

## BUILDING SAFETY AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

HOW IS CONSTRUCTION  
RESPONDING TO DAME  
JUDITH HACKITT'S CRITICISM?







SonaSpray fc in grey in Oscar Acoustics' SonaSpray Training Academy. ©Antonia Stuart.

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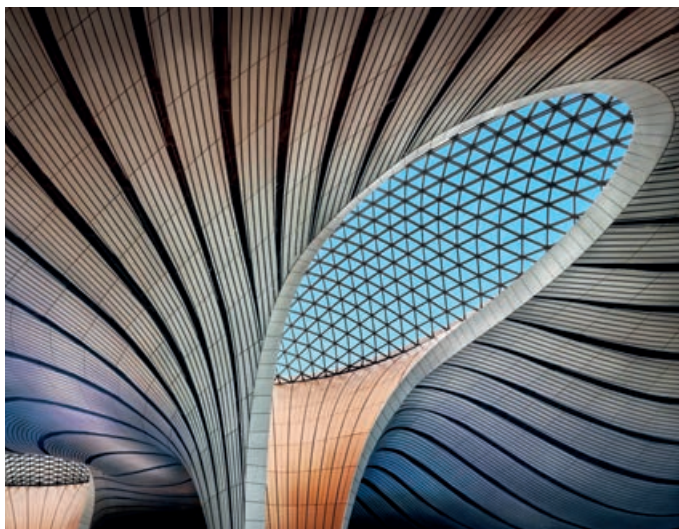


# 01/25

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GF TOMLINSON

## ▲ New planetarium in Nottingham

GF Tomlinson has finished building a planetarium on top of an old 25m diameter Victorian reservoir in Nottingham. Architect AnotherKind used Graphisoft's BIM software Archicad to show the building's designs, using VR headsets to 'walk' around the site.

## ► Menai Suspension Bridge maintenance

Spencer Bridge Engineering's workers replaced and painted 168 of the 208 wire rope hangers of the Grade I-listed Menai Suspension Bridge in Wales, ahead of the crossing's bicentenary in 2026. The structure is the world's second oldest operational vehicular suspension bridge.



SPENCER BRIDGE ENGINEERING



Dr Scott McGibbon won CIOB's first Paul Dockerill Award after creating an innovative silica awareness toolkit (see p49)



NIALL WALKER/MACE



### ▲ Heathrow Cargo Tunnel project

Mace is completing the upgrade of an 870m-long cargo tunnel at Heathrow Airport built in the 1960s. The tunnel links the central terminal area with Terminal 4 and handles 6,000 vehicles per day. Mace has used MMC for the project, including manufacturing 730 MEP modules off site.

### ► Challenging large-scale excavation in UAE

Temporary works specialist Altrad RMD Kwikform provided 387 tonnes of Tubeshor material consisting of 24 Tubeshor props, each with a 1,060mm diameter, on a large-scale excavation in a mixed-use development in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The props were specifically designed for heavy-duty applications.



### ► A pint of dust

Construction cleaning specialist Dustcontrol launched an awareness campaign, Dust to Dust, on the risks of overexposure to respirable crystalline silica. The company calculates that a construction worker could potentially ingest in their lifetime the equivalent of 0.68 imperial pints of respirable crystalline silica in an uncontrolled environment.



WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

### ▲ Rare find in Kier project

Archaeologists found an "extremely rare" prehistoric wooden spade at Kier's habitat adaption scheme at Arne Moors, Dorset. Preliminary scientific dating confirms that the spade is around 3,500 years old, making it one of the earliest wooden tools discovered in Britain.



# First BSR prosecution 'only a matter of time', says Hackitt

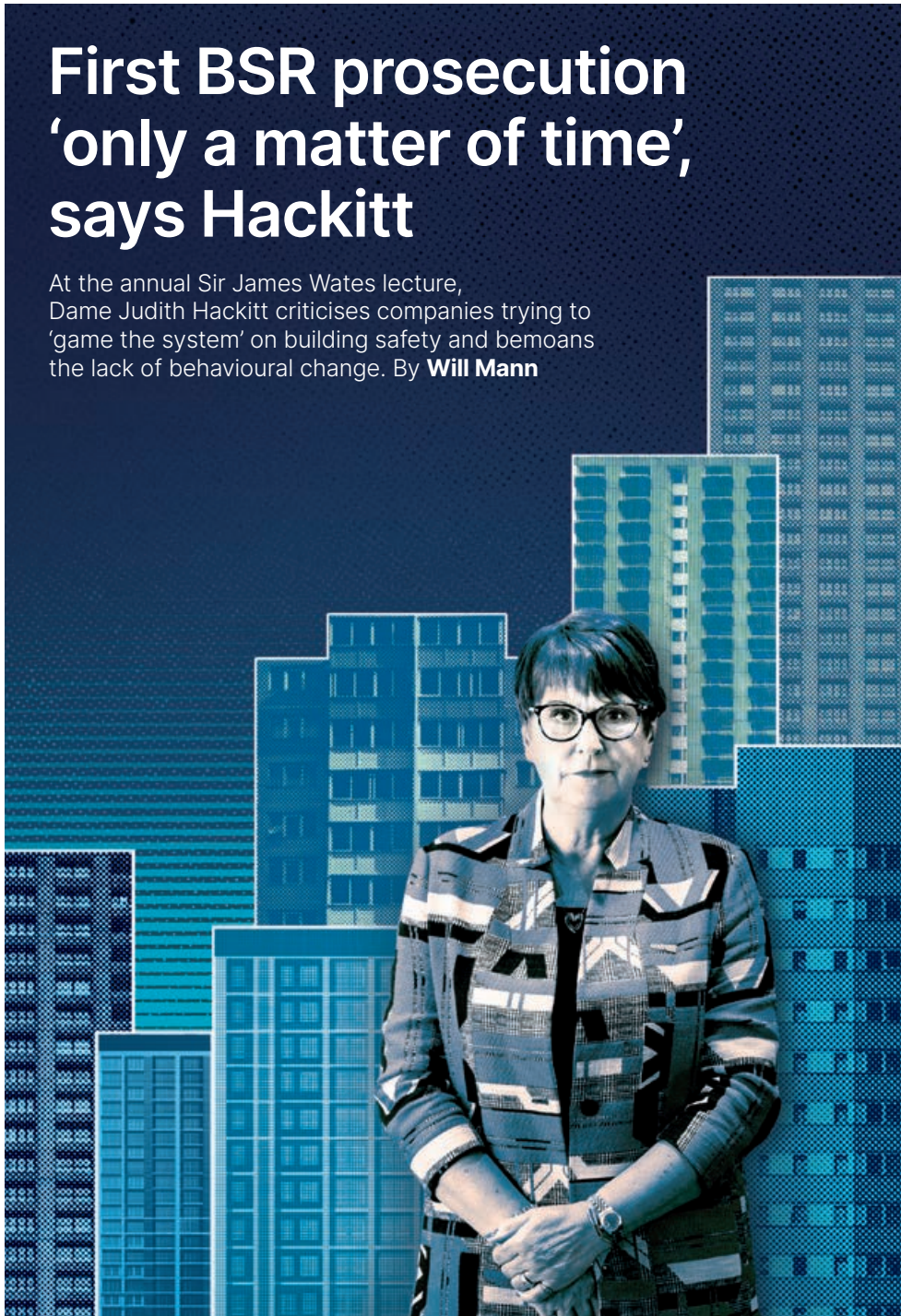
At the annual Sir James Wates lecture, Dame Judith Hackitt criticises companies trying to 'game the system' on building safety and bemoans the lack of behavioural change. By **Will Mann**

**T**he first Building Safety Regulator (BSR) prosecution is "only a matter of time", according to Dame Judith Hackitt, because of companies trying to "game the system" on building safety.

