in offering in-house training would be really beneficial, especially if and when HERs become statutory under the new LURB'*



## Interviews

Using the self-selected sample from the employer's survey, a total of 19 individuals across a range of companies, many of which fell into more than one sector category, were interviewed. Although the majority of interviewees were from commercial companies, a small number of representatives from national bodies also took part.

## Archaeology Organisations

- Archaeology Research Services
- BAJR
- Drakon Heritage
- FAME
- Heritage Lincolnshire
- Historic England
- Isle Heritage
- Magnitude Surveys
- MOLA
- National Trust
- York Archaeological Trust

## Conservation

- Drakon Heritage
- Heritage Lincolnshire
- Historic England
- Lincolnshire County Council – Historic Places
- National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN)
- Royal Pavilion and Museums Trust (rebranded as Brighton and Hove Museums)
- Vincent Reed Conservation and Restoration

## Historic Environment Advice (SLAs, advice on conservation and archaeology)

- Gloucestershire HER
- Heritage Lincolnshire
- Lincolnshire County Council – Historic Places
- Northumberland NPA

## Other Types of Organisation

- Heritage Alliance

As outlined in the methodology, the interview responses were analysed using a thematic approach. Key recurring themes were identified for each question and are discussed below. Quotes from the interviews have been included in the discussion where these illustrate or expound upon a key theme. Attribution of these quotes has been included in line with the wishes of the interviewees.

## Interview Responses

What has stopped you from taking on an apprentice so far?

One of the key themes identified in the responses to this question relates to the current apprenticeship standards and training providers. For some companies, they indicated that they hadn't taken on an apprenticeship as none of the current apprenticeship standards apply; this particularly relates to specialist subjects such as geophysics. The location and lack of training providers was also identified as a barrier together with the requirement for apprentices to be in college one day a week which some responders felt was impractical with archaeological fieldwork and the need to be on site. The yearly academic intake and the length of time to train an apprentice was also a barrier for some companies.

A lack of staff time, both for training and to build a relationship/partnership with training providers featured highly in responses. This appears to be particularly relevant for small to medium companies and is linked with financial constraints, particularly as staff would effectively be non-fee earning when training an apprentice. Financial constraints appear to be multi-faceted; there is an issue with ensuring that an apprenticeship will lead to a follow-on role which cannot always be guaranteed due to the changing nature of archaeological fieldwork and the difficulty in being able to forecast budget and workloads for both the length of time taken to complete an apprenticeship and beyond.

The lack of awareness of the current apprenticeship standards was also raised as a barrier for some companies. For some responders, this linked with a lack of information available as to the success of the first cohort of apprentices which made building a business case for management more difficult.

What do you think the barriers are to employers offering apprenticeships?

Many of the themes identified in the previous question also recurred in answers to this question. Many responders felt that the process to set up an apprenticeship and how it works in reality is not clear with one responder finding the administration and bureaucracy involved off-putting. Other responders highlighted that the current content of the apprenticeship standards is seen as being too restrictive with not enough flexibility built in. This may be linked to other barriers such as the lack of a clear skills pathway for apprentices and guidance as to the relationship between employers and training providers.

The length of time taken to train apprentices is a recurring theme both in terms of the staff time required to train and the current archaeology business model which requires *all* staff to be fee earning. One responder felt that as apprentices are not 100% fee earning, some employers will not see them as being as valuable, particularly as they don't work full time due to attending college one day a week. The fast paced and relatively uncertain nature of archaeological fieldwork means that employers would rather recruit staff who can perform the role straightaway rather than invest in apprenticeships. Some responders also felt that as there is not a tradition of apprenticeships within the industry, employers may not want to invest both time and money if the apprentice subsequently moves to another company. Some responses also highlighted that the majority of companies do not have a dedicated training role or team which can be problematic, particularly for micro and small to medium businesses.

Another key theme which was identified in the responses was the issue of health and safety. Large infrastructure projects have many health and safety requirements which cannot always be addressed for apprentices, particularly in relation to CSCS cards. This was felt to be a key barrier and has proved to be restrictive both for apprentices and trainees. One responder who is the owner of a small business, indicated that should they take on an apprentice, there would be a requirement to upgrade equipment and processes which would not be financially viable.

*'Need a top end approach to trickle down. Encouragement for top level clients to build it into tendering requirements. Becomes another thing that gets done like social value.'*

**Jenni Butterworth of Drakon Heritage**

*'How employers view training is something that needs to change – other industries who offer apprenticeships understand that training is multi-faceted, and that people will move between companies etc.'*

**David Connolly of BAJR**

Do you think there is enough sector support for apprenticeships?

