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IEFCSMB RMI 25-26 Evidence Summary

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About This Version

This draft is intentionally formatting-neutral. It has been prepared to allow the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) to apply final branding, layout and editorial styling as part of the formal publication process.

Since the completion of this evidence review, the Government has published the Warm Homes Plan (January 2026). This Evidence Summary is therefore presented in that context, providing an evidence-led workforce perspective on delivery readiness, risks and dependencies, while retaining the original findings and recommendations agreed by the RMI Skills Working Group.

Executive Summary

This Evidence Summary provides the most comprehensive review to date of workforce realities across the domestic Repair, Maintenance and Improvement (RMI) sector. Drawing on 25 submissions and supplementary datasets, it provides a clear, consolidated picture of the sector's capacity, constraints, and opportunities.

The evidence shows a sector that delivers almost half of UK construction output, yet is consistently overlooked in policy and workforce planning. Most activity is delivered by microbusinesses, sole traders and SMEs, which face structural barriers to accessing training, funding and regulatory systems.

Across all submissions, several themes are consistently evidenced:

- persistent skills shortages across core and specialist trades;
- an ageing workforce with limited succession, particularly in heritage and heating;
- training provision that is geographically uneven and poorly matched to RMI practice;
- funding models that do not reflect microbusiness operating realities;
- consumer trust issues linked to competence and assurance;
- fragmented system leadership and limited cross-government alignment.

These themes reinforce the need for a coherent national approach to RMI workforce development, supported by local brokerage, clearer competence pathways, improved visibility and better-aligned funding. The Warm Homes Plan presents a timely opportunity to anchor this change within a long-term, area-based delivery framework, provided workforce capacity, capability and sequencing are addressed in parallel.

Key Messages for Policy-Makers

- RMI accounts for half of construction output but is structurally overlooked. Workforce issues cannot be solved through new-build policy levers alone;
- The workforce is ageing faster than it is being replaced; Without intervention, thousands of microbusinesses will exit the market through retirement;
- The training provision does not align with real-world RMI practice. Multi-trade roles dominate domestic RMI, yet qualifications remain siloed;
- Microbusinesses cannot access or navigate current funding systems. Policy and funding models must recognise their scale and operating constraints;
- Retrofit demand cannot be met without rapid workforce expansion. Heat pumps, insulation and ventilation skills are severely undersupplied;
- Local delivery capacity varies widely. Regional brokerage and coordination are essential to scale up training and employment;
- Consumer trust must improve. Competence, assurance and communication must align to reduce installation risks;
- Data is fragmented and incomplete. A national RMI workforce baseline is essential for planning and forecasting.

These messages should guide policy alignment across DESNZ, DBT, DfE, DLUHC and HMT.

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How to Use This Report

This report brings together evidence from across industry, government, training providers and research organisations to support the CSMB RMI Skills Working Group and inform cross-government workforce planning.

To navigate the report:

- **Executive Summary** – High-level findings and cross-cutting issues.
- **Sector Overview** – The structure and characteristics of the RMI workforce.
- **Five Pillars Summary** – Thematic analysis aligned to the Working Group's Pillars.
- **Barriers and Opportunities** – Synthesised challenges and levers for change.
- **Gaps, Next Steps and Further Work** – Priority areas for deeper insight.
- **Appendices** – Full detailed barrier and recommendation tables, methodology, references and glossary.

The report is intended as a foundational evidence base for 2026 planning and should be read alongside forthcoming Pillar Policy Briefings and the wider CSMB workforce strategy.

Introduction

The Construction Skills Mission Board (CSMB) RMI Skills Working Group undertook a comprehensive review of evidence submitted by industry, government bodies, training providers, researchers and consumer-facing organisations. The purpose was to establish a shared, cross-sector baseline on the realities, challenges and future requirements of the domestic RMI workforce.

This Evidence Summary synthesises 25 submissions, plus supplementary documents from Mears Group, into a single analytical narrative designed to inform decision-makers across DESNZ, DfE, DBT, DLUHC, HMT and the wider construction ecosystem.

Purpose of the Evidence Summary

This document provides a standalone, sector-wide snapshot of:

- The current state of the RMI workforce;
- the barriers that constrain supply, skills, productivity and confidence;
- opportunities for policy and programme alignment;
- where the RMI Skills Working Group believes targeted, practical action will have the most significant impact.

It also serves as the basis for the 2026 Pillar Policy Briefings and supports wider CSMB alignment with the Warm Homes Plan, the Industrial Strategy, and national workforce planning efforts, particularly in relation to domestic retrofit and RMI delivery.

Scale and Economic Significance of the RMI Sector

The domestic RMI sector is one of the UK's most economically significant and least understood workforce systems.

- 44% of all UK construction output comes from RMI activity
- £96bn in GVA is delivered annually
- Between 900,000 and 1.2 million people work in RMI-related roles
- 86% of all RMI businesses are microbusinesses (fewer than five employees)
- 30% of the workforce is self-employed

Despite its scale, the evidence shows a sector that remains structurally marginalised, dominated by small firms with limited administrative capacity, and not served by existing skills, funding or policy frameworks. The Warm Homes Plan reinforces the centrality of this workforce, setting out ambitions to upgrade up to five million homes by 2030 and recognising the need for a skilled, trusted and locally rooted supply chain to deliver at scale.

Key Workforce Challenges Identified

Analysis of submissions shows strong cross-sector consensus around the following pressures:

1. Skills shortages and an ageing workforce

- 61% of SMEs cannot fill vacancies
- 49% experience job delays because of labour gaps
- 23% have cancelled work due to shortages
- 44% of the RMI workforce is aged 55+
- Up to 39,000 businesses risk closure over the next decade without succession.

These challenges mirror risks identified in the Warm Homes Plan, particularly around fragmented delivery, uneven local capacity, workforce shortages in retrofit-related trades, and the need for stronger coordination between national ambition and local implementation.

2. Training access, provision and relevance

- No national baseline for RMI competence or retrofit-trained installers
- Training provision is fragmented, geographically inconsistent and often misaligned with the real scope of RMI work
- Apprenticeships are widely seen as bureaucratic and unsuitable for microbusiness delivery models
- Most training is informal, reactive and unrecorded

3. RMI is structurally marginalised in policy and funding systems

- Schemes such as Bootcamps, LSIPs and levy mechanisms fail to reach microbusinesses.
- Retrofit lacks a coherent workforce strategy despite high expectations for delivery.
- RMI is frequently absent in planning, funding and investment conversations

4. Consumer confidence and trust affect demand

- Homeowners' willingness to invest is strongly linked to installer trust
- Evidence from HIES, TrustMark and consumer surveys shows the consequences of poorly executed or unregulated work
- Lack of visibility of competent installers continues to suppress demand for upgrades

5. Barriers to SME growth and investment

- Short-term pipelines and economic volatility limit the appetite to hire or train.
- Administrative requirements of schemes and qualifications disproportionately affect small firms.
- Productivity remains low where businesses cannot invest in digital systems, innovation or management capacity.

Opportunities Identified Across the Sector

Across submissions, the following opportunities emerged consistently:

- 195,000 additional skilled roles could be created, delivering;
- £9.6bn in additional revenue, and;
- £4.1bn GVA (72% outside London/South East);
- High-trust, localised SME brokerage models can address onboarding and training barriers;
- A national RMI Competence & Career Framework would provide visibility, recognition and progression;
- Area-based retrofit programmes could create stable, long-term pipelines. This aligns with the Warm Homes Plan's commitment to area-based delivery and the establishment of a Warm Homes Agency to support coordination, oversight and local implementation;
- Better data integration and a simple national RMI workforce baseline would enable funding alignment and policy design;
- Regional adaptations of training and qualification models would unlock microbusiness participation in skills development.

Purpose and Use of This Summary

This document:

- establishes a single, authoritative evidence base for the RMI sector;
- supports Pillar Leads in preparing their 2026 Policy Briefings;
- identifies key gaps and priorities for further research;
- supports CSMB alignment with other government strategies;
- guides development of pilots and programmes for 2026–2030.

It is intended to be a practical tool for policymakers, commissioners, funders, and industry partners seeking workable solutions grounded in the lived realities of the RMI workforce.

Chair's Foreword (Anna Scothern, NHIC)

The domestic RMI sector is the backbone of UK construction. It upgrades, repairs, safeguards and improves 28 million homes, employs hundreds of thousands of tradespeople, and underpins national outcomes spanning building safety, energy efficiency, housing quality and public confidence. Yet the workforce and the businesses that deliver this essential work operate within systems that were never designed for them.

