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**Press Release:**

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**FPS Welcomes CITB Report Adding its Support for
More Apprenticeships**

The Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS) welcomes the Construction Industry Training Board’s (CITB) ‘Construction Skills Network’ (CSN) report, which predicts ‘…sustained growth from 2016-2020…’ adding its support to its call for ‘All types of training, and especially apprenticeships…’.

Marin Blower, Chair of the FPS, said: “The FPS has long highlighted its concern over the growing skills shortage within the geotechnical sector and construction industry as a whole, by pointing out the adverse impact this will have on future development projects and the wider UK economy. This report, whilst positive news for the construction industry in terms of growth (2.5% for the next five years\*) and job creation (232,0000\*) highlights that demand must be met with the supply of talented, high calibre and well-qualified people – all of which requires sustained investment in training and in particular, as highlighted by the report, apprenticeships.”

Martin added: “The FPS has introduced a number of initiatives designed to tackle the skills issue, including its own Piling Apprenticeship Scheme, but there is still a wider issue of attracting people into the construction sector in the face of strong competition from other careers. Our own short careers video, which promotes the different roles available in the geotechnical sector through youngsters explaining how rewarding their own careers are and the qualifications or career path they followed, aims to address this for the geotechnical sector. But more must be done to make construction as a whole a more attractive career option.

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“The skills shortage is having an impact now and the construction industry needs to re-double its efforts before the sector reaches a point of no return. The CITB initiatives will make a difference, but these must be matched with initiatives like those of the FPS, as well as businesses investing in training their people if only for selfish financial reasons – that is securing the resource to ensure their future growth!”

*\* CITB’s Construction Skills Network (CSN) report*

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**Notes to Editors | About the FPS:**

Established in 1964, the Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS) has proactively worked with its members to drive up standards within the industry. From a handful of members back in the days when rotary techniques were coming into use and crane-mounted and hydraulic equipment was in its infancy, the FPS represents most of the leading piling and geotechnical specialists in the construction sector.

Its independent auditing process, which all prospective members need to go through, ensures the highest standards are met, and this audit is repeated every three years to ensure standards are maintained and continually improved.

The FPS works closely with its members to establish standards and provide guidance across all piling and geotechnical areas as well as on wider construction related issues that affect the sector such as Building Information Modelling (BIM). Safety and training are the highest priorities.

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**Martin Blower, Chair of The Federation of Piling Specialists (FPS)**