Speaking at the annual Sir James Wates lecture, organised by CIOB before Christmas, Hackitt pulled no punches in a sobering speech, criticising the lack of behavioural change in construction, a key theme of her 2018 post-Grenfell report *Building A Safer Future*. She said an "appalling attitude continues to prevail", despite the 2022 Building Safety Act now being in force and the recommendations of the Grenfell Inquiry report.

"I feel strongly that it is time for us to name and shame those who continue to try and game the new system," Hackitt said. "Some would say, the sooner, the better... when this does happen, it will galvanise a few more into action."

She noted that planning gateway one, introduced through the Building Safety Act, had "put the brakes on more than 50% of applications in the very early days of its introduction. This has now dropped, I'm pleased to say, but it's still running at 20%, which feels high to me. There are still 20% of applications going in at planning gateway one where people are seeing if they can get away with it."





'It was once the norm for more than 150 people to lose their lives in this sector every year'

150

**The inquiry report could not be clearer that this rotten system needs to be fixed and in a robust way. It should be something that worries all of you**  
Dame Judith Hackitt



Common failings, Hackitt continued, included submitting floor plans as designs and a lack of early engagement of fire engineers. "One application received by BSR simply said: 'I don't know why I have to do this. It complies!'" she added.

The lecture was titled 'In Search of the Leaders' and Hackitt said she was making a plea for leaders on building safety to emerge from the industry.

"I've spoken to companies large and small who do 'get it'. I applaud them for what they're doing and feel that they deserve greater recognition," she commented, singling out Clarion Housing Group and Persimmon Homes as "exemplars".

Product assurance is one of Hackitt's "greatest frustrations", she said. "The inquiry report could not be clearer that this rotten system needs to be fixed and in a robust way. It should be something that worries all of you, with the duty that you have to demonstrate safe buildings."

She also called on the government for leadership on building safety. "It was once the norm for more than 150 people to lose their lives in this sector every year," she noted. "In the early 2000s, deputy prime minister John Prescott's summit shook the industry out of the presumption that things could not change. One of my pleas to the new government will be to seek another summit, focused on building safety." ●

## Behavioural change and building safety: industry perspectives

**CM** spoke to several leading organisations from across the built environment for their views on Dame Judith Hackitt's comments and how they have responded to her calls for change

### 'We're not waiting for legislation before taking action'

**The client: Clarion Housing Group  
Dan Hollas FCIOB, building safety director**

Clarion was one of two organisations described by Dame Judith Hackitt as "exemplars" in their approach to building safety, in her CIOB lecture.

The largest social landlord in the UK has 125,000 homes, with around 80 buildings of seven or more storeys. Post Grenfell in 2017, Clarion was one of the first housing organisations to embrace digital technology in its approach to asset management and creation of fire safety reviews, including point cloud scans of tower blocks.

"Clarion was created by a merger of two housing associations in 2016 and we've had the building safety culture right from the start, with leadership and support from the top," explains Dan Hollas, building safety director. "The board have not only given us the money, they have given us the support and freedom to implement those systems."

"Our team – technical manager Jack White, lead inspections manager Tom Lawlor, head of building safety Matthew Lewis and myself – has been

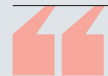
able to work together on our building safety remediation projects over a long period, in a consistent way, and that has really made a difference in terms of delivery."

The group has adapted its approach in response to new legislation and standards, including the Fire Safety Act and PAS 9980. Recently, Clarion has developed a detailed data-led approach to evaluating external wall systems, using this information to model its remediation work.

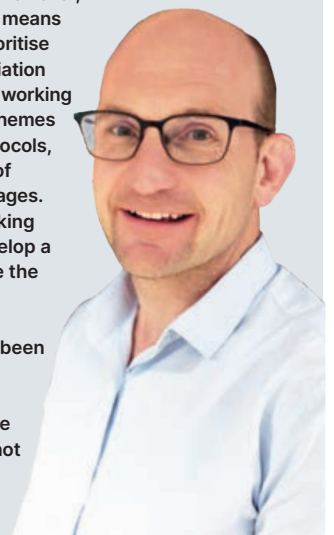
The external wall surveys have confirmed suspicions about a drop-off in construction quality standards during recent decades, with 176 out of 215 buildings identified for remediation built after 2000. However, Hollas says the data strategy means his team has been able to prioritise buildings and execute remediation projects quickly. Contractors working for Clarion on remediation schemes must follow strict quality protocols, with photographic evidence of their work taken at regular stages.

Clarion has also been working with Bentley Systems to develop a system that will help manage the golden thread of information for its buildings.

"We are delighted to have been recognised by Dame Judith. We are pursuing new and innovative ways to ensure the safety of our buildings, and not waiting for legislation before taking action," Hollas adds.



**We've had the building safety culture right from the start, with leadership and support from the top**  
Dan Hollas, Clarion Housing Group





## 'Competency is about SMEs as well as tier 1s'

The professional body: CIOB  
Paul Nash, Quality Implementation Group chair

CIOB provided a wake-up call to construction back in 2016 – pre Grenfell – when it launched a quality commission, chaired by then president Paul Nash. Since then, the institute has pushed hard to raise awareness of quality and building safety issues among its membership and beyond.

"The Principal Contractor Competency Certification Scheme (PCCCS) has been a big focus for CIOB, and I'm encouraged by the number of companies who have shown interest," says Nash, who chairs CIOB's Quality Implementation

Group. "There's a healthy mix of companies involved, ensuring the scheme is accessible to both SMEs and large tier 1 contractors.

"The competency assessment framework was developed with Gerald Naylor, author of PAS 8672, and the pilot programme with early adopters like Tilbury Douglas has helped refine the scheme."

Nash says the uptake for the scheme hasn't been as quick as he hoped, which he puts down to people still "grappling" with understanding the new building safety regime.

"The legal requirement for clients to sign a competency declaration for HRBs (higher-risk buildings) is now clear, but many clients are just waking up to the obligation they must employ competent principal designers and principal contractors," he says.

Nash notes Hackitt has been critical of CPD and says: "One shocking aspect of the Grenfell Inquiry report was the lack of knowledge about building regulations among professionals. This unfortunately, is a byproduct of deregulation, with professionals relying on building control to tell them how to comply. So a key takeaway from the report for me is that building regulations need to be a fundamental part of CPD.

"CIOB has done a good job of developing CPD and training resources, but there's always room for more."



“One shocking aspect of the Grenfell report was the lack of knowledge about building regulations among professionals”  
Paul Nash, CIOB

## 'Make the step change and heed the wake-up call'

The contractor: Tilbury Douglas  
Neil Rosiak, HSE director

Main contractor Tilbury Douglas, a half-billion-pound-turnover business, has been working hard to prepare for the changes introduced by the new building safety regime, says HSE director Neil Rosiak.

"The Building Safety Act includes provisions to improve competence levels and accountability in the built environment sector, creating a new professional and regulatory structure for building control, and we are very supportive of this," he says.

"In terms of ensuring individual competence, we

were the first company to put our project managers through CIOB's new Principal Contractor Competency Certification Scheme (PCCCS).

"We have also launched and embedded new software called My Competence, which logs our colleagues' capabilities and competencies, based on their skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours," he explains.

Tilbury Douglas has also focused on compliance across other certification schemes.

"We have attained Common Assessment Standard compliance via Constructionline Gold and maintained our certification status through audit for key accreditations including ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001," says Rosiak.

"We are also seeing an improved awareness of the requirements from our supply chain partners."

"Dame Judith Hackitt's lecture reminds us that this is the biggest mindset change in a generation since the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

"The industry, as a whole, has to make that step change and heed the wake-up call.

