

## **West London Construction Academy hosts a Construction Challenge for local schools**

Last week over 75 pupils from year 8 got to grips with a host of new skills, including learning how to build and plaster walls, as part of a Construction Challenge. The two-day event was held at the West London Construction Academy located on Berkeley's Southall Waterside development.

Pupils from Featherstone High School, Dormers Wells High School and Villiers High School took part in the challenge, which provided an opportunity to gain invaluable hands-on experience of core construction tasks to give an insight into the industry and the different career options available.

For the workshops, the 12- and 13-year olds were split into teams to complete a series of practical tasks that are vital to construction such as bricklaying, moulding and plastering, drainage, as well as learning about health and safety awareness.

The challenges encouraged students to work together and think outside the box to find solutions. When asked what they thought of the development one pupil from Featherstone High School commented: "I enjoyed bricklaying as it felt nice to actually build something and see the end result of your work", while another from Villiers High School said that Southall Waterside was "Awesome!".

Berkeley, which is delivering the 88-acre Southall Waterside development, hosted the event in partnership with West London College. Throughout the event, pupils were encouraged to ask questions about the different career opportunities in the construction industry and routes available to them, including apprenticeships, which are offered at the West London Construction Academy.

The winning team from each school has been invited to return to Southall Waterside later this summer to battle it out in a final challenge to see who will take home the Construction Challenge Trophy 2019.

David Warnes, managing director from West London College said: "It has been wonderful to have such engaged students from the schools local to the West London Construction Academy to take part in the Construction Challenge 2019.

"It's these types of community activities that we take part in that can really have an impact and inspire the next generation of builders, architects, quantity surveyors, site managers, and more. We saw some excellent work over the two days and are looking forward to welcoming the winning teams back again for the final!"

Lord Young of Norwood Green, apprenticeship ambassador said: "It is great to see employers and training providers partnering to deliver high-quality education and training initiatives that highlight the wide variety of options available to people once they leave school. An event like this may spark a new found interest that could lead to a lifelong career."

Damian Leydon, operations director at Berkeley West Thames, said: "At Berkeley we are committed to supporting the local community and making it easier for everyone to access a range of jobs and training opportunities.

“The construction challenge event is a fantastic way to boost the future of the construction industry by inspiring the next generation.”

The West London Construction Academy, which opened on-site at Southall Waterside last year and has now been recognised as one of the Mayor of London’s Construction Academy hubs, provides apprenticeships that allow students to gain on-the-job experience alongside classroom and online learning – bridging the skills gap for the long-term and allowing students to earn as they learn.

The development of Southall Waterside is set to create 21,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, and a further 600 permanent roles. Berkeley is working closely with Ealing Council and local businesses to ensure local people are the first to benefit from these valuable career and training opportunities.

Once complete, Southall Waterside will provide 3,750 new homes on disused industrial land. The scheme will create a welcoming, open landscape with two new parks for everyone to enjoy. Other planned amenities include a health centre, primary school, community centre and a buzzing commercial district with shops, restaurants, a cinema and public squares.

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### **Notes to editors**

#### **Southall Waterside**

Southall Waterside, Berkeley’s exciting new development in West London is one of the capital’s most ambitious regeneration projects. The 3,750-home scheme will bring a redundant gasworks site back into use for the whole community to benefit from. Southall Waterside is about more than just homes. It will be a thriving new neighbourhood on the Grand Union Canal – with a buzzing commercial district, two new parks and landscaped green spaces, and open up access to the adjacent 90-acre Minet Country Park for all to enjoy.

The first 304 homes to be delivered at Southall Waterside are all affordable, and are being offered to existing Ealing residents under either affordable rent or shared ownership.

Every home at Southall Waterside will be within a five-minute cycle of a station, and the arrival of Crossrail will provide a direct service to Bond Street in 17 minutes and Canary Wharf in 30 minutes. A network of safe cycle paths and walkways will improve connections to the surrounding area and open up access to a 1km waterside trail along the Grand Union Canal.

#### **About Berkeley Group**

The Berkeley Group build homes and neighbourhoods. We focus on creating beautiful, successful places in London and the South of England. We work together with other people to

tackle the shortage of good quality homes and make a lasting contribution to the landscape and to the communities we help create.

The Berkeley Group is made up of six autonomous companies: St George, St James, Berkeley, St Edward, St William and St Joseph. We are publicly-owned and listed on the London Stock Exchange as a FTSE 100 company.

Berkeley's business strategy is called Our Vision. This focuses on five key areas: our customers, homes, places, operations and people. Through this framework we are striving to become a world class business.

Sustainability is at the heart of Berkeley. Our single biggest contribution is to create new places that grace their surroundings and will stand the test of time. The environmental performance of each site is monitored tightly and we publish independent research measuring our social and economic impact.

The Berkeley Group was voted one of Britain's Most Admired Company across all industries from 2012 to 2016 and Housebuilder of the Year in 2015. In 2014, we won the Queens Award for Enterprise and in 2015 we were the first house-builder in Britain to have 500 sites registered by the Considerate Constructors Scheme.

The Berkeley Foundation was set up in 2011 by the Berkeley Group. So far it has committed over £11 million to over 100 charities and worthy causes. The Berkeley Foundation focuses on four key areas: homes, jobs, skills and care. Funding comes in a variety of ways: the Berkeley Group covers overhead costs; employees have so far raised over £3.5 million; and we are also very grateful for support from our consultants, subcontractors and supply chain.

### **About West London College**

West London College is a large further education college with five sites: Hammersmith & Fulham College, Ealing Green College, Southall Community College, Park Royal College and West London Construction Academy.

Rated Good by Ofsted, West London College achieved the first position in the National Achievement Rate Tables for both Overall Achievement Rate and Adult Achievement Rate in London. Offering both full-time and part-time courses for 16-18 year olds and adults in a range of subjects, students can choose vocational and professional qualifications, including BTECs, apprenticeships, HNDs, Access to Higher Education Diplomas, CIPD courses, short courses and bespoke training for businesses and organisations. They also have courses that can help students learn English and a range of courses for students with Special Educational Needs.