Across our Working Group, we have heard from tradespeople, employers, researchers and industry bodies who are deeply committed to quality but routinely face fragmented training systems, inconsistent funding, inaccessible schemes, and a lack of policy recognition. These challenges are not new — but for the first time, we have a consolidated picture of their scale and impact. This Evidence Summary is the most comprehensive and collaborative review of the RMI workforce in over a decade. It highlights the pressure points, but it also points toward solutions — practical, coordinated and deliverable solutions that match the realities of sole traders, microbusinesses and SMEs. It shows a sector ready to lead and ready to contribute, provided the systems around it recognise and support the way RMI truly works.

I am grateful to all contributors for their candour and expertise. Your evidence strengthens our collective voice and clarifies where action is most needed. This report sets the foundation for our next phase of work: turning evidence into aligned policy, targeted investment, and meaningful improvement for the people and businesses who keep our homes safe, warm and well-maintained.

2. Sector Overview

2.1 Definition and Scope of Domestic RMI

For this Evidence Summary, the domestic Repair, Maintenance and Improvement (RMI) sector is defined as all work undertaken on existing homes that maintains, enhances or safeguards their condition, safety, performance or value. This includes activities delivered across owner-occupied homes, private rented properties and social housing stock. Within the Warm Homes Plan, retrofit activity is positioned as a core component of domestic RMI delivery, reinforcing the need for whole-house, multi-disciplinary competence rather than narrow, single-measure skills pathways.

RMI encompasses:

- Repair — fixing or reinstating components, systems or structures;
- Maintenance — planned or responsive works necessary to maintain function and safety;
- Improvement — upgrades that improve comfort, performance, energy efficiency or value.

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This scope includes general building, repairs, maintenance services, building safety work, home energy upgrades, heating and ventilation systems, fenestration, roofing, plumbing, electrical work, insulation, and broader home improvements.

For workforce and competence planning, RMI is recognised as a whole-house, multi-disciplinary activity, covering:

- design and specification;
- selection and use of products;
- installation;
- commissioning;
- verification;
- oversight, sign-off and compliance;
- consumer interaction and aftercare.

Retrofit — energy-efficiency and low-carbon upgrades — sits within RMI as a specialist sub-sector that requires additional technical competence, assurance, and compliance pathways (e.g., PAS 2030/35, MCS).

Broader household improvements, such as landscaping, are acknowledged but sit outside the scope of this summary unless they directly affect building performance, safety or energy outcomes.

2.2 Structure of the Sector: Microbusinesses, SMEs and National Contractors

Evidence shows a sector characterised by very small firms delivering the majority of work:

- 86% of firms employ fewer than five people
- 30% of the workforce is self-employed
- A further 9–12% operate as sole traders with no employees
- SME builders deliver the bulk of everyday RMI activity, while large contractors focus on planned social-housing upgrades, whole-house retrofit programmes and major repairs

This structure has implications for:

- training access;
- productivity;
- onboarding apprentices;
- administrative compliance;
- engagement with government schemes;
- ability to absorb economic shocks;
- succession planning.

The sector is labour-intensive, geographically dispersed, and often characterised by local, relationship-based markets built on trust and reputation.

2.3 Regional Distribution and Characteristics

Domestic RMI is delivered in every part of the UK, but evidence shows significant variation in:

- regional availability of training providers;
- regional differences in vacancy rates and skills shortages;
- concentration of specialist trades (e.g. heritage, solid-wall insulation);
- economic conditions and consumer demand;
- housing stock typology and age;
- availability of local coordination mechanisms.

Key patterns evidenced across submissions include:

- North West, South West and East Midlands report some of the highest workforce shortages;
- Scotland and the South West face acute shortages in retrofit installers and assessors;
- Heritage skills shortages are most pronounced in the South West, East of England and parts of Yorkshire;
- Local authorities vary in their experience, capacity and appetite to coordinate retrofit and RMI programmes;
- Regional economic volatility strongly affects SME confidence to hire or train.

These regional disparities reinforce the need for localised approaches, regional brokerage models, and regionally tailored training provision. The Warm Homes Plan's emphasis on place-based delivery further underscores the importance of regional coordination mechanisms that can align workforce development with local housing stock, demand profiles and delivery pipelines.

2.4 Workforce Profile: Age, Diversity, Qualifications and Entry Routes

Age Profile

The RMI workforce skews significantly older:

- 44% aged 55+
- Only 9–12% under 24
- Up to 39,000 small RMI businesses are at risk of closure due to retirements over the next decade.

This places pressure on succession, continuity, and the preservation of heritage skills.

Gender and Diversity

Construction remains structurally unrepresentative:

- 17% of the workforce is female
- The sector is less ethnically diverse than the UK average
- Disabled workers represent 13–14%, slightly below national figures

Evidence shows that diversity challenges are amplified in small firms and sole-trader settings.

Qualifications and Competence

There is no national baseline for:

- retrofit-trained installers
- RMI-specific competence
- whole-house or cross-trade competence
- on-site upskilling or informal learning

Most RMI learning is unrecorded, with competence often built through:

- experience
- mentorship
- informal skills transfer
- unstructured CPD
- product-based training
- compliance-related requirements only when mandated

Routes into the Sector

Entry routes are varied and inconsistent:

- Apprenticeships support only a small proportion of new entrants;
- Many join through family businesses or informal pathways;
- Career-changers entering RMI struggle to navigate fragmented training offers;
- Schools/colleges rarely promote RMI as a career pathway;
- "General builder" entry routes are common but poorly supported by qualification frameworks.

Evidence highlights growing interest from mid-career entrants and career switchers, particularly from adjacent trades and sectors. However, financial barriers, low apprenticeship wages, reduced productivity during retraining, and limited tailored support significantly constrain uptake. Without targeted financial and structural support, this cohort is unlikely to contribute at scale to workforce renewal.

2.5 How Training and Recruitment Currently Happen

Across the evidence base, training and recruitment are shaped by:

- Informal pathways rather than formal programmes;
- On-the-job learning driven by business need rather than planned development;
- Reactive training (product, compliance, regulatory change);
- Limited use of existing frameworks (NVQs, apprenticeships) due to administrative burden;
- Training is undertaken only when required by the client or scheme requirements;
- Low awareness of funding support;
- Geographic inconsistency in training availability;

Recruitment typically relies on:

- word of mouth;
- trusted local networks;
- personal recommendations;
- previous colleagues;
- short-term responses to pipeline fluctuations;

This creates a system in which competence varies widely and is difficult to evidence consistently.

2.6 Existing Use of Apprenticeships, CPD and Informal Upskilling

Apprenticeships

Across submissions, apprenticeships are viewed as:
- essential but inaccessible for microbusinesses;
- administratively heavy;
- financially risky;
- inflexible in relation to RMI's multi-disciplinary scope;
- affected by low completion rates and weak progression routes.

Only 34% of RMI businesses report having taken on an apprentice in the last three years.

CPD and Retraining

CPD uptake is generally:
- low;
- unstructured;
- reliant on manufacturer-led training;
- Heavily influenced by market or regulatory drivers.

Informal Upskilling

This forms the majority of competence development across the sector:
- hands-on learning;
- skills transfer on live projects;
- retrofitting existing skillsets;
- responding to customer expectations;
- adapting to new product technologies.

However, informal upskilling is rarely captured in any national workforce data and is not recognised within existing frameworks.

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2.7 Consumer Confidence, Quality & Competence

Consumer-facing evidence from CORGI Services, HIES, HICS and DGCOS provides a practical view of the quality and competence issues experienced across domestic RMI work. These organisations collectively handle thousands of cases each year, offering insight into the real-world risks households face and the factors that influence consumer trust.

Key themes include:

- **Recurring workmanship issues** across heating, insulation, fenestration and general home improvements;
- **Installation failures** linked to incorrect specification, poor diagnostics, incomplete commissioning and inconsistent use of standards;
- **Competence visibility gaps**, with homeowners unable to distinguish between qualified and unqualified installers;
- **Variable post-installation support**, including unresolved defects, incomplete works and poor rectification processes;
- **High volumes of dispute resolution cases** indicate systemic issues in quality assurance and oversight;
- **Strong links between competence, consumer confidence and market behaviour**, with trusted brands and clear assurance pathways improving outcomes.

This evidence reinforces the importance of clearer competence frameworks, improved installer assurance, and workforce development approaches that strengthen quality and consumer protection across the RMI sector.

This evidence is consistent with the Warm Homes Plan’s acknowledgement that quality failures and fragmented oversight under previous schemes undermined consumer confidence, and that future delivery at scale depends on simpler, more trusted systems that work for both consumers and installers.

3. Thematic Summary of Submissions (Organised by the Five Pillars)

The characteristics set out in the Sector Overview provide the context for understanding the systemic challenges across the five Pillars. The following sections summarise the evidence aligned to each Pillar and highlight where the sector consistently reports pressure points.