"As our journey continues to meet the evolving requirements, we will look for new ways to ensure we not only meet the standards but go above and beyond them."

“This is the biggest mindset change in a generation since the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act”  
Neil Rosiak, Tilbury Douglas





# 10,000

Persimmon  
Homes  
constructs  
around 10,000  
homes each year

## 'A journey of continuous improvement'

The housebuilder: Persimmon Homes  
Andrew Fuller, group construction director

One of the UK's biggest housebuilders, constructing around 10,000 homes each year, Persimmon Homes was also praised by Dame Judith Hackitt for its leadership on building safety.

"Persimmon shares Dame Judith's fundamental view that everyone has the right to be safe (and feel safe) in their home, and over the past five years we have been promoting this ethos through a journey of continuous improvement around quality and building safety," explains Andrew Fuller, group construction director.

"We have worked hard to drive the improvement. Our in-house

**Our system includes rigorous inspections by independent quality controllers at key stages**  
Andrew Fuller,  
Persimmon Homes



quality initiative, The Persimmon Way, was launched in 2020 to establish a systematic approach to best practice across our build programme.

"The system includes rigorous inspections undertaken by independent quality controllers at key stages for each home. Progress to the next build stage is not allowed unless these signoffs have been secured. These inspections are in addition to the normal building control and warranty regime."

This approach has been augmented with the launch of The Persimmon Way app which allows for direct communication to the entire workforce, including subcontractors, to reinforce quality and safety standards across 21 build stages. This in turn supports trend analysis and interrogation of real-time quality and safety metrics by management teams.

"The Persimmon Way has led to significant improvements in quality, with Persimmon achieving Home Builders Federation 5-star status for the first time in the company's history in 2022 and retaining the accolade in both 2023 and 2024," says Fuller. "The system is kept under continuous review to ensure it meets regulatory changes, new technology and evolving construction methods."

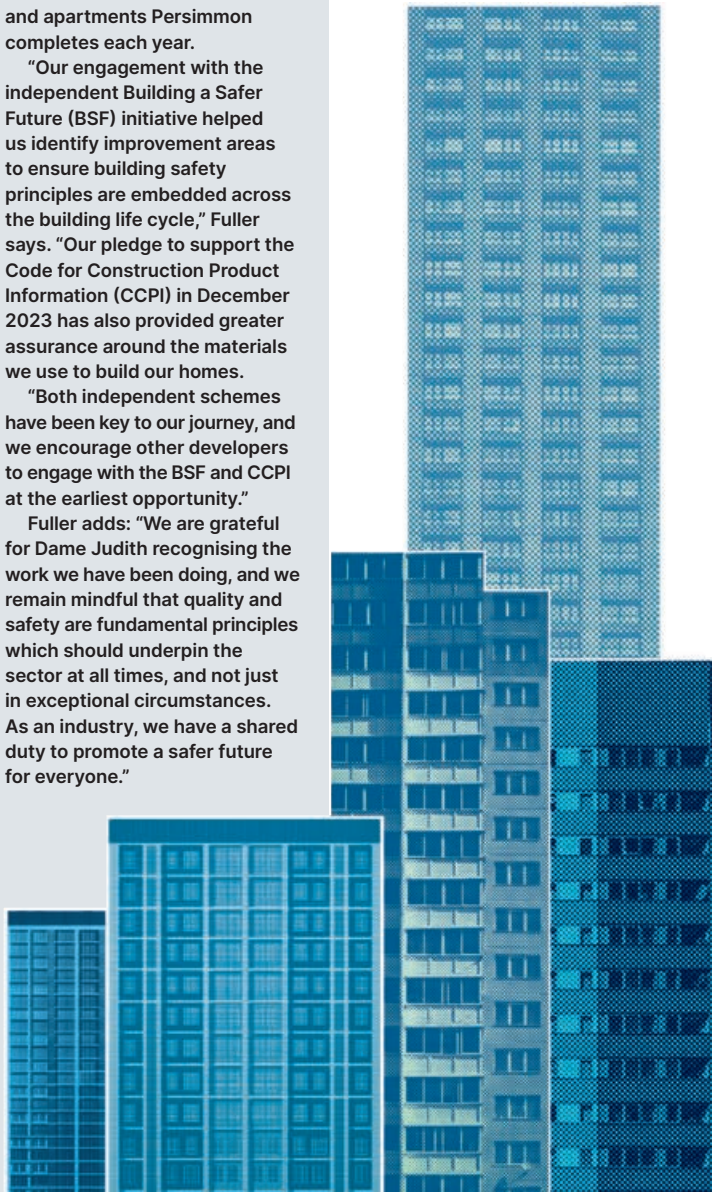
As a further set of safeguards, Persimmon internally monitors building safety compliance through a centralised group function, established in 2022, which has oversight of all houses

and apartments Persimmon completes each year.

"Our engagement with the independent Building a Safer Future (BSF) initiative helped us identify improvement areas to ensure building safety principles are embedded across the building life cycle," Fuller says. "Our pledge to support the Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI) in December 2023 has also provided greater assurance around the materials we use to build our homes."

"Both independent schemes have been key to our journey, and we encourage other developers to engage with the BSF and CCPI at the earliest opportunity."

Fuller adds: "We are grateful for Dame Judith recognising the work we have been doing, and we remain mindful that quality and safety are fundamental principles which should underpin the sector at all times, and not just in exceptional circumstances. As an industry, we have a shared duty to promote a safer future for everyone."





# Tier 1s project urges construction to treat mental health like H&S

CIOB-supported initiative will be backed by academic research into triggers impacting mental health in the industry. **Cristina Lago** reports

## A group of tier 1 health and safety

executives has launched a major project to identify the root causes of poor mental health in construction and tackle the industry's high suicide rate.

The Tier 1 H&S Leadership Group, which includes over a dozen directors from contractors such as Sir Robert McAlpine, Mace and Balfour Beatty, wants the industry to treat mental health with the same seriousness as physical health and safety through the introduction of proactive measures based on academic research.

It has partnered with the University of Warwick and construction charity Mates in Mind to produce a study into the triggers of poor mental health in the industry, drawing on research done in Australia, where the construction suicide rate is similar to the UK.

It will then review the data to propose short- and long-term proactive initiatives to address the underlying causes of impacting mental health found in the report. This could include recommendations around payment practices, changes on long working hours and measures tackling the lack of job security resulting from zero-hours contracts.

The project will also incorporate findings from CIOB's global survey into mental health issues affecting construction workers.



**We need to start looking at the root causes and main triggers that are causing people to have such poor mental health compared to other industries**

David Bucksley, CIOB

David Bucksley, chair of CIOB's HS&W advisory panel and EHS director for Europe at Turner and Townsend, is promoting the project through his involvement in the Tier 1 H&S Leadership Group.

"Although great work has been done over the past decade in the mental health space, it's not changing the statistics and approximately two people take their

own lives in the industry every day," said Bucksley, whose previous roles include HS&W director at Sir Robert McAlpine.

"Awareness is great but we need to start looking at the root causes and main triggers that are causing people to have such poor mental health in construction compared to other industries."

Initial findings from focus groups at UK construction projects suggest an overwhelming majority of industry workers had no mental health training and those who did felt "it was done to tick a box".

The leadership group also found evidence suggesting workers experiencing acute stressors such as financial difficulties prior to suicide were less likely to have received mental health support.

