

Major infrastructure projects in Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire is currently experiencing significant growth in infrastructure development, with several major projects creating exciting opportunities for students studying construction courses.

Key projects such as HS2, The East West Rail project and developments by leading construction company Winvic are transforming the region's landscape.

HS2, the high-speed rail project and sites like Turweston Green Bridge are not only improving connectivity across the UK but also generating thousands of construction and engineering roles.

The East West Rail project, linking Oxford to Cambridge via key locations like Milton Keynes and Bedford, further boosts demand for skilled workers in areas such as civil engineering, groundworks and project management.

Winvic, a company with strong links to Northamptonshire, is involved in numerous large-scale commercial and residential developments, including logistics parks, smart warehouses and sustainable building projects.

For students on construction courses, these projects offer valuable opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships, site visits and future employment. They also provide the chance to learn about innovative construction techniques, sustainability practices, and large-scale project management, giving students practical insights and skills that are highly sought after in the industry.

Heritage projects

Northamptonshire is home to a rich variety of heritage sites that reflect its long and diverse history, from historic buildings and stately homes to iconic landmarks such as Delapré Abbey, Althorp House and Rockingham Castle. Many of these sites require specialist restoration and conservation work, creating an increasing demand for construction workers with heritage skills.

Recognising this skills gap, the College is passionate about equipping its students with traditional heritage techniques that are highly valued by employers. To support this, students have the opportunity to take part in real-life heritage projects across the county, working with organisations such as the Churches Conservation Trust, Delapré Abbey and Northampton and Lamport Railway.

These hands-on experiences not only help preserve Northamptonshire's rich history but also allow students to develop essential skills such as stonework, repointing, rewiring, timber repairs and sensitive restoration techniques. By working directly on these projects, students are gaining valuable, industry-relevant experience while playing an important role in protecting the county's heritage.

One exciting example of project providing hands-on learning for construction students is the restoration of a 19th century abandoned cottage at Delapré Abbey. This project students the rare opportunity to take full responsibility for a real-life regeneration project.

Examples of other projects include:

- Working with multiple partners on the restoration of St Katherine's Gardens, Northampton

- Improvements to St Giles Churchyard, Northampton
- Created a Santa's Grotto for Northampton BID for visitors to Northampton
- Working with West Northamptonshire Council and the Churches Conservation Trust on the £3.5m restoration of Northampton's historic Old Black Lion pub
- Heritage restoration work of the pond around 'The Woman with a Fish' statue at Delapre Abbey and students being given a 19th century cottage to renovate
- Ongoing heritage works at Northampton and Lamport Railway
- Created horse mounting blocks for the British Horse Society at Salcey Forest
- Bricklaying students worked on Abington Park's Aviary restoration project.

Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS)

The College secured nearly £17,000 of funding so its students can complete the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) before they finish their college studies. For this, students complete an additional health and safety course and their CSCS test, which is worth £300 to each candidate. All building site workers need this certification, but it is normally left to students to arrange to complete and pay for this for themselves after they finish college. By arranging for their students to do this before they finish their studies the team is ensuring the students are immediately employable on completion of their course.