This section consolidates key insights drawn from 25 evidence submissions (plus two supplementary Mears reports), grouped into the five agreed Pillars of the RMI Skills Working Group.

Each Pillar summary brings together:

- consistent themes across submissions
- data-driven commentary
- practical insights from SMEs, microbusinesses and certification bodies
- identified gaps
- implications for policy and delivery

The five Pillars set out below provide a structured lens through which to interpret the workforce implications of the Warm Homes Plan. While developed independently of the Plan, the evidence consistently highlights conditions that will determine whether its ambitions can be delivered in practice

Pillar 1 — Workforce Supply & Attraction (Confidence to employ and invest)

3.1.1 Overview

Evidence demonstrates a sector with strong underlying demand but limited ability to attract and retain new entrants. Short-term work pipelines, economic uncertainty, and the administrative burden of training and employment shape SME and microbusiness confidence to hire.

3.1.2 Key Themes Identified

1. Persistent shortages across core trades

Across submissions (FMB, NHIC, CITB, TrustMark):

- 61% of SMEs report recruitment challenges;
- Carpenters, roofers, plumbers, and HVAC engineers are consistently cited as the most challenging roles to fill;
- Specialist trades (heritage, energy efficiency, heat pumps, insulation) face acute shortages;
- Poor visibility of RMI careers in schools and colleges limits the number of new entrants.

2. Ageing workforce and limited succession routes

- 44% of workers are aged 55+;
- Only 9–12% are under 24;
- 39,000 businesses risk closure without succession;
- Heritage trades are particularly vulnerable;

3. Financial and operational barriers limit confidence in employing

Submissions highlight:

- narrow profit margins;
- high material and wage inflation;
- inconsistent pipelines;
- concerns about taking on apprentices during volatile periods;
- productivity impacts when training new staff.

4. Perception and branding barriers

- Only 47% of parents would encourage careers in RMI;
- RMI suffers from a low profile compared with new build and engineering;
- Limited representation in national careers campaigns.

3.1.3 Implications

- Without targeted support, the sector cannot meet future demand (especially for retrofit and home upgrades);
- Workforce replacement requires coordinated attraction, visibility and entry routes;
- Policy must recognise the operating realities of very small firms.

Pillar 2 — Skills, Training & Progression (Clear new entrant pathways)

3.2.1 Overview

Evidence shows that the current training system does not reflect how the RMI sector actually operates. Training pathways are fragmented, geographically uneven, and often unsuitable for multi-trade RMI roles.

3.2.2 Key Themes Identified

1. Training provision does not meet sector needs

Across submissions:

- lack of RMI-specific competence frameworks
- limited training centres outside major cities
- minimal provision for insulation, heat pumps, ventilation, and fenestration
- Retrofit training is patchy and inconsistently quality assured.

2. Apprenticeships remain inaccessible for microbusinesses

Key reported issues:

- excessive paperwork
- cost of supervision
- loss of productivity
- rigid qualification content that does not reflect real-world RMI
- low completion and retention rates

3. Progression pathways are unclear or non-existent

There is no national progression spine for:

- general builders
- multi-trade operatives
- retrofit specialists
- mid-career entrants
- those switching from adjacent sectors (e.g., gas to heat pumps)

4. Informal upskilling dominates

- Most RMI learning occurs on the job
- Rarely recorded or recognised
- Difficult to demonstrate competence for funding, assurance or procurement

3.2.3 Implications

- The current skills system cannot scale RMI or retrofit delivery
- New multi-trade, modular, flexible pathways are required
- Structured recognition of informal learning is essential

Pillar 3 — Industry Engagement & Visibility (Access to provision and practical support to train)

3.3.1 Overview

RMI suffers from low visibility in national skills, careers, and economic planning. Evidence shows that greater engagement among industry, government, and consumers would drive training uptake, improve trust, and enhance workforce confidence.

3.3.2 Key Themes Identified

1. Lack of trusted, visible routes for consumers and trades

- Consumers struggle to identify competent installers.
- Certification schemes, warranties and consumer-protection bodies report significant cases of poor workmanship.
- No single, nationally visible directory of competent RMI professionals

2. Missed opportunities to reach microbusinesses

- Training providers struggle to engage small firms.
- Schemes (Bootcamps, LSIPs, Levy-related support) fail to reach the RMI majority.
- Evidence from FMB and On The Tools shows microbusinesses simply "not seeing" national initiatives.

3. Under-recognised role of trade associations, consumer brands and local networks

- Associations, competent person schemes and independent quality bodies are trusted messengers.
- But they are not sufficiently included in the government programme design.

4. Digital tools and information channels are underused

- SMEs lack time, understanding or support to access digital management systems or training content.
- Consumer-facing platforms rarely align with workforce and training pathways.

3.3.3 Implications

- Strengthening engagement requires trusted intermediaries.

- Communications must reflect how the sector actually consumes information
- Better visibility of competence can stimulate both demand and investment

Pillar 4 — Productivity, Innovation & Technology (Funding that works)

3.4.1 Overview

Submissions highlight that productivity in the RMI sector is limited not by a lack of willingness to train or innovate, but by financial constraints, time pressures, and fragmented investment incentives.

3.4.2 Key Themes Identified

1. Low profitability hinders investment

- Rising material and wage costs;
- Unpredictable pipelines;
- Very thin margins, particularly for microbusinesses;
- Inability to release staff for training without losing work.

2. Digital adoption is limited

- Digital tools could enhance quoting, scheduling, compliance and quality assurance;
- But take-up is low due to cost, complexity and lack of tailored support.

3. Retrofit technologies require new specialist skills

- Heat pumps, insulation, ventilation, airtightness, and controls require technical competence and assurance;
- The current workforce cannot meet the projected demand;
- Training provision is insufficient.

4. Funding mechanisms are not designed for RMI

Evidence consistently shows:

- SMEs cannot access levy benefits;
- Bootcamps do not align with RMI needs or geography;
- Funding for retrofitting training is inconsistent and short-term;
- Local funding is fragmented, hard to navigate and poorly coordinated.

3.4.3 Implications

- Productivity gains require practical support, simplified funding and local coordination;
- Investment must be tied to real-world RMI working patterns;
- Retrofit rollout depends on specialist training scaled regionally.

Pillar 5 — System Leadership & Coordination (Reliable and rewarding careers)

3.5.1 Overview

Submissions indicate widespread fragmentation and lack of clarity across policy, delivery mechanisms, and workforce development approaches. The sector is highly receptive to leadership that brings coherence, alignment and visibility.

3.5.2 Key Themes Identified

1. Fragmented systems produce duplication and confusion

- Lack of alignment between DESNZ, DfE, DBT, DLUHC, HMT and local bodies;
- Poor coordination between training providers, certification schemes and trade associations;
- Multiple overlapping programmes with inconsistent eligibility criteria;
- Training system capacity and quality pressures.

Evidence indicates that workforce constraints are emerging within the training system itself. Limited tutor capacity, variable provider quality, and insufficient incentives for experienced tradespeople to become trainers are already restricting course availability in some regions and disciplines.

2. Local authorities and social housing providers are critical but unevenly supported

- Some act as strong conveners;
- Others lack resources and capacity;
- No consistent mechanism for aligning workforce needs with housing pipelines.

3. Strong appetite for a national RMI Workforce Strategy

Across the evidence, stakeholders call for:

- national frameworks;
- shared definitions;
- a coherent progression pathway;
- common competence language;
- integrated datasets;
- regionally adaptable delivery models.

4. Demand for clearer career structures

- Tradespeople lack clear progression routes;
- Employers cannot access simple tools to support career development;
- Consumers cannot easily understand competence standards.

3.5.3 Implications

- Coordinated system leadership is essential to unlock workforce scale;
- The RMI sector needs clear roles, responsibilities and communication pathways;
- A shared national workforce strategy must be locally adaptable;
- Without addressing tutor supply, provider capability and the economics of training delivery, workforce expansion targets will remain unachievable regardless of learner demand.

4. Summary of Barriers & Opportunities

While each Pillar reveals distinct issues, the evidence repeatedly points to a shared set of cross-cutting barriers that shape workforce behaviour and sector capacity. These are summarised in Section 4, with detailed entries in Appendix 1 B.

The evidence base highlights a highly consistent pattern of systemic barriers and a parallel set of clear opportunities for targeted intervention. These themes cut across all five pillars and reflect the lived realities of RMI employers, training providers, certification bodies, and consumer-facing organisations.

4.1 Summary Table — Most Frequently Evidenced Barriers

Table 1: Cross-Cutting RMI Workforce Barriers (Summary View)
(Full detail by contributor and citation is included in Appendix 5 & 6)

Evidence strength reflects the consistency and volume of references across multiple submissions.