The project is supported by CIOB, the HSE, the Construction Leadership Council, Build UK, CITB and the Lighthouse Club charity but is seeking additional support from other industry bodies to ensure a comprehensive approach. ●

*Construction workers can text BOB to 85258 to access mental health support. The Lighthouse Club provides a confidential 24/7 support helpline on 0345 605 1956 to anyone in the industry who needs financial or wellbeing support.*

## CIOB asks government to include construction in industrial strategy

CIOB has said it is "disappointed" at the "lack of explicit focus" on construction in the government's industrial strategy proposal.

In its 16-page response to the Department for Business and Trade's consultation, the institute

said that construction should have been "explicitly listed" as one of the government's "foundational sectors" providing infrastructure and "critical inputs" to the economy.

David Barnes, acting head of policy and public affairs at CIOB,

said: "Construction has a key role in driving economic, social and environmental progress which is critical for other sectors to succeed.

"We urge the government to improve the quality of data, which is not fit for purpose, used in

defining the construction sector and its role in the economy.

"A better understanding of the built environment is needed to accurately reflect its contributions and drive innovation and productivity across the wider economy."



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# CIOB Awards: first set of finalists announced

CIOB's annual awards recognise achievements by project managers and leaders in UK construction industry



**The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)** has revealed the first set of finalists for its coveted awards ceremony.

Next spring, construction professionals from across the UK will go head-to-head for a chance to win a variety of awards, with categories including Rising Star, Team of the Year and the Sustainability Award – won by now CIOB vice president Saul Humphrey in 2024. Finalists will gather at a glittering black-tie ceremony at London's Hilton Metropole Hotel on 15 May 2025 where the winners will be announced.

Judges have announced finalists for the Client Award (team and individual), Rising Star, EDI Team and Individual Awards, Sustainability Award and Team Award. CIOB will reveal the finalists for the Construction Manager of the Year (CMYA) categories in late January 2025.

Caroline Gumble, CEO at CIOB, said: "We're wishing the very best to the finalists of our coveted awards, once again giving us a chance to showcase and celebrate the brightest talents and outstanding leaders our sector has to offer."

**“Congratulations to everyone who has been put forward – making the finals alone is certainly no easy feat**  
Caroline Gumble, CIOB



GARY BRITTON



“Congratulations to everyone who has been put forward – making the finals alone is certainly no easy feat – and I very much look forward to seeing you all at the CIOB Awards in London in the spring.”

Judges go through a rigorous assessment process to select finalists for each category, which includes assessing written applications, carrying out site visits and hosting panel interviews.

The first list of finalists can be found on the dedicated CIOB Awards website: [www.ciob.org/awards](http://www.ciob.org/awards).

The CIOB Awards, formerly known as the Construction Manager of the Year Awards (CMYA), were first held in 1978. The prestigious awards are often a springboard for careers, with many winners going on to work on iconic landmarks like Canary Wharf and The Shard. ●

- ▲ CMYA winner 2024 Barry Kingscote won for his work on 1-4 Marble Arch
- ◀ The 2024 awards ceremony took place at London's Hilton Metropole Hotel
- ▼ Barry Kingscote receives his award from CIOB's Sandi Rhys Jones



## CIOB Awards finalists 2025

Finalists for the Rising Star, Client, Sustainability, Team and EDI awards

### ● Rising Star

- Damilola Ola**  
Mount Anvil
- Deepthi Ravi**  
PLP Architecture
- Rohit Malhotra**  
AtkinsRéalis
- Caitlin Cronin**  
BAM Construction
- Nicole Harris**  
Tilia Homes
- Eliot Pears**  
Tilia Homes
- Shahnawaz Khawaja**  
Mace
- James Darbyshire**  
Caddick Construction NW
- Nauman Chicktey**  
John Sisk & Son Ltd
- Donna Milliner**  
Citizen Housing Group
- Adam Mansfield**  
Rose Builders Ltd
- David Akinwamide**  
Edinburgh Napier University
- Lewis Quinn**  
Morgan Sindall Construction
- Jade Catchpole**  
JJ Rhatigan
- Aoife Healy**  
JJ Rhatigan
- Harry Ravenhall**  
Ward Williams Associates LLP
- Ben Yates**  
Bloor Homes

### ● Client

- Steve Fennell**  
Ministry of Justice
- Charlotte Hollingsworth**  
Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority
- Joanna De Lima**  
The Christie NHS Foundation Trust
- Lynn Summerfield**  
British Land

### Simon Halewood

Transport for Greater Manchester

### Ruth Rathmell

The Guinness Partnership Ltd

### Emily Newland

London Borough of Hounslow

### ● Sustainability

#### Sheryl Owen

Mott MacDonald

#### Andrew Crimston

Geosentinel (UK) Ltd

#### Daniel Coyle

Ryebribe Construction Ltd

#### Roxann Dawson

Tilbury Douglas

#### Ian Pritchett

Greencore Homes

#### Paul Broadbent

LocatED

### ● Team

- Vinci Building
- University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust
- Wiltens Construction Ltd
- Wates Construction
- Morris and Spottiswood
- Citizen
- Thompsons of Prudhoe Ltd
- Quinn London Ltd
- Norton Folgate Project Execution Team
- Graham
- ISG Construction Ltd
- Hill Group UK
- Redrow Homes North West
- Projekt Ltd
- Lendlease Construction

### ● EDI Team

- RED Engineering Design Ltd
- Dobuild
- McCann
- Core Recruiter Ltd

### ● EDI Individual

- Leigh Renshaw, AstraZeneca
- Martin Griffin, GHD
- Gary Jones, Strategic Estates, House of Commons



# Introducing CIOBJobs... your new career starts here

The CIOB jobs board has relaunched with hundreds of global construction management jobs listed each week and exclusive benefits for CIOB members



**CIOBJobs.com is the official** recruitment site of the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) – and it has been relaunched this month with loads of extra features.

The job board serves the largest audience of construction management professionals in the UK and globally. This includes numerous tens of thousands of CIOB members, among the most highly regarded professionals working in the international construction industry, who represent a wide variety of roles and promote the delivery of high work standards and values.

Each week, hundreds of new construction management jobs are listed, posted by a wide range of recruiters who are keen to reach CIOBJobs.com's professional audience, and including positions with major contractors, specialist contractors, clients, consultancies and specialists in research and education.

**“ The job board serves the largest audience of construction management professionals in the UK and globally**



# CIOB Jobs

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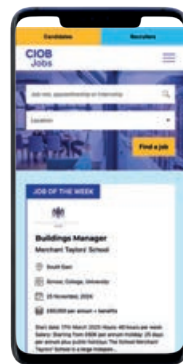
- candidate dashboard to manage CV, job applications and email alerts tailored to your job search;
- recruiter dashboard to manage job posting, check applications and other analytics features;
- careers advice articles;
- latest professional courses; and
- CPD resources.

Candidates who registered on the previous version of the website – constructionmanagementjobs.co.uk – will find their previous login details work on the new CIOBJobs.com site. If you've not registered, log on today and upload your CV.

## Recruiters

The CIOB brand is synonymous with high standards of professionalism in the built environment. This makes CIOBJobs.com an essential tool for any recruiter seeking to attract well-qualified and dynamic professionals developing a career in construction.

CIOB members are drawn from a wide range of professional disciplines working within building and construction supply chains. The highly regarded designations MCI0B and FCI0B are the marks of a true professional. Holders of the CIOB qualification are recognised throughout the



▲ CIOBJobs.com has been relaunched with a host of extra features

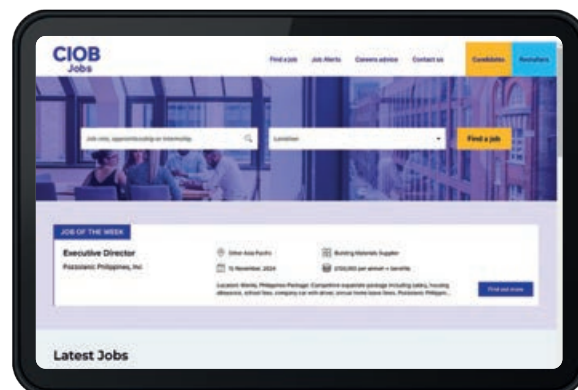
▼ Major contractors are keen to attract professional candidates

industry as knowledgeable and competent in their field with a personal commitment to continual professional development.