Responses to this question indicate that there is a general level of support for apprenticeships within the sector but there are barriers which means that this support is not widespread.

These barriers are recurring themes from the previous two questions with responders suggesting ways in which this sector support could be increased.

- There needs to be strategic level support which is both visible and transparent.
- There is a need to streamline the process, outline who it is aimed at and what does it result in.
- Align intake of apprentices with annual forecasting budgets – this was particularly highlighted as a request for museums as they work on a project-by-project basis in financial terms.
- There is a requirement for funding, particularly for micro and small to medium companies (under 25 employees) who will find it difficult to deliver apprenticeships.
- Clearer guidance on what employers need to do in order to support apprentices.

*'[It's an] Issue of scale – very difficult for companies under 25 people to deliver apprenticeships. Those over 100 disappointing if not.'*

**Anonymous**

*'There would be support as practitioners understand the crisis the sector is in. It really needs funding to make happen and then practitioners would bite [the] hand off to stop the skills being lost. Something needs to change and that is recognised but there has to be an understanding people can't sit in an office and make decisions – maybe shadow in the setting to understand the issues more about how the profession works in practice.'*

**Vincent Reed of Vincent Reed Conservation and Restoration**

## What do you see as stopping the sector supporting apprenticeships?

The responses to this question were generally reflective of earlier questions. A key recurring theme is the apprenticeship process and the length of time taken to train an apprentice, particularly at Level 3. Some responders felt that the timescales of intake don't work for the wider sector with training programmes offered by companies seen to be more appropriate to their needs i.e., the length of time to train is shorter and the intake can be at any point during the year.

The location and lack of training providers was again regarded as an issue with responders indicating that there is a disconnect between employers and training providers with more support from training providers required. There is also the feeling that the process needs to be simplified and made easier for employers together with more visible promotion of when cohorts are due to start. There also seems to be an issue with employers understanding how the apprenticeship scheme works including how the levy operates in terms of apprenticeship salary: *“does this cover the one day a week requirement to be in college?”*

This can be linked to the lack of understanding the sector has on the different qualification types, what they are and how they relate to each other.

There also seems to be a feeling amongst respondents that Historic England need to adopt a more proactive approach in promoting apprenticeships if they want to see more uptake of them.

Another theme appears to be a natural resistance to new entry routes. As highlighted in question 2, apprenticeships are a non-traditional entry route for the industry and therefore there is an element of behavioural/cultural change which is required in order for the apprenticeship scheme to be more successful.

*‘It needs a proactive approach. Historic England need to realise strain on the sector at the moment. They need to go visit the units, talk to the heads or senior people to sell the idea. Go out and be there, don't expect them to come to you. The Historic England website is unfathomable, and people don't have time to go through it to find the information. A bit like research frameworks; at start consultants didn't understand how they worked as they were put up on a website and then Historic England moved on – very passive approach and workshops preach to the converted rather than seeking out new audiences. Needs a proactive approach to get people on board. Needs the next stage of the implementation. Pushing the scheme to people rather than expecting people to find it themselves. Where are*

*ClfA? They haven't pushed this to RO's – needs to be more joined up between ClfA and Historic England as a pincer movement.'*

**Kristina Krawiec of York Archaeological Trust**

*'Staff time to train apprentices and the funding required to support the apprenticeship. Need more evidence that the apprenticeships result in staff which are better trained and more ready for fieldwork than graduate programmes. Where do apprenticeships sit within the wider context of training. There are ClfA accredited degrees, inhouse training programmes so where does the apprenticeship scheme sit within this? This can be confusing. Having clearer pathways for each of these would help. There is also the question of ClfA NVQs – do they still exist? If they do, how do they relate to the apprenticeship scheme and other training programmes. Clearer communication is needed right across the board.'*

*'There may be some behavioural/cultural change that may need to happen in the sector so that the sector doesn't just view degrees as the only method of training. This is really the older generation of archaeologists that hold this view so this attitude is slowly changing as that generation is retiring.'*

**Annie Partridge of Isle Heritage**

Are there alternative training programmes that you think would be a better tool than apprenticeships?

Generally speaking, the majority of respondents felt that apprenticeships are a good model for training if the barriers and issues highlighted could be addressed.

Other options for training which were presented include:

- The NVQ in Archaeological Practice was regarded by some as being a better option as it is predominantly practically based, and also in that the employer can control the content more and don't have to pay another provider to fill in the gaps.
- In-house training programmes were offered as a valid alternative to apprenticeships but only if they are well structured, have dedicated people for training and will result in employment. Concern was raised that there is a lack of standardisation for in-house training programmes across different sector employers.