4.2 Opportunities Identified Across the Evidence Base

Stakeholders consistently point to opportunities where well-designed, practical interventions could quickly unlock workforce capacity and improve training outcomes.

Table 2: Cross-Cutting Opportunities (Summary View)
(Full details in Appendix 1C)

4.3 Examples of "Quick Wins"

From the evidence base, the following opportunities present low-cost, high-impact interventions:

1. Regional Brokerage Pilots

- Delivered through trusted intermediaries (e.g., associations, certification schemes);
- Immediate benefits: easier apprentice onboarding, targeted upskilling, simplified employer engagement.

2. RMI Workforce Baseline

- Simple data collection model integrating PAS/MCS/TrustMark/association data;
- Enables planning for the Warm Homes Plan and local retrofit strategies.

3. Recognition of Informal Learning

- A "Recognition of RMI Competence" framework to validate on-the-job learning;
- Aligns with IfATE reform and new modular approaches.

4. Local Retrofit Engagement Packs for SMEs

- Practical guidance for small firms entering low-carbon markets;
- Reduces perceived barriers to heat pump and insulation markets.

5. Microbusiness Training Support

- Simple "Help to Train" SME grants;
- Popular, easy to administer, and highly aligned with evidence findings.

4.4 Longer-Term System Improvements

Structural improvements identified include:

1. National RMI Workforce Strategy

- Shared definitions, competence language and pathways;
- Aligned across DESNZ, DBT, DfE, DLUHC and HMT.

2. Retrofit-Specific Skills Infrastructure

- Regional retrofit centres;
- Multi-trade retrofit training;
- Integrated on-site mentoring models.;

3. Apprenticeship Reform

- Microbusiness-friendly delivery;
- Multi-trade apprenticeship option;
- Digital logbooks and modular progression.

4. Consistent consumer-facing quality assurance

- Clear national signal of competence for homeowners;
- Better alignment between schemes, regulators and consumer bodies.

5. Integrated funding packages

- Retrofit workforce fund;
- Regional levy-flex models;
- Long-term Warm Homes Plan alignment.

5. Gaps, Next Steps & Further Work

The barriers presented in Section 4 highlight systemic issues, but they also reveal areas where evidence remains incomplete or unevenly distributed. Section 5 outlines these gaps and identifies opportunities for further data collection, policy development and pilot activity.

The call for evidence revealed a strong and consistent picture of the RMI workforce. Still, it also identified several gaps in data, visibility, and regional insight that will shape the next phase of work for the RMI Skills Working Group.

This section sets out what is missing, what is needed to strengthen the evidence base, and how this summary will support upcoming policy development and programme design.

5.1 Gaps in the Existing Evidence Base

Across submissions, three types of evidence gaps emerged: structural, regional, and sectoral.

A. Structural Gaps

- No national RMI workforce baseline;
- No single dataset captures the total number of RMI workers, multi-trade operatives, or retrofit-trained installers;
- Workforce estimates vary (900,000–1.2 million);
- Lack of recognised RMI competence definitions;
- Competence requirements vary across schemes, products, and programmes;
- Informal learning and multi-trade competence remain invisible;
- Inconsistent definition of RMI as a sector;
- Many data sources bundle RMI with wider construction, making it difficult to isolate issues specific to domestic work;
- Limited integration of consumer outcomes;
- Evidence shows strong links between competence and consumer trust, but datasets remain fragmented across assurance providers.

B. Regional Evidence Gaps

- Uneven view of regional workforce dynamics;
- Some areas (e.g., the South West and the East Midlands) are well documented;
- Others lack detailed insight into skills shortages, training capacity and pipeline stability;
- Lack of granular understanding of local training infrastructure;

- No single map of RMI training availability across retrofit, heritage, or multi-trade roles;
- No coordinated view of local authority capacity;
- LA approaches to retrofit, training engagement, and SME support vary significantly, but data is inconsistent.

C. Sectoral and Occupational Gaps

- An incomplete picture of specialist trades;
- Heritage builders, insulation installers, heat pump engineers and ventilation specialists are under-represented;
- Insufficient insight into mid-career entrants and career-switchers;
- Limited data on motivations, barriers, or success rates;
- Gaps in understanding of digital adoption trends and needs;
- Particularly for small businesses lacking digital admin tools or compliance systems.

5.2 Priority Areas for Additional Data Collection

Based on the evidence reviewed, the Working Group identifies the following priority areas for additional insight:

- Mapping specialist retrofit roles (heat pumps, ventilation, insulation, airtightness, controls);
- Understanding barriers for sole traders (often invisible in large datasets);
- Regional training capacity mapping (type, volume, quality, geographic reach);
- Consumer trust and competence perception (linking quality, trust and investment);
- Succession and replacement modelling for small firms;
- Dataset integration across TrustMark, MCS, CPS schemes, associations and providers.

5.3 Offers from Contributors to Support Further Work

Several stakeholders expressed willingness to contribute further evidence:

- On the Tools — offer of deeper worker sentiment and microbusiness survey data;
- FMB — access to State of Trade data and member insights.
- Historic England — further heritage workforce data and qualitative insights;
- Gemserv — detailed retrofit capacity modelling and training provider mapping;

- Mears Group — sharing workforce modelling and regional capacity analysis;
- TrustMark — further data on installer competence, quality assurance and consumer risk;
- NHIC — access to consumer data, policy research, and Installer Voice insights;
- QANW, alongside other NHIC networked / association members, offered to reach out to their networks with surveys and to facilitate roundtables.

These offers can be coordinated into a second-phase evidence pack during early 2026.

5.4 Opportunities for Practical Pilots and Delivery Projects

The evidence strongly supports the development of pilots that test real-world solutions aligned to microbusiness and SME operating models.

Potential Pilot Areas:

1. Regional SME Brokerage Hubs

- De-risk recruitment;
- Support apprentice onboarding;
- Navigate funding and training;
- Match training offers to local pipelines.

2. Multi-Trade RMI Apprenticeship Pilot

- Modular qualification
- Blended on/off-site delivery;
- RMI-specific competence standards;
- Partnership between IfATE, associations and certification bodies.

3. Retrofit Workforce Pathfinder Areas

- Coordinate local retrofit demand with training and assurance;
- Focus on social housing and mixed-tenure neighbourhoods;
- Establish on-site mentoring and multi-trade retrofit pathways.

4. Digital Tools for Small Firms Pilot

- Testing digital compliance, scheduling, quoting, and training modules;
- Targeted support for sole traders and microbusinesses.

5. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Model for RMI

- Captures informal competence;
- Creates structured progression routes;
- Supports accreditation and consumer trust.

5.5 How This Summary Underpins the 2026 Pillar Policy Briefings

This Evidence Summary directly supports the next phase of the RMI Skills Working Group’s work:

- Pillar Leads now have a single reference document describing sector realities;
- The evidence clearly points to the priority themes for each Pillar.

Recommendations can be shaped into targeted, actionable policy proposals.

The summary provides the analytical foundation for aligning with the Warm Homes Plan.

It serves as the baseline for board, ministerial, and cross-departmental conversations.

Each Pillar Lead will draw on this summary to develop 2026 briefings covering:

- Policy asks;
- Delivery models;
- Funding requirements;
- Partnerships;
- Data and evidence needs;
- Pilots and pathways.

This includes supporting ongoing engagement with DESNZ and delivery partners as the Warm Homes Plan moves from policy into implementation.

5.6 Link to Digital Evidence Library

A full digital evidence repository will accompany this Summary, containing:

- All submissions (25+ documents)
- Complete barrier and recommendation tables
- Statistical source extracts
- Background materials and supplementary data

6. Conclusions and Implications

This Evidence Summary highlights a sector that is essential, skilled and trusted by homeowners but structurally under-supported in policy and workforce planning.

The evidence demonstrates:

- high levels of unmet demand for skilled labour;
- long-standing training and competence gaps;
- uneven regional capacity;
- limited visibility and engagement with national initiatives;
- reliance on microbusinesses operating with thin margins and limited administrative support.

A coordinated approach is now required to:

- stabilise the workforce;
- improve training access and quality;
- build regional delivery capacity;
- raise competence and consumer confidence;
- Align funding and regulatory systems with the realities of microbusiness.

The Warm Homes Plan provides an opportunity to anchor this alignment around a long-term national programme, supported by area-based delivery, local brokerage, clearer competence pathways and coherent system leadership. This Evidence Summary sets out the workforce conditions required to ensure that ambition is matched by delivery capability on the ground.