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- High-quality candidates. Feedback from consultants who regularly use CIOB Jobs indicates that we provide the highest quality applicants in the construction recruitment market.
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## Construction insolvencies: is it *that* bad?

Although the industry is known for firms going under, the wider picture shows the problem is less severe, writes **Barrett Harris**



The construction industry has consistently topped the list for company insolvencies in

Great Britain. Although the number of insolvencies from January to September 2024 decreased by

3.7% compared to the previous year, it remains the industry with the highest absolute figure.

It is however necessary to consider the scale of the sector to gain a more comprehensive understanding of this issue. Construction comprises a vast

number of companies, many of which are relatively small. This naturally contributes to a higher overall insolvency count. When examining the insolvency rate, which measures insolvencies relative to the total number of companies, construction ranks

third with an insolvency rate of 1.3%, behind accommodation (2.6%) and manufacturing (1.7%). This suggests that, proportionally, insolvencies in construction are not as severe as initially perceived.

While insolvency statistics provide valuable insights, they only represent about 10% of the businesses leaving the industry. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) tracks business 'deaths', which encompass all types of dissolutions, including insolvencies, whereas insolvency statistics only relate to companies listed on Companies House. This way, the ONS measure of business 'deaths' provides a fuller picture of companies exiting the industry.

Despite this, the net balance of business 'births' less 'deaths' has been positive over the past six quarters, indicating a growing industry. However, there have been periods, particularly since 2020, where 'deaths' outpaced 'births', leading to a temporary contraction. More recently, the trend has shifted back to positive net growth, which points to a recovering industry.

### Industry impact

Since this measure began in Q1 2017, there have been only three instances where business 'deaths' outnumbered 'births'. This trend has been mainly influenced by the reduction of government aid after the covid pandemic and the onset of the conflict in Ukraine, leading to a negative net balance and a contracting industry.

However, from Q2 2023, 'births' have consistently exceeded 'deaths', signalling a recovering



Construction  
insolvency  
percentage rate

1.3

The net balance of business ‘births’ less ‘deaths’ has been positive over the past six quarters, indicating a growing industry

industry with a positive net balance. This suggests that the market is expanding, as the number of new entrants outweighs the combined impact of insolvencies and exits.

Nevertheless, the effects of both insolvencies and business ‘deaths’ can have a significant impact on the industry, particularly for larger companies. These events can delay projects and negatively affect the remaining businesses.

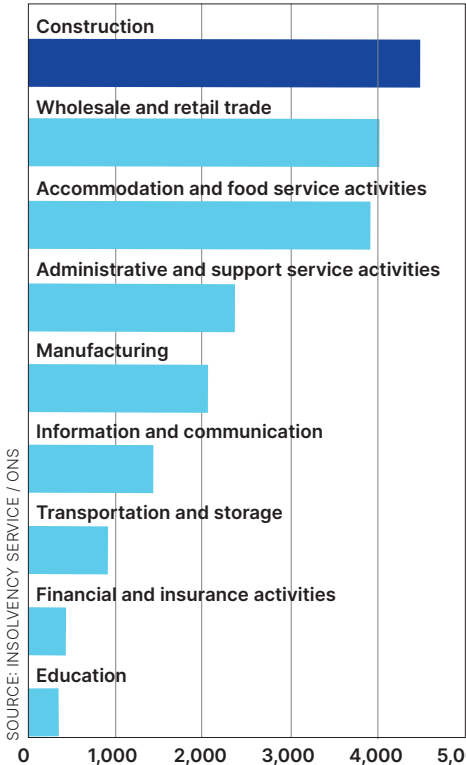
In this challenging market environment, clients should take a more proactive role in managing their supply chains. By adopting sophisticated commercial models that position contractors and key trades as partners rather than mere suppliers, clients can foster collaboration, share risks and rewards equitably, proactively address challenges and ultimately enhance project delivery.

The focus should be on creating effective supply chain strategies and commercial models to drive success. Managing the entire supply chain and identifying potential risks is a crucial responsibility.

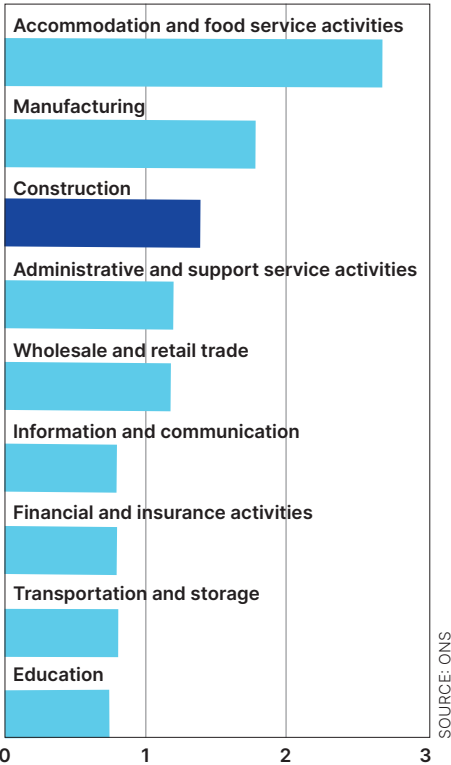
Barrett Harris is an economist at Turner & Townsend.

Insolvencies by industry in 2023

Number of company insolvencies

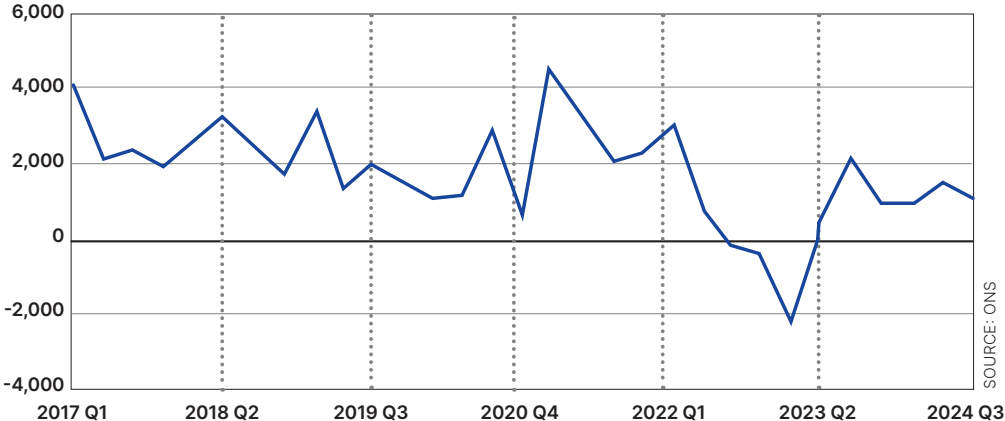


Net balance of companies (%)



Company ‘births’ have exceeded ‘deaths’ since Q2 2023

Net balance of companies: ‘births’ minus ‘deaths’ of companies







**Caroline Gumble**  
CIOB

# We need another fundamental shift to prioritise building safety

**Caroline Gumble** shares her take on this year's Sir James Wates lecture, delivered by building regulations independent review author, Dame Judith Hackitt

**It's the time of year when I reflect** on what the institute and the wider construction community experienced in 2024 and what we should be taking forward into 2025.