- Good field schools for practical archaeological skills if they use a structured framework. These could be accredited and if operated over a period of 3 years for example, could result in a qualification which would allow individuals to enter the profession. What qualification this might be however was not specifically suggested.
- Shorter training courses such as those run by SPAB would be more beneficial for heritage construction as there are many skilled tradespeople who would benefit from short courses on conservation principles and ethics.
- A training academy for heritage construction and built heritage conservation was also suggested as an alternative to apprenticeships for this part of the sector. However no particular detail was provided on how this would operate, e.g. a single institution, or a network of institutions across the country.
- Revisit the A Level in Archaeology course with the possibility of creating a T Level based on this content. This was seen to offer a good entry level into the profession for school leavers.

*'Universities starting to look more at work-based placements – year in industry. I managed three of these at the New Forest National Park Authority and all have gone on to working in the archaeology sector. Found these worked really well but they don't deliver the same as apprenticeships and don't help diversify the sector as they are people already progressing along university route just getting better training and skills as part of course improvements.'*

**James Brown of the National Trust**

*'Archaeology has one of highest rates of degree entries, but employers say that graduates don't have the right skill set.'*

**Jenni Butterworth of Drakon Heritage**

*'Any alternative will depend on the nature of the work and what skills are needed. There are training programmes for transferable skills such as management which the organisation has utilised. There are no real alternatives to provide training on geophysics and surveying skills. Geophysics and surveying are a combination of skills such as geology, archaeology and geophysics. It would be useful to have an introduction to archaeology in the British Isles for example – it would provide a good*

*introduction to archaeology for non-archaeologists who work in geophysics/surveying.'*

**Paul Johnson of Magnitude Surveys**

*'There are currently no alternative training programmes for conservation. The only pathway is to undertake an MA and there is a squeeze on practical skills in these courses. Apprenticeship offers the best training for these practical skills as it combines experience within a conservator role while linking with universities which are best placed to provide the theoretical training.'*

**Andrew Thrackray of Brighton and Hove Museums**

Do you think there has been enough support from heritage agencies and trade bodies in helping employers take on apprenticeships?

The majority of respondents felt that while there has been some support from heritage agencies and trade bodies, this support hasn't been particularly visible or practical. The general feeling from responses appears to suggest that a more formal strategy to embed apprenticeships within the sector is needed with more collaboration between heritage agencies, trade bodies and employers across the sector. Responses seem to indicate that it cannot fall solely to one heritage agency to provide mentoring and support as this is a full-time job and would be better placed as a collaborative effort to spread the workload.

*'There needs to be formal strategy to embed apprenticeships within the sector, but this requires funding, time and a commitment by national bodies and employers to drive it forward. There needs to be a trickle down of information/training the people who will actually be delivering the apprenticeships. This needs to come down to regional and local levels. These conversations have happened in the past, but this information isn't fed to the people that it affects.'*

**Matthew Bentley of Heritage Lincolnshire**

*'The whole sector needs to come together and put existing things to one side. Apprenticeships should unite people. There is a misconception perhaps that it's a Historic England thing, we'll leave them to get on with it.'*

**James Brown of the National Trust**



## Conclusions

The results of the surveys and the one-to-one interviews clearly demonstrate that there are a number of barriers to employers taking up the apprenticeship scheme. The following outlines the main conclusions drawn from this research and a range of recommendations as to how they may be addressed.

### Conclusion 1

Financial constraints are a key barrier to employers taking up apprenticeships. This includes both the cost in setting up the apprenticeship and the ongoing cost of employing an apprentice. This is particularly relevant for micro and small to medium companies.

### Recommendations

Heritage agencies, trade and professional bodies such as CifA, ALGAO, FAME, ICON, IHBC etc. should collaborate to explore the possibility of setting up a funding stream which would provide seed money to small/medium companies to both set up an apprenticeship and contribute to ongoing costs.

The potential for apprentices to be shared between companies within the same area should be explored. This would result in the costs of employing an apprentice to be shared between two or more companies and would also result in a well-rounded experience for the apprentice. It is suggested that a network of companies, particularly those that fall into the bracket of micro and small to medium enterprises (SME's), is set up which would enable this collaboration between companies.

### Conclusion 2

The length of time to train an apprentice, particularly at Level 3, is a recurring theme. Responders felt that 18 months was an unnecessarily long time to train a field archaeologist for example.

There is also concern over the apprenticeship standard content and its perceived lack of flexibility. Linked to this is the fact that intake onto the apprenticeship training programmes currently only take place once or twice a year.

### Recommendations

The Historic Environment Trailblazer should engage with training providers to consider whether the suggested time requirements for standards are still appropriate, or whether training providers could revisit their delivery plans to reduce the length of training programmes, particularly within archaeological apprenticeships.