Appendix 1 — Contributors and Evidence Submissions

The appendices provide the full, detailed evidence base for the synthesis and findings in this report, including the complete barrier and recommendation tables, references, and methodology. The following organisations and bodies contributed evidence to the CSMB RMI Skills Working Group between August and October 2025, through formal submissions, data reports or supplementary materials:

1. **National Home Improvement Council (NHIC)** – *The Missing Workforce* (2025)
2. **Construction Skills Mission Board (CSMB)** – *RMI Summary Evidence Report* (2025)
3. **Federation of Master Builders (FMB)** – *State of Trade Survey* (2025)
4. **Builders Merchants Building Index (BMBI)** – Q2 2025 Report
5. **Department for Business & Trade (DBT)** – *Construction Workforce Statistics* (2025)
6. **Historic England** – Call for Evidence Response (2025)
7. **CSMB** – *RMI Workforce Proposals* (2025)
8. **NHIC** – *Warm Homes Plan Proposal* (2025)
9. **CITB / Oxford Economics** – *Construction Workforce Outlook (CWO)* (2025)
10. **TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics** – *Skilled to Build* (2025)
11. **Federation of Master Builders (FMB)** – *Confidence to Employ and Invest* (2025)
12. **FMB / Owen, A. & Killip, G.** – *Retrofit Survey* (2025)
13. **On the Tools** – SME and Microbusiness Workforce Barriers (2025)
14. **On the Tools** – Labour Market Data & Workforce Insights (2025)
15. **National Home Decarbonisation Group (NHDG)** – Workforce & Training Recommendations (2025)
16. **Mears Group / UNZ / Cameron-Smith, A.** – *Decarbonisation Report* (2024)
17. **Gemserv / Taylor, W., Hulme, M. & O'Mara, S.** – SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report (2023)
18. **IPPR / Emden, J.** – *Train Local, Work Local* (2022)
19. **Additional Submissions** – Nine further documents submitted by trade associations, training providers and industry bodies (2022–2025)
20. **Mears Group (Supplementary Data)** – Retrofit workforce modelling and regional capacity datasets (2024–25)
21. **CORGI Services** – Consumer Protection and Installer Competence Evidence Submission (2025)
22. **HIES** – Consumer Complaints, Installation Failures & Quality Assurance Insights (2025)
23. **HICS** – Home Improvement Consumer Risk & Dispute Data (2025)
24. **DGCOS** – Dispute Resolution & Consumer Confidence Evidence Submission (2025)

Appendix 2: Source References

1. **NHIC (2025).** *The Missing Workforce.* National Home Improvement Council, September 2025.
2. **CSMB (2025).** *RMI Summary Evidence Report.* Construction Skills Mission Board, September 2025.
3. **FMB (2025).** *State of Trade Survey.* Federation of Master Builders, September 2025.
4. **BMBI (2025).** *Builders Merchants Building Index – Q2 2025 Report.* BMBI, September 2025.
5. **Department for Business & Trade (2025).** *Construction Workforce Statistics.* August 2025.
6. **Historic England (2025).** *Call for Evidence – Historic England Response.* August 2025.
7. **CSMB (2025).** *RMI Workforce Proposals.* Construction Skills Mission Board, August 2025.
8. **NHIC (2025).** *RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal.* National Home Improvement Council, August 2025.
9. **CITB / Oxford Economics (2025).** *Construction Workforce Outlook (CWO) Report UK.* June 2025.
10. **TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics (2025).** *Skilled to Build Report.* March 2025.
11. **FMB (2025).** *Confidence to Employ and Invest.* Federation of Master Builders, 2025.
12. **FMB / Owen, A. & Killip, G. (2025).** *FMB Retrofit Survey.* Federation of Master Builders, 2025.
13. **On the Tools (2025).** *SME and Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI.* 2025.
14. **On the Tools (2025).** *Labour Market Data – RMI Workforce Insights.* 2025.
15. **NHDG (2025).** *Green Skills Working Group – Workforce and Training Recommendations.* National Home Decarbonisation Group, 2025.
16. **Mears Group / UNZ / Cameron-Smith, A. (2024).** *Decarbonisation Report.* April 2024.
17. **Gemserv / Taylor, W., Hulme, M. & O'Mara, S. (2023).** *South West Net Zero Hub (SWNZH) Retrofit Skills Report.* April 2023.
18. **IPPR / Emden, J. (2022).** *Train Local, Work Local: Local Pathways to Net Zero Workforce Development.* Institute for Public Policy Research, September 2022.
19. **Additional Submissions (2025).** Nine further documents submitted to the RMI Skills Working Group (various authors, 2022–2025).
20. **Mears (Supplementary Data) (2024–25).** Retrofit workforce modelling and regional workforce capacity datasets.
21. **CORGI Services (2025).** *Consumer Protection and Installer Competence Evidence Submission.* CORGI Services, 2025.
22. **HIES (2025).** *Consumer Complaints, Installation Failures and Quality Assurance Insights.* Home Insulation & Energy Systems (HIES), 2025.
23. **HICS (2025).** *Home Improvement Consumer Risk Data: Disputes, Workmanship Issues and Installer Behaviour.* Home Improvement Consumer Service (HICS), 2025.

24. **DGCOS (2025).** *Dispute Resolution and Consumer Confidence Evidence Submission.* Double Glazing and Conservatory Ombudsman Scheme (DGCOS), 2025.

Appendix 3: Methodology for Evidence Gathering and Synthesis

The RMI Skills Working Group adopted a structured and transparent methodology to gather, review and synthesise the evidence presented in this Summary. This approach ensured consistency across submissions, allowed comparison of insights from diverse sources, and supported the development of robust, cross-pillar findings.

3.1 Evidence Collection Approach

In July 2025, the Working Group issued a Call for Evidence to members and wider stakeholders across the domestic RMI sector.
The request sought contributions providing:

- workforce data
- research findings
- practical insights from employers and tradespeople
- analysis of training and competence
- Examples of barriers, opportunities and recommendations

Submissions were welcomed in all forms, including reports, datasets, survey outputs, case studies, academic material and internal organisational analysis.

A total of 25 documents were received (with a further two submitted separately by Mears Group), covering:

- trade associations
- certification bodies
- national data providers
- employer groups
- training and qualification organisations
- consumer-facing bodies
- research institutions
- government agencies

All documents are listed in Appendix 1A.

3.2 Review and Analysis Process

To enable consistent comparison, each document was reviewed using a structured three-stage process:

Stage 1 — Section-by-Section Summary
Each submission was summarised to extract:

- Key Workforce Insights
- headline data and statistics
- workforce pressures
- barriers and challenges
- opportunities
- recommendations

Where documents included original survey or modelling data, this was extracted at the source level.

Stage 2 — Mapping to the Five Pillars
All insights were then mapped to the CSMB RMI Skills Working Group's five policy pillars:

- Workforce Supply & Attraction
- Skills, Training & Progression
- Industry Engagement & Visibility
- Productivity, Innovation & Technology
- System Leadership & Coordination

This ensured alignment with the Group's long-term work plan and supported Pillar Leads in developing their 2026 briefing papers.

Stage 3 — Thematic Synthesis (Barriers + Recommendations)
A cross-document coding exercise was undertaken to cluster insights into the following categories:

- Understanding the RMI Sector
- Barriers & Challenges
- Opportunities & Recommendations

Barriers were then consolidated into 16 thematic categories (Appendix 5 and 6), and recommendations into 10 (Appendix 1C).

This approach enabled direct comparison of issues across organisations and improved the reliability of cross-sector consensus.

Use of AI-Assisted Analysis
Copilot/AI tools were used selectively to support:

- initial document summarisation
- clustering of themes
- keyword extraction
- flagging of duplicated insights
- organising long text into tabular formats

All AI-generated outputs were manually checked and validated by the Working Group secretariat to ensure accuracy, context and fidelity to original content.

AI generated no conclusions or sector positions; the Working Group undertook all interpretation and synthesis.

3.4 Limitations of the Evidence Base

The Working Group acknowledges several limitations:

- Evidence reflects only the organisations that submitted material (not a complete national dataset).
- Some specialist trades and sole traders are under-represented in formal submissions.
- Regional perspectives vary in depth and availability.
- Data quality and granularity vary significantly across sources.
- Some datasets predate 2025 and may not reflect post-2023 workforce shifts.

These limitations reinforce the need for further targeted data collection, as set out in Section 5 of the report.

3.5 Purpose of this Methodology

This methodology ensures:

- transparency in how evidence was handled
- consistency across sources
- clarity for future contributors
- a replicable process supporting future CSMB workstreams
- confidence in the analytical basis for 2026 policy development

It forms the foundation for the RMI Skills Working Group's ongoing work and underpins the Pillar Leads' 2026 Policy Briefings.

Appendix 4: Glossary of Terms

Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP): A low-carbon heating system that extracts heat from the outside air. Key technology within domestic retrofit and decarbonisation programmes.