Just a few weeks ago, CIOB hosted the third annual Sir James Wates lecture, compered excellently by our very own Will Mann, *CM*'s editor, and delivered by Dame Judith Hackitt, and it summed up many of the conversations I had with CIOB members in 2024.

It's clear that the lecture's focus on safety in the built environment and the need for professionals in the industry to take the lead, regardless of whether or not they hold a formal leadership role, will be one of the dominant themes of 2025.

Many of the conversations on that theme will focus, quite rightly, on the need to evidence competence as a built environment professional and ensure we are encouraging a culture of ethical, responsible behaviour.

At CIOB we have been fortunate to hear from Dame Judith, who is an honorary CIOB fellow, at previous events. We've heard her message of taking our responsibilities as construction professionals and industry leaders seriously. As with last year's talk from Paul Morrell, our audience was presented with questions which not



▲ A new legislative regime is in place for construction, but further regulation is not off the table

**It's clear that the lecture's focus on safety in the built environment and the need for professionals in the industry to take the lead, regardless of whether or not they hold a formal leadership role, will be one of the dominant themes of 2025**

everyone will be able to greet with a satisfactory answer.

Dame Judith pointed out that "regulation is required when there's a need to drive different behaviours". She cited the example of the Health and Safety at Work Act, introduced 50 years ago, which helped to drive a "fundamental shift" from simply adhering to rules to more of an "outcomes-based" system. She did, however, also add that it was not an entirely easy shift in behaviour but it has influenced so much of how we work today.

It's not a stretch to see that may be where we're heading now – the shift in thinking required now on prioritising safety and quality in construction is similar to the significant culture change of a generation ago.

A new legislative regime is now in place, with a new regulator to hold people to account. However, further legislation and other prescriptive measures are not off the table – unless we accelerate the pace of change.

We need to see more leaders in the built environment sector set the example and drive culture change, showing the right moral and ethical behaviours and clearly evidencing their competence and experience. As Dame Judith said: "Compliance is the minimum we require." ●  
**Caroline Gumble is CEO of CIOB.**



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**Len Bunton**  
Arbitrator, adjudicator,  
mediator and conflict  
avoidance consultant

# Why construction is signing the conflict avoidance pledge

An initiative to reduce conflict and boost collaboration in the industry is receiving growing backing. **Len Bunton** explains

**The UK construction industry has** recently begun embracing the Conflict Avoidance Process (CAP), an early intervention strategy aimed at resolving emerging issues before they escalate into costly disputes like adjudication. CAP encourages proactive problem-solving and collaboration, reducing the reliance on formal dispute resolution mechanisms.

Support for CAP has grown significantly, particularly in Scotland, where key organisations like the Scottish Building Federation (SBF), SELECT, the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA) and the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) have endorsed the Conflict Avoidance Pledge.

Over 475 construction organisations across the UK have signed this pledge, with increasing interest also noted in Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland. The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) is encouraging its members to adopt CAP practices to enhance collaborative working environments.

The main objective of CAP is to identify and address potential disputes early, with the help of an experienced industry consultant who can provide binding or



**This collaborative approach has proven effective in mitigating issues, allowing construction projects to continue with a focus on trust and cooperation**

non-binding recommendations. This collaborative approach has proven effective in mitigating issues, allowing construction projects to continue with a focus on trust and cooperation.

The Conflict Avoidance Coalition Steering Group, which includes about 80 organisations, has been pivotal in

promoting CAP adoption across various sectors such as transportation, rail, nuclear, water, utilities, power and health. A successful trial by Transport for London on 20 projects showed a significant reduction in contractual claims and legal costs, further demonstrating CAP's effectiveness in conflict management.

Government endorsement of CAP is also increasing. The Scottish government has recommended its use in public sector projects, and discussions are underway with the Welsh government, the Northern Ireland Assembly and authorities in Ireland. Notably, the UK Parliament refurbishment and restoration project will integrate CAP into its construction contracts, highlighting its growing acceptance in large-scale projects.

The 2024 edition of the Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT) contract, while not directly referencing CAP, encourages collaborative dispute resolution methods. This reflects an industrywide shift towards reducing conflicts and fostering a cooperative approach to project management. ●

**Len Bunton is an arbitrator, adjudicator, mediator and conflict avoidance consultant.**

**The Conflict Avoidance Pledge, integral to CAP, outlines key commitments for signatories:**



Conflict Avoidance Coalition

- Collaborative working. Emphasises early intervention to resolve issues before they escalate.
- Embedding mechanisms. Promotes the integration of conflict avoidance strategies within projects to manage potential conflicts effectively.
- Resource allocation. Commits necessary resources to implement these strategies across all projects.
- Skill development. Enhances the

capability to identify early signs of disputes and apply suitable conflict resolution measures.

● Industry collaboration. Encourages working with industry partners to promote and utilise conflict avoidance methods. This pledge aims to create a culture of proactive dispute management in the construction industry, enhancing collaboration and reducing conflicts.

**Further information:**  
[www.rics.org/capledge](http://www.rics.org/capledge)

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**Ian Brant**  
FCIOB

# CIC: Championing collaboration and innovation

CIOB trustee **Ian Brant FCIOB** is deputy chair of the CIC. This month, he begins a regular series of columns in CM, looking at the latest policy news, insights and developments from the council



## The Construction Industry Council

(CIC) stands as a cornerstone of the UK's built environment sector, representing a unique coalition of professional bodies. Established in 1988, CIC serves as a unifying voice for the industry, fostering collaboration across disciplines to address the complex challenges faced by the construction industry.

CIOB is a key member among the 40-strong membership which make up the CIC. CIOB collaborates with other institutes through all of CIC's committees and working groups.

Through its membership, CIC's influence spans construction



**CIC's commitment to advocacy ensures that professionals' collective voices are heard at the highest levels of policy-making**

managers, architects, engineers, surveyors and beyond. This breadth of expertise allows us to address key industry priorities. Through our involvement in the Construction Leadership Council and Building Safety Alliance, CIC actively promotes best practices, safety standards and innovative solutions.

CIC's commitment to advocacy ensures that professionals' collective voices are heard at the highest levels of policy-making, reinforcing the critical role of construction in economic growth and society.

CIC's vision is clear: through leadership and collaboration, CIC empowers a thriving, interconnected industry that meets the demands of today while building a sustainable legacy for future generations.

CIOB members represent its interests on the following CIC committees: Alternative Dispute Resolution; Digital Forum; Climate Change; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Building Safety; Professional indemnity; Health and Safety; Housing; Infrastructure; Liability; Public Affairs; and Education and Future Skills.

CIOB is also represented through CIC's nations and regions committees and has excellent representation on the 2050 group (the leaders of the future). All of this is coordinated through CIOB's external affairs board.

## Building safety work

Since the tragedy at Grenfell Tower, CIC has made building safety a major priority and has focused on driving several initiatives to achieve culture change in the sector. Much work has already been done by the industry through the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety undertaken by Dame Judith Hackitt and the consequent programme of regulatory reform, which is now being implemented.

CIC and its members strongly supported the review, and many individuals and organisations were directly involved in the six working groups set up by Hackitt.

CIC is very clear on the requirements for the construction sector to deliver, and that reforms in response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry report need to support and enable the sector to make its full contribution to delivering safer buildings, net zero and increased housebuilding. ●

**Ian Brant FCIOB is a director at Brant Construction Quantum Experts, CIOB trustee and deputy chair of the CIC.**



# Feedback

A selection of readers' comments about news and issues in the industry from across the CIOB community and social media



CM

## Time to stop changing standard contracts beyond recognition

*Construction Leadership Council's Samantha Peat argued against the increasingly common practice of adding clauses amending industry-approved forms of contract.*

Richard Saxon FRICS FRIBA

This article is absolutely correct. Too many clients, aided by their lawyers, distort initially balanced contracts to exploit their power position in a project. This is an ongoing source of industry problems and hardly benefits clients as suppliers and their insurers often cannot deliver the unreasonable obligations they are asked to undertake. Standard form contracts are valuable as they are and should be used that way.

