



# Construction charter

Southwark Council

## Introduction

As a local authority, Southwark Council is responsible for the procurement of a multitude of construction projects. It is therefore appropriate that we, as a responsible client, commit to proactively engaging with the appropriate trade unions and with our works contractors, to achieve the highest standards in respect of:

- employment status,
- health & safety,
- quality of work,
- apprenticeship engagement and
- a commitment to continued professional development

## Charter Aims

The following aims shall be encouraged and supported for all contractors and their supply chain engaged by the council. This Charter will be incorporated into all contracts for works entered into by the council.

1. We recognise that the highest level of compliance with current HMRC regulations must be achieved where public funds are utilised. Wherever possible all main contractor staff engaged on a works contract with the council should be directly employed on a PAYE basis under a contract of employment.
2. Health and safety of workers and site visitors on all of our construction projects is paramount. All contractors must rigorously implement and adhere to our standards for health and safety, as set out in the Southwark Safety Reference Manual (and any other requirements included in our works contracts) and higher levels where possible. All contractors must also provide quality welfare facilities fit for purpose in accordance with the Construction Design and Management Regulation of 2015.
3. It is accepted that the presence of trade union safety representatives can significantly improve safety in the workplace. Contractors and their supply chain are encouraged to work collaboratively with the appropriate trade unions to identify and implement all reasonable and practicable measures that improve and sustain site safety.
4. The council requires all projects to be completed to the quality standards specified in the relevant contract, so as to meet the aspirations of the residents of this Borough. In order to achieve this, it is important that all workers are competent and have the appropriate level of skill to carry out the work they are employed to do. To assist in the achievement of this goal the council's contractors and their supply chain will ensure they retain documented evidence that all workers are competent to carry out the work they have been employed to do and allow the council or our nominees to audit such documentation if required. Possession of the relevant industry skills/grade card such as JIB or CSCS will be considered acceptable evidence.
5. The council is mindful of the industry skills shortage and the need to address this through appropriate apprenticeships, including adult training in up skilling. The council's contractors and supply chain will, in consultation with the council and other interested parties, develop and implement a programme that addresses the skills shortage and provides training opportunities to local residents.

6. The council understands the right for all construction workers to be employed under and to be protected by the appropriate national industry collective agreement and relevant appropriate legislation. The council welcomes and encourages full compliance with all appropriate national agreements applicable to the construction industry.
7. All contractors and their supply chain will accept the right of any trade union that is a signatory to an appropriate national agreement, to appoint shop stewards, workplace health & safety representatives and Union Learning Representatives. All trade union accredited representatives will be granted appropriate time and facilities to carry out their responsibilities.
8. The council, our contractors and their supply chain are committed to a fair and transparent recruitment policy. All contractors and their supply chain will actively ensure that the engagement of staff and operatives is based on the individual's ability to meet the needs of the project and the specific tasks for which they are recruited to undertake.
9. The council, our contractors and their supply chain agree it is not acceptable for anyone to use or make reference to any form of blacklist.
10. The council welcomes the benefit trade unions bring to the workplace and the rights of workers to hear from trade union representatives. The council, our contractors and their supply chain will support this by allowing access for nominated trade union officer(s) from trade unions that are signatories to the relevant national agreements. Access shall mean access to welfare facilities during working times so as to allow them to consult with their members and potential members.
11. The council supports the 'Get Britain Building' campaign, which is aimed at supporting and sustaining the British construction industry. All relevant construction contracts will incorporate the council's Sustainable Buying Standard for Highways and Construction Materials, which requires structural steel and other relevant materials to be covered by BES 6001 Responsible Sourcing of Construction Product certification, or equivalent.
12. All construction or refurbishment contracts/projects in excess of 6 weeks in duration, at the request of the Council as appropriate, must be registered with the Considerate Constructor Scheme (CCS) or evidence how they meet all the criteria of the CCS, and all contractors working on these projects need to adhere to the rules of the scheme. Registration should be undertaken by the principal contractor, who should detail on the CCS documentation the name and contact details of the Southwark principal contact for each project. Further information on CCS can be found at: <http://www.considerateconstructorsscheme.org.uk>