Opportunities should be taken to explore the potential for company in-house training programme content to be used as part of the apprenticeship standard. It is recognised that this will be difficult to implement, both in terms of the lack of standardisation between in-house training schemes but also due to the requirement for companies to be on the Register of Apprenticeship Providers which is currently closed to new applications.

Heritage agencies, trade and professional bodies should look for opportunities to facilitate training providers and employers to explore the potential for more than one or two intakes a year.

### Conclusion 3

The apprenticeship process has been identified as unclear and from the survey responses it is evident that there is a lack of understanding of how the process works. Linked with this, there is a lack of clarity on what the different qualification routes are into the heritage sector and how they are linked. As part of this, lack of promotion of available apprenticeships has been quoted by both employers and early careers respondents as a barrier to taking up apprenticeships.

### Recommendations

It is recommended that the apprenticeship progress is clearly outlined, accompanied with an FAQ document and made clearly visible on the websites of heritage agencies, trade and professional bodies.

A defined and clear skills pathway for all qualification routes should be designed across the whole heritage sector. This pathway should clearly demonstrate how the different career pathways are interlinked and should be accompanied with appropriate case studies.

Promotion of apprenticeships should be made more clearly visible across the heritage sector. This promotion should be of a proactive nature with heritage agencies undertaking an active campaign to go to companies (either virtually or physically) to essentially sell the concept of the apprenticeship scheme. This promotion should also include accessing school leavers through schools and other youth groups such as the CBA's Young Archaeologists Club.

### Conclusion 4

Lack of staff time has been quoted throughout the project as a barrier to taking up an apprenticeship. This comprises both the lack of time to set up an apprenticeship and recruit and also the lack of dedicated time to train an apprentice. This is particularly pertinent for micro and small to medium companies and is linked to financial constraints.

Some responses indicated that there is a concern that existing staff within companies, while highly experienced in their field, may not be experienced in training/teaching.

## Recommendations

This recommendation is linked to Recommendation Number 1 and could be resolved by exploring the potential of sharing staff resource across companies as well as apprentices. Historic England, for example, has a highly skilled and experienced workforce and access to this experience could help to alleviate the issue of constrained staff resources.

It is recommended that a short course should be designed and implemented by heritage agencies within the sector which would aim to outline how a company's existing staff can support an apprentice. This could take the form of a series of webinars designed to outline best practice in terms of training and support.

It is recommended that example training plans and schedules linked to Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours listed in the apprenticeship standard are created which could be used by companies when undertaking an apprenticeship.

## Conclusion 5

Concern was raised over the lack of training providers and their location. Companies who would consider employing an apprentice have found that they are unable to move forward, in part, due to the lack of an available training provider within a reasonable distance.

## Recommendations

To alleviate the issues of geographical locations of training providers, blended learning should continue to be implemented within apprenticeship training programmes. The possibility of holding residential schools rather than attendance at the training provider for one day a week should also be explored as an option.

## Conclusion 6

As apprenticeships are a non-traditional route into the heritage sector, there is a perception that they are not 'as good' as an academic qualification such as a degree. There is a need for a shift in attitude away from the concept that only an academic degree (both undergraduate and post-graduate) is the only suitable route into the sector.

## Recommendations

There is a need to effect a cultural change within the heritage sector with regards to how it views apprenticeships. There are a number of recommendations which could help to implement this change:

- Publication of both negative and positive case studies of previous apprenticeships cohorts. This would allow companies and organisations to build a successful business case.
- Creation of a mentoring scheme with employers who have been through the apprenticeship process. This could take the form of either a virtual or physical Q and A session at an annual sector conference where employers could make themselves available to talk to. This mentoring scheme could also be more formal and be part of a wider sector training network as outlined in Recommendation Number 1 above.

## Conclusion 7

Concern was raised that, whilst the current apprenticeship standards are welcome and do fill a certain skills shortage, there is also the need to address the specific skills gap in subjects such as geophysics, geoarchaeology and palaeoenvironmental archaeology, and it is felt by a number of employers that the existing standards do not allow for this.

Responses also indicated that apprenticeships should also include heritage adjacent skills such as project management, HR, Business Administration etc.

## Recommendations

Guidelines should be produced to demonstrate how the current Level 7 Archaeological Specialist standard is adaptable to address specific specialist skills gaps and include in the wider promotion activity recommended above (Recommendation 3).

Promotion should also include clear and concise information on how historic environment apprenticeship standards address key business skills; but also the range of apprenticeship standards that are available for employers to utilise which focus solely on such skills.



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