Pierre Venter

Is this 'bastardisation' of the documents a result of clauses deemed too restrictive by clients/developers and general contractors? Or are the design/engineering teams too accommodating and not demanding enough? The design responsibility matrix and information delivery requirements are good for stipulating what is to be delivered, and key to ensuring the measure of what matters.

◀ Amending industry-approved forms of contract is increasingly common



CIOB People

## Will the Grenfell fire engineer recommendation fix the competence problem?

*Professor Michael Parrett FCIOB told CIOB People fire engineer training must go further than theory to prevent more deadly disasters.*

Ian Robertson

Training has always been a hot topic and I believe it is better to understand the complexities of the range of subjects we partake in. Perhaps degree apprenticeships backed by hands-on experience would be far better than a university course. Considerations could be made to extend the learning, ensuring it is completely regulated, with no loopholes.



Too many clients, aided by their lawyers, distort initially balanced contracts to exploit their power position in a project

Richard Saxon



BIMplus

## Information Management Initiative: information management for all

*Nima launched an initiative to replace the previous information management mandate, which in turn superseded the original 2016 UK BIM mandate.*

Sarah Meah

This brings to mind the original target to have everything in place by 2020. A standardised way of specifying requirements has been available since PAS 1192, although terminology has evolved and new concepts have been introduced over time.

Now the target appears to have moved to 2030, will there be a review of the lessons learned from the 2020 timeline to understand why it wasn't achieved and to better support this new goal? I do feel that although a few individuals are now BIM Experts and do BIM things, the majority of projects still do things traditionally and wastefully when it comes to BIM.



Share your views on the latest industry issues by posting comments online at [www.constructionmanagement.co.uk](http://www.constructionmanagement.co.uk) or by emailing the editor at [construction-management@atompublishing.co.uk](mailto:construction-management@atompublishing.co.uk)



CM

## The PPP comeback: a broken model or a new opportunity for construction?

*Anthony Walker made the case for reviving a new generation of well-designed public-private partnership models.*

Andrew Board

I'm retired now but was part of a team that successfully negotiated and delivered three PFI housing schemes. I agree with Anthony that the model of private and public schemes should not be abandoned and learning experience could help develop the model.

None of the schemes were without challenges. The procurement process was certainly lengthy and the room full

of contracts on signing day bore witness to the scale of the document negotiation with the legal representation of the parties.

A better risk share arrangement would certainly deliver better value, as would standardised contracts. Payment for the procurement process would enable parties to invest the time and resources necessary to speed up the process. A single project bonding and insurance and warranty arrangement for all parties would save costs.

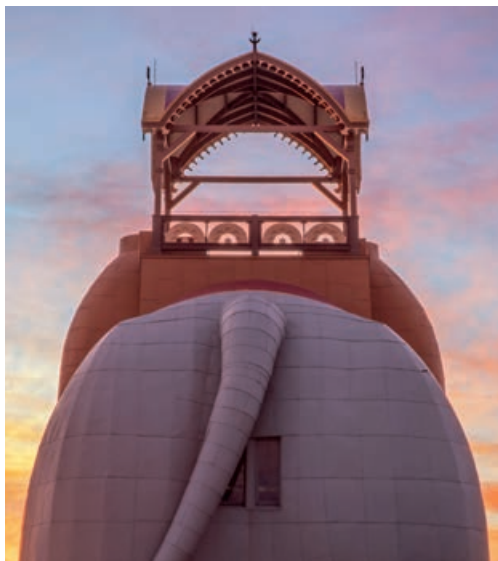
I remain of the view that PPP could form a part of the government's delivery of the housing targets with carefully crafted and balanced risks and rewards drawing on private contractors' expertise.



## ▼ Battersea Power Station

by Daniel Sambraus

Photographer's words: "I have followed the development of the derelict Battersea Power Station into one of the most sought-after places in the world. The impression of a spaceship is quite intentional – this huge monster of a building looks like it is out of this world."



# In pictures: Art of Building 2025

Twelve photos have made it to the final shortlist of this year's CIOB photography competition, the Art of Building, including the six here. Cast your vote online by 10 January at [www.artofbuilding.org](http://www.artofbuilding.org). The winner will be announced on 22 January

## ◀ A Pane in the Rear

by Bob Debski

Photographer's words: "Lucy the Elephant, in Margate City, in the US state of New Jersey, is the earliest example of American roadside architecture. The 90 tonne and 20m tall pachyderm was built in 1882 by a real estate developer to attract buyers to the beach south of Atlantic City."



 Visit [www.artofbuilding.org](http://www.artofbuilding.org) to cast your vote



### ◀ Medieval Highrise

by Gabriel Coarna

Photographer's words: "This is Uchisar Castle in Cappadocia, Turkey. I love the apparent modernity of this construction – an idea I emphasised via the straight-on angle and composition and which is the basis of the image's title."

### ▼ We Are All One

by Dorota Yamadag

Photographer's words: "The Baha'i Temple [of South America, in Chile] is a place open for everyone, regardless of their faith, race, origin, ethnicity or sexual orientation. It welcomes and invites all to come in and pray, meditate, ponder, reminisce or just enjoy a quiet moment."

### ▼ Calm Waters

by Rosetta Bonatti

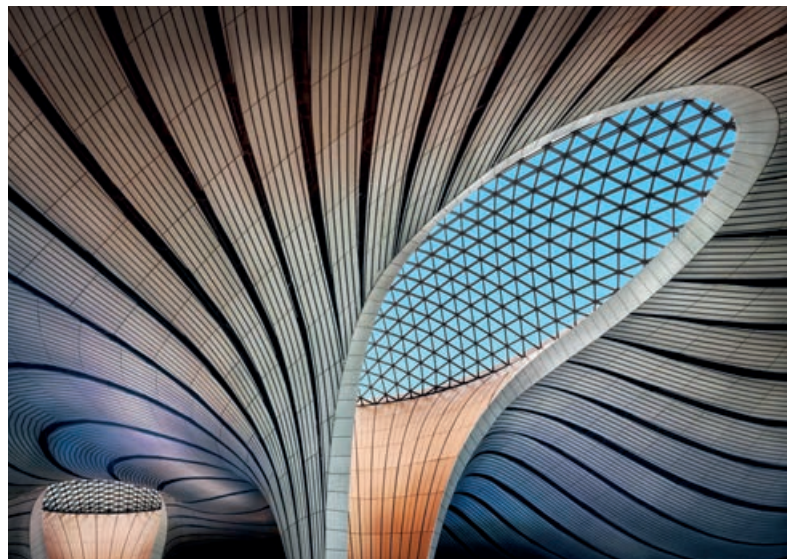
Photographer's words: "More than 30 years have passed since a gentleman from Sestri decided to build a ship-shaped nightclub 800m above sea level on the Parma Apennines. The suggestive concrete building bears the name of the historic Segesta (ancient Sestri Levante)."



### ▶ Daxing International Airport

by Marcel van Balken

Photographer's words: "Beijing Daxing International Airport is a masterpiece of design, where the terminal's flowing, vaulted roof gracefully extends to the ground, seamlessly supporting the structure while flooding the space with natural light."