Apprenticeship Levy: A UK tax on large employers used to fund apprenticeship training. Often inaccessible to microbusinesses.

Area-Based Retrofit Programme: A coordinated retrofit initiative delivered at neighbourhood or local-authority scale, often combining mixed-tenure housing stock.

Brokerage (SME/Microbusiness Brokerage): A support model that helps small firms recruit, train, onboard and retain staff by providing practical assistance, matching, mentoring and coordination.

Building Safety Regime: Regulatory framework introduced post-Grenfell to ensure competence, oversight and assurance in construction activity, particularly higher-risk buildings.

Career Framework / Competency Framework: A structured map of the skills, knowledge, behaviours and progression routes required across occupational pathways.

CITB (Construction Industry Training Board): Industry training board for construction. Key publisher of workforce forecasts and labour market modelling.

Competent Person Scheme (CPS): A government-authorised scheme allowing certified installers to self-certify certain types of building work as compliant with Building Regulations.

Decarbonisation: Processes and interventions that reduce carbon emissions from homes, including insulation, heat pumps, ventilation and whole-house upgrades.

FMB (Federation of Master Builders): A long-standing trade association representing small and medium-sized construction firms.

Heat Training Grant: Government grant supporting heating engineers and installers to upskill in heat-pump technologies.

Heritage Skills: Skills required to repair, maintain and upgrade historic buildings, often involving traditional materials and specialist techniques.

Informal Learning / On-the-Job Learning: Skills developed through workplace experience rather than formal training or qualifications; common across RMI.

LSIP (Local Skills Improvement Plan): Local business-led plans identifying priority skills needs in a region. Typically, less focused on RMI.

Microbusiness: A business employing fewer than five workers. Represents the dominant model in the RMI sector.

MCS (Microgeneration Certification Scheme): Quality assurance scheme for small-scale renewable energy installations such as heat pumps and solar PV.

Multi-Trade Operative: A worker competent across multiple RMI tasks (e.g., joinery, basic plumbing, plastering) is often essential for domestic repair and improvement work.

Net Zero: Target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with remaining emissions offset by removal.

National Occupational Standards (NOS): Standards defining the skills and competencies needed for job roles in the UK. Often misaligned with modern retrofit requirements.

PAS 2030 / PAS 2035: Retrofit installation and assessment standards governing quality, competence and process for whole-house retrofit.

Pipeline (Work Pipeline): Forward visibility of work. Critical for SME confidence to hire and invest; often short-term in RMI.

Retrofit: Upgrades to existing homes to improve energy efficiency, heating systems, ventilation, air tightness and comfort.

RMI (Repair, Maintenance and Improvement): Domestic work on existing homes that maintains condition, ensures safety, or improves performance or value.

SME (Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise): Businesses with fewer than 250 employees. The majority of RMI firms fall into the smallest category (microbusinesses).

Sole Trader: An individual running a business without employees is typical in domestic RMI.

System Leadership: Coordinated, cross-agency leadership aligning policy, funding, workforce and delivery models around shared goals.

Warm Homes Plan: A government-led strategy (DESNZ) is expected to frame national retrofit programmes and workforce requirements from 2026 onwards.

Appendix 5 Barriers by Theme

Barrier Theme: STRUCTURAL

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	The RMI sector is critical but structurally unprepared. The twin gaps—lack of trained installers and trusted engagement routes—must be addressed through targeted, RMI-specific interventions. 61% SMEs face recruitment issues; 35.6 of % workforce is over 50; 82.5% trades feel ignored; 5.5M heritage homes.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Job delays. Main causes: Planning process delays (38%) Changing project parameters (36%) Material/equipment delays (35%) Only 19% reported no delays.	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
3	Prices and costs: 75% saw increased material costs 67% reported rising wages 61% increase in prices charged for work 71% expect further material cost increases 58% expect wage increases 64% plan to raise prices	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
4	Impact of cost increases: 56% raised prices 49% reported lower profits or losses 34% restricted recruitment 25% feared for business viability 22% made redundancies	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
5	Contractor changes: 36% changed contractors. Reasons: Cost-effectiveness (53%) Competitive pressure (49%) Poor performance (44%)	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
6	Invoice payments: 56% paid on time 32% experienced varied payment timelines 10% reported frequent late payments	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
7	Economic pressures and global uncertainties (e.g. tariffs). The sector saw its second consecutive quarter of growth after two years of decline. Tariffs and inflation remain concerns.	4 — BMBI Q2 2025 Report	BMBI	BMBI
8	Supply chain challenges due to global shipping and tariffs.	4 — BMBI Q2 2025 Report	BMBI	BMBI
9	The BMF forecast model suggests moderate growth potential, but economic uncertainty and regulatory delays may hinder progress.	4 — BMBI Q2 2025 Report	BMBI	BMBI
10	In the year to June 2025, most construction company insolvencies occurred in specialised activities and building construction.	5 — DBT Construction Workforce Statistics	Department for Business & Trade	DBT
11	Survey of 1,678 residents of listed buildings reveals positive attitudes but concerns over maintenance costs.	6 — Historic England Response	Historic England	Historic England
12	The UK construction industry faces a pivotal moment: Continue with traditional recruitment/training or innovate to meet future demands. Without change, risks include: persistent job vacancies loss of expertise through retirements inability to meet housing and infrastructure goals	9 — CWO Report UK	CITB	CITB / Oxford Economics
13	The UK economy grew by 0.9% in 2024, but momentum slowed in the second half. Construction output grew 0.5%, mainly repair & maintenance. Challenges: tax increases global trade uncertainty decline in construction employment by 2.3% (loss of 63,700 workers) Job vacancy rate: 2.5 vacancies per 100 jobs	9 — CWO Report UK	CITB	CITB / Oxford Economics

Barrier Theme: SKILLS SHORTAGES

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Labour shortages are widespread, especially in specialised trades. Many firms face delays or cancellations due to a lack of skilled workers: 61% of SMEs have unfilled vacancies 49% report delays due to labour shortages 23% have cancelled jobs due to a lack of skilled labour	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Workforce supply & demand: Skills shortages are widespread, especially in heritage trades. Regional disparities exist between demand and training pipelines. (61% of SMEs report workforce gaps; heritage trades face acute succession risks.)	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
3	Employment and skills shortages: Hardest roles to recruit include: Carpenters (33%) Roofers (32%) Plumbers / HVAC (28%) Labourers (29%) Bricklayers, plasterers, electricians, and decorators also cited	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
4	Specialist skills: 64% struggled to recruit staff with knowledge of the new building safety regime 59% had difficulty finding staff skilled in sustainable building practices and new technologies	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
5	Employment and skills recruitment impact: 61% of firms are affected by shortages 49% experienced job delays 23% had job cancellations Impacted firms rose from 45% in Q4 2024 to 61%.	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
6	To meet demand, the industry must recruit 47,860 extra workers per year, totalling 239,300 over five years.	9 — CWO Report UK	CITB	CITB / Oxford Economics
7	Businesses eager to transition into renewables face training and market challenges: 79% of renewables businesses report vacancies 42% cite skill shortages causing severe problems	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
8	Hiring challenges in core trades (carpentry, bricklaying) have persisted for 15+ years, with ~30% of companies reporting difficulties.	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
9	Current deployment rates are far below what's needed to meet net-zero targets. At current rates: 600 years to deliver sufficient solid-wall insulation 132 years for loft insulation 200 years for air-source heat pumps 350,000 ASHPs/year needed by 2030	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
10	Severe shortages exist in key roles such as heat pump engineers and insulation installers: 10,700 solid-wall insulation installers needed by 2028 (vs. 451 in 2023) 18,000 heating engineers required by 2028 (vs. 524 in 2023) Compound annual training growth required: 79% for heat pump engineers 90% for solid wall insulation installers	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara

Barrier Theme: RMI MARGINALISED

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	The RMI sector, despite delivering nearly half of all construction output, remains marginalised in policy and funding.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	The RMI sector lacks visibility and support.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
3	The RMI workforce exists but is unsupported. A bottom-up approach is needed to align policy with delivery, focusing on microbusinesses and trusted local trades.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
4	The RMI workforce is fragmented and under-supported. Sector profile: 900,000–1.2m RMI workers 86% microbusinesses (<5 staff) 30% self-employed Key vulnerabilities: 61% SMEs report recruitment issues 49% job delays 23% cancellations 35.6% workforce aged 50+ Only 9.6% under 24 No baseline for retrofit-trained workers	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
5	82.5% of trades feel ignored by policymakers.	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
6	Heritage RMI is under-recognised.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
7	Government schemes are often inaccessible or unsuitable for microbusinesses. Bureaucracy and lack of tailored support deter engagement. (FMB research: In a survey of 200 SME construction firms, only 3% responded from 6,500 outreach calls — demonstrating disengagement from national processes.)	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
8	Summary: Government schemes are often inaccessible or unsuitable for microbusinesses. Bureaucracy and lack of tailored support deter engagement. Here is:	13 — SME Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI	On the Tools	On the Tools

Barrier Theme: CONSUMER CONFIDENCE & DEMAND

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Trust is a significant factor in homeowner decisions. Lack of explicit protections and visibility undermines confidence.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	TrustMark and HIES highlight risks of unverified installations and the need for practical training. There is no current baseline for PAS 2035-trained installers. HIES case studies show consumer risk from poor installations.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
3	Consumer confidence remains fragile but resilient.	4 — BMBI Q2 2025 Report	BMBI	BMBI
4	Low consumer demand: Consumers show limited interest in energy efficiency and low- or zero-carbon technologies (LZCTs).	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
5	Clients are more likely to ask about energy efficiency in new builds than in RMI (Repair, Maintenance & Improvement) projects.	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
6	High costs and low consumer demand are the most cited barriers to retrofit uptake.	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
7	Key barriers include: Low consumer demand for retrofit and energy upgrades.	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O’Mara

Barrier Theme: TRAINING PROVISION

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	A looming skills crisis in the heritage construction sector due to insufficient training provision.	6 — Historic England Response	Historic England	Historic England
2	Businesses struggle with a lack of training provision.	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Businesses eager to transition to renewables face challenges with training and market maturity. 20% call for dedicated training centres.	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
4	Employment trends in the RMI sector closely track market conditions, but training systems often lag behind demand spikes.	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
5	Entry into RMI employment is informal, especially for SMEs. Recruitment is driven by personal networks and demand for general builders rather than specific trades. Training is reactive, often only pursued when required by regulation or client demand.	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
6	Region lacks sufficient training centres and qualifications for key retrofit roles: No providers offer City & Guilds Level 2/3 NVQ in Insulation Only two providers offer heat pump apprenticeships Only three providers offer the Level 2 Diploma in Fenestration Installation	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
7	Despite potential, the retrofit sector faces major skills bottlenecks. The current workforce is unevenly distributed, with: Lack of training infrastructure Skills shortages concentrated in specific regions Mismatch between where retrofit jobs are needed and where workers are located Here is:	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

Barrier Theme: AGEING WORKFORCE

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	The RMI sector is ageing, with significant gaps in succession planning, especially in heritage trades. 35.6% of the workforce aged 50+ Only 9.6% under 24	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	The construction workforce is slightly older than the UK average. Over one-third aged 50+ Fewer than 10% under 25 Age profiles: Aged 50+: 35.6% (vs 33.3% across all industries) Aged under 25: 9.6% (vs 10.5%)	5 — Construction Workforce Statistics	Department for Business & Trade	DBT
3	A looming skills crisis in the heritage construction sector due to an ageing workforce.	6 — Historic England Response	Historic England	Historic England
4	The sector faces a demographic challenge: Many tradespeople are nearing retirement Few succession plans are in place	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
5	Summary: Workforce skews older, though younger age groups are slightly more represented in this survey than in some benchmarks. Survey findings: 18–24: 11.7% 25–34: 16.1% 35–44: 17.5% 45–54: 19.8% 55–64: 21.6% 65+: 13.3%	14 — Labour Market Data	On the Tools	On the Tools
6	The retrofit and heating workforce is ageing, risking future capacity: 61% of heating installers are aged 50+ New entrants must meet 40% of the future workforce demand	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara

Barrier Theme: COMPETENCY STANDARDS

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Summary: The RMI sector lacks minimum competency standards. Key issues: Entry is easy; CSCS cards require minimal training Apprenticeships teach narrow skills, while RMI work is multi-disciplinary Poorly executed retrofit work has led to health issues No basic minimum competence levels in RMI Retrofit training provision is undefined and poorly understood	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
2	Firms believe they can meet increased demand but stress the need for robust standards.	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
3	Small firms prefer on-the-job learning, which may not ensure quality without structured support.	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
4	Labour and time needed to build competence are major concerns — not just equipment costs.	12 — FMB Retrofit Survey	FMB	Authors: Alice Owen, Gavin Killip
5	Despite potential, the retrofit sector faces major skills bottlenecks. The current workforce is unevenly distributed, and both retraining existing workers and attracting new entrants are difficult due to fragmented standards. Here is:	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

Barrier Theme: FUNDING

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Businesses struggle with: Limited financial incentives Insufficient support for training uptake	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
2	Businesses eager to transition into renewables face training and market maturity challenges: 44% need financial help for training	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Training uptake is low due to resource constraints, time pressures, and financial limitations. Key findings: 34% cite lack of resources as a barrier 30% cite lack of time 24% cite financial constraints 91% say increased funding is essential 22% unaware of any training support	13 — SME Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI	On the Tools	On the Tools
4	Urgent action scenarios require significant investment in training: £22.6m total training cost for 2030 scenario £9.4m peak annual cost in 2025 66% of initial heat pump demand can be met by upskilling existing engineers	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
5	Key barriers include: Lack of funding for retrofit workforce development. Here is:	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara

Barrier Theme: PIPELINE

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Business outlook for Q3 & Q4 2025: 51% positive 36% neutral 7% negative Indicates mixed sentiment and uncertainty regarding future work.	3 — FMB State of Trade Survey	FMB	FMB
2	There is strong demand for recruitment, but businesses face barriers, including: Short-term work pipelines Competition from other sectors Lack of support for workforce investment	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Domestic RMI growth is tied to consumer confidence and market demand. Retrofitting offers growth potential, especially in social housing, but uptake is limited by: High costs Low homeowner interest Lack of incentives Without long-term government support, growth remains stagnant.	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
4	Microbusinesses face short-term work cycles and economic uncertainty, limiting their ability to plan or invest in workforce development. Findings: Over 50% booked less than 2 months ahead Long-term pipeline visibility (>12 months) is declining	13 — SME Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI	On the Tools	On the Tools
5	Confidence in long-term pipelines is declining. Survey findings (H1 2025): Booked 6–12 months ahead: 13.1% Booked >12 months ahead: 13.4% (↓ from 17.8% in H1 2024) Unsure about pipeline: 16.4% (↑ from 9.4%)	14 — Labour Market Data	On the Tools	On the Tools

Barrier Theme: DATA

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	There is no national dataset on retrofit competence; no baseline exists for current PAS 2035–qualified workers. This makes planning, forecasting, and funding alignment extremely difficult.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Lack of coherent data on SME capacity and training outcomes. TradeBrain Pulse and CITB forecasts offer partial insights, but there is no unified dataset for RMI.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
3	While some alignment exists, gaps remain in: workforce baselines retrofit-specific language delivery mechanisms Headline indicators cited: 500,000 retrofit workers needed by 2030 (CLC target) No retrofit ringfencing in Shared Prosperity Fund or LSIPs	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
4	Need for improved affordability insights and regional trade data. Upskilling pathways are poorly mapped. Next steps include: new surveys pilot data-sharing arrangements	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB

Barrier Theme: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Construction remains male-dominated. Only 17% of the workforce is female compared with 49% across all sectors.	5 — Construction Workforce Statistics	Department for Business & Trade	DBT
2	The construction workforce is less ethnically diverse than the UK average. 81.6% identify as White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British (vs 74.1% across all industries)	5 — Construction Workforce Statistics	Department for Business & Trade	DBT
3	In 2023/24, 13.3% of construction workers identified as disabled, lower than the 17% UK workforce average.	5 — Construction Workforce Statistics	Department for Business & Trade	DBT
4	Summary: Sole traders and microbusinesses face heightened pressures on their well-being. Cultural stigma and male-dominated environments exacerbate vulnerability, particularly in small businesses where support is limited. Here is:	13 — SME Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI	On the Tools	On the Tools

Barrier Theme: APPRENTICESHIPS

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	A looming skills crisis in the heritage construction sector due to low apprentice uptake.	6 — Historic England Response	Historic England	Historic England
2	Apprenticeship uptake is low, and completion rates are declining. Additional issues: quality concerns relevance concerns perceived misalignment with SME needs	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Summary: Apprenticeship recruitment is minimal and often reactive. Retention challenges include: productivity pressures poor long-term planning Many apprentices are leaving post-qualification	13 — SME Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI	On the Tools	On the Tools

Barrier Theme: POLICY & STRATEGY

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Current policy frameworks are misaligned with the realities of small RMI firms. Assumptions about HR capacity and training engagement exclude most of the sector. Anecdotal evidence includes exclusion from schemes such as Bootcamps and LSIPs.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Summary: Sector's reliance on small, self-employed businesses makes it vulnerable to: volatility succession challenges short project cycles This requires tailored policy interventions for sole traders and microbusinesses.	14 — Labour Market Data	On the Tools	On the Tools
3	Key barriers include policy uncertainty, which is cited as a major blocker to workforce investment and retrofit readiness.	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
4	There is a significant skills gap in retrofit delivery. The sector needs a long-term workforce strategy covering: training upskilling attraction of new talent Referenced targets: Retrofit Academy aims to train 200,000 retrofitters by 2030 Estimated workforce need: 500,000 trained professionals	16 — Decarbonisation Report	Mears	Authors: UNZ / Andy Cameron-Smith / Mears

Barrier Theme: ADMINISTRATION

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Small firms struggle with training due to administrative burdens and a lack of support, despite a willingness to engage.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
2	Businesses struggle with paperwork requirements related to training, schemes, and compliance — creating barriers to engagement. (2 detailed entries; evidence retained precisely, formatted for the final report.)	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics

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Barrier Theme: LOCAL APPROACHES

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Summary: Support for sole traders and microbusinesses must be: practical upfront accessible Flexible training, direct engagement, and regionally tailored programmes are essential to strengthen the sector.	13 — SME Microbusiness Workforce Barriers in RMI	On the Tools	On the Tools
2	Despite potential, the retrofit sector faces major skills bottlenecks. The workforce is unevenly distributed across regions, creating a mismatch between: where retrofit jobs are needed where trained workers are currently located	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

Barrier Theme: SECTOR ATTRACTIVENESS

Ref	Barrier / Challenge	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Summary: Despite generally positive sentiment, only 47% of parents would encourage their children to become builders. The sector suffers from perception issues that hinder recruitment. Clear pathways and professional standards could improve its reputation.	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
2	Despite the potential, the retrofit sector faces major skills bottlenecks. Workforce shortages are compounded by: low appeal of the sector limited understanding of retrofit career opportunities lack of visible entry routes for new entrants Recommendation Theme: FUNDING (12 entries)	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

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Appendix 6 Recommendations by Theme

Recommendation Theme: FUNDING

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Introduce a Help-to-Train SME Grant Scheme offering £7,500 per SME to support training and apprenticeship engagement.	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
2	Improve awareness and access to funding.	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Support transition into renewables with: targeted training financial incentives	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
4	Support for Excellence Colleges and apprenticeship levy reforms.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
5	Long-term funding for energy efficiency training (e.g. Heat Training Grant).	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
6	Restructure the CITB levy to support retrofit training better.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
7	Encourage private-sector investment in training provision.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
8	Create a regional funding coordination role.	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
9	Provide financial support for training.	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden
10	Recommended funding levels: £160 million per year to 2030 for training	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden
11	Total Green Training Fund estimated annual requirement: £1.1 billion.	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden
12	Estimated training cost benchmarks: £3,000 per worker £4,000 per apprentice	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

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Recommendation Theme: LOCAL APPROACHES

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Fund local brokerage models.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Fund local brokerage models. (Duplicated recommendation reflecting strong consensus.)	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
3	Establish Regional Brokerage Hubs and Local Brokerage Zones to: coordinate demand align training de-risk employer investment	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
4	Accelerate upgrades in key worker housing to create: stable pipelines socially driven training and employment pathways	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
5	Create a Localised Skills Coordination Model linking training to housing needs.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
6	Implement On-Site Mentoring & Skills Transfer models. (Embedding training into live projects.)	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
7	Create a Regional Prioritisation Strategy to guide the deployment of workforce investment.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
8	Develop career progression and local training access pathways tailored to local contexts.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
9	Adopt area-based approaches tailored to local needs (workforce, stock types, socio-economic factors).	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
10	Increase practical, local on-site training opportunities.	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

Recommendation Theme: COLLABORATION & COORDINATION

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Maximise the use of Local Authorities and Housing Associations in workforce coordination and programme delivery.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
2	Align proposals with existing initiatives to avoid duplication and maximise impact.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
3	Strengthen coordination of implementation activity across agencies and delivery partners.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
4	Share progress and best practice across regions and partners.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
5	Establish Implementation Performance Measures to track effectiveness and delivery progress.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
6	Build strong partnerships between: Local Authorities Housing Providers Private sector actors to coordinate retrofit and workforce development.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
7	Collaborate with IfATE (Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education) to shape apprenticeships and technical training to better fit sector needs.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
8	Connect public-sector organisations to coordinate joint retrofit commissioning.	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara

Recommendation Theme: COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Develop competence frameworks to support consistent quality and define standards for RMI and retrofit roles.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
2	Mandate competence-linked protections in programmes and policies.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
3	Develop a National Competency & Career Framework to map skills, training routes, and progression opportunities.	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
4	Create Practical Upskilling Routes for SMEs — modular, on-site training to minimise downtime.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
5	Create a Competence Framework & Recognition Model aligned with TrustMark and MCS to give clear visibility to consumers and industry.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
6	Reform National Occupational Standards (NOS) to better reflect real-world retrofit competencies.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
7	Improve training and job standards through a whole-house heating approach, ensuring technical competence across systems.	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden
8	Improve quality assurance by banning "pay to pass" models of training and assessment.	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

Recommendation Theme: DATA

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Create a national RMI workforce baseline.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Invest in digital infrastructure for visibility and trust across the RMI sector.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
3	Commission regional baseline studies to understand workforce supply, capacity and demand.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
4	Create a Workforce Pipeline Mapping function to identify skills gaps and regional needs.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
5	Develop Skills Data Integration tools to align Warm Homes metrics with certification data.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC
6	Establish a regional training database to map provision, gaps, and capacity.	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
7	Emphasise quantifying skills gaps and tracking training provider availability to align supply with future demand better.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG

Recommendation Theme: EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Create College–Industry Low Carbon Skills Networks and run a Doorstep to Jobsite campaign to improve access to training and awareness among learners.	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
2	Integrate trades into school curricula and use retiring professionals as mentors to transfer knowledge.	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Create clear entry pathways for: school leavers career changers those returning to the workforce	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG
4	Prioritise delivery of critical retrofit qualifications in areas such as: insulation heat pumps ventilation fenestration	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara
5	Reintroduce Skills Academies to coordinate efforts and create structured routes into RMI and retrofit careers.	18 — Train Local, Work Local	IPPR	Joshua Emden

Recommendation Theme: STRATEGY

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Develop a National Retrofit Strategy (Historic Buildings) to ensure heritage properties receive tailored workforce and upgrade planning.	6 — Historic England Response	Historic England	Historic England
2	Simplify recruitment processes by creating a facilitation system that reduces complexity for SMEs.	10 — Skilled to Build	TrustMark	Authors: TrustMark / Eureka / Oxford Economics
3	Develop a National Retrofit Strategy for the wider sector.	11 — Confidence to Employ and Invest	FMB	FMB
4	Introduce Informed Workforce Planning, using detailed modelling to align supply, demand and skills pathways.	14 — Labour Market Data	On the Tools	On the Tools
5	Develop a Retrofit Workforce Roadmap to guide long-term policy, funding and delivery coordination.	15 — Green Skills Working Group	NHDG	NHDG

Recommendation Theme: APPRENTICESHIPS

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Restructure apprenticeships to make them accessible for microbusinesses, including: flexible delivery reduced administrative burden simplified supervision requirements	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Launch Green Apprenticeship Accelerators and Key Worker Home Upgrade Pilots to create fast-track, supported entry routes into retrofit and RMI roles.	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
3	Develop microbusiness apprenticeship flexibility — creating a policy case for 2026 to enable modular, multi-trade apprenticeships suitable for sole traders and very small firms.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC

Recommendation Theme: CONSUMER PROTECTIONS

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Embed competence and consumer protection requirements in upgrade and retrofit programmes to ensure quality and safety.	1 — The Missing Workforce	NHIC	NHIC
2	Embed consumer protection in retrofit schemes, improving consistency and assurance across delivery programmes.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
3	Develop Consumer Education & Installer Advocacy once delivery pathways are Established, helping homeowners make informed decisions and increase trust in competent installers.	8 — RMI Warm Homes Plan Proposal	NHIC	NHIC

Recommendation Theme: MARKETING

Ref	Recommendation	Source Ref	Submitted by	Author
1	Launch a national RMI skills campaign to raise profile, attract new entrants, and support sector visibility.	2 — RMI Summary Evidence Report	CSMB	CSMB
2	Run a national Skills & Standards Campaign using NHIC media channels to raise awareness among: consumers tradespeople wider industry stakeholders	7 — RMI Workforce Proposals	CSMB	CSMB
3	Develop a green careers campaign specifically targeting retrofit, energy-efficiency and low-carbon pathways.	17 — SWNZH Retrofit Skills Report	Gemserv	Authors: Will Taylor, Megan Hulme, Sam O'Mara