# Landsec's low-carbon hybrid

A hybrid steel and CLT solution, combined with a retained 1950s structure, helped cut construction-related CO<sub>2</sub> on a Landsec scheme where Mace is main contractor. **Martin Cooper** reports from Southwark

Reused steelwork was fabricated into around 500 beams which were used in both buildings

# 500

► A hybrid solution of steelwork supporting cross-laminated timber flooring is used in both buildings

**T**argeting the highest sustainability ratings, a Landsec commercial scheme in Southwark, south London, provides an exemplary model of design, setting an industry-wide precedent for the reuse of existing structures and exceeding recognised carbon targets.

Timber Square consists of two buildings that are situated a short distance from the capital's South Bank and the Tate Modern. One building is a transformed 1950s-built printworks (now simply known as Print), where 80% of the existing structure is being reused and five new floors added to the top, forming a nine-storey office block. Next door, the other structure (known as Ink) is a new-build 14-storey office building.

This is Landsec's latest steel-framed project in Southwark, following the delivery of the nearby Forge scheme (see box, p29), which is said to be the UK's first net zero commercial building designed in line with the UKGBC's framework. It was completed by Mace and its joint venture partner, Sir Robert McAlpine.

Mace Construct is main contractor for Timber Square and project director Rob Dudley says: "Building on our experience delivering The Forge, we are working closely with the Landsec team to maximise the retention and use of recycled materials.

#### Timber Square, London

- Main client: Landsec
- Architect: Bennetts Associates
- Main contractor: Mace
- Structural engineer: Heyne Tillett Steel
- Steelwork contractor: William Hare
- Steel tonnage: 2,600 tonnes



"Combined with the integration of a complex steel hybrid structure and the application of advanced offsite methods, with Timber Square we are pioneering the next generation of low-carbon buildings."

To this end, both buildings are steel-framed structures, a solution that has allowed the design to benefit from a lighter and quicker framing solution as well as one that can easily create the long clear internal spans wanted by office tenants.

#### Hybrid solution

The retained structure in Print is a steel frame supporting in-situ concrete floors. However, above this for the new floors, a hybrid solution of steelwork supporting cross-laminated timber (CLT) flooring has been used. This solution has also been utilised for the entire superstructure for Ink, making this structure the largest in the UK to be designed with a steel/CLT frame.

Further enhancing the project's sustainability credentials, approximately 70% of the steelwork fabricated, supplied and erected

#### With Timber Square we are pioneering the next generation of low-carbon buildings

Rob Dudley,  
Mace Construct



by William Hare was sourced from electric arc furnace (EAF) production facilities.

EAF steelwork is considered to be much greener and more efficient in terms of energy consumption for the production process, as it can utilise renewable energy from wind farms instead of carbon fuels such as oil and gas.

Another carbon saving has been generated by using 120 tonnes of reused steelwork sourced from Cleveland Steel & Tubes, which has a stock of reclaimed material. This has been fabricated into around 500 beams, used primarily in and around the cores in both buildings.

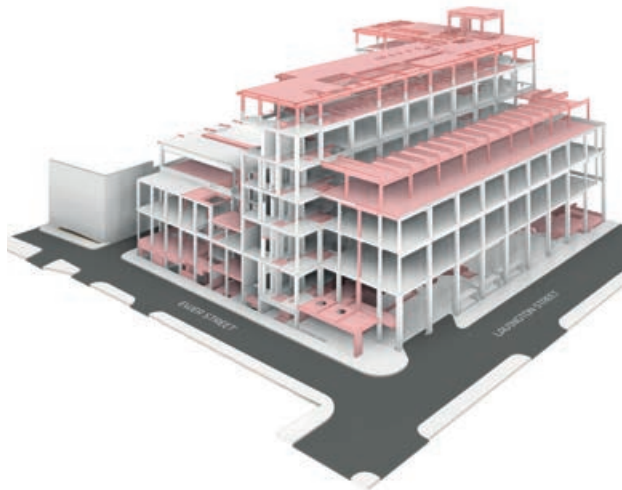
As Print was originally built for an industrial use, a cut-and-carve ►

◀ CGI showing Timber Square's Print building with the Ink building to the right



## 850

A series of 850mm-deep Warren trusses form the new office spaces



construction programme has been undertaken, whereby the retained structure has been extensively remodelled to create a modern office environment.

This work required a significant amount of new strengthening steelwork to be erected within the retained structure, providing support and allowing voids to be cut through the concrete floors. Four new steel-framed cores, for lifts and stairs, have been erected through these voids. Extending upwards into the new uppermost floors, the cores are braced and provide stability to the building.

#### Health and wellbeing

According to Landsec, the existing commercial building has been sensitively redesigned to cater for a mixed tenure alongside additional retail units at ground floor level. Representing both environmental and social sustainability, the building places the health and wellbeing of its occupants at the centre of the development with increased light levels, natural

material palettes and access to outdoor terraces.

On the front elevation, facing Lavington Street, a double-height ground floor reception area has been created from what was originally a large loading bay. Above this, a series of seven large steel transfer beams have been installed to support and create a new set-back and terrace at third floor level.

The majority of the steelwork erection for both buildings has been carried out using the project's three tower cranes. However, the transfer beams each weigh 8 tonnes and required a mobile crane to be brought to site for their installation.

Creating the new upper floors, steelwork follows the retained structure's original column grid, while also wrapping around a new full-height central atrium. As the existing structure is encased in concrete, the old steelwork is in good condition, and once areas have been broken out, new steel-to-steel connections have been made.

Forming the new office spaces are a series of 850mm-deep Warren trusses, up to 14m-long. The trusses each weigh up to 3 tonnes, and were brought to site as fully assembled sections and erected straight from the delivery truck.

In the Print building, finishes are kept to a minimum and steelwork, flooring, structural joints and services are visible, creating a modern industrial aesthetic. This design includes the retained structure, where the predominantly concrete encased columns and floors will be on view, while the upper floors, trusses and the underside of the CLT flooring will also be left exposed.

This exposed design aesthetic is also present in Ink, as this building's entire frame, services and underside of the flooring will also be left on view.

Based around two centrally positioned stability-giving concrete cores, the steelwork in the 14-storey Ink building is based

▲ Steelwork was erected within the existing Print building to support new upper floors  
▼ The new steel frame supports cross-laminated timber flooring





## We're delivering two highly sustainable buildings centred around a new public square which combine a breadth of amenities with highly efficient space

James Rowbotham,  
Landsec



around a 6m x 10.5m column grid. Sitting above a two-level basement, the steel-framed structure will form 17,781 sq m of new flexible workspace, with floor plates ranging from 733 sq m up to 1,514 sq m. Ground floor retail units can be accessed from a pedestrianised square between the two buildings.

Throughout the Ink building, cellular beams have been used to support the CLT flooring and accommodate the services within their depth. Fabricated from EAF-sourced UB sections, the beams had bespoke service holes cut into them at William Hare's factory.

As well as accommodating modern office workspaces, Ink

will feature a number of balconies and terraces, providing outdoor breakout areas for the tenants.

The largest terrace is on the fifth floor, along the Lavington Street elevation, where the building steps back to accommodate the outdoor space. Two floors above, the seventh floor cantilevers out over the terrace.

This feature is formed by a large single-storey-high (3.8m) truss, measuring 24m long. Positioned along the perimeter of the building, the truss also supports the column lines that extend upwards from the eighth floor to the roof.

James Rowbotham, head of workplace development at Landsec, says: "We're delivering two highly sustainable buildings centred around a new public square which combine a breadth of amenities with highly efficient space.

"Timber Square, along with our wider Southwark pipeline will deliver much-needed capacity to a supply-constrained market and allow us to respond to the growing demand for space in the borough." ●

## The Forge's kit of parts

Offsite steel fabrication speeded delivery

Said to be the UK's first net zero carbon commercial development, the Forge comprises two nine-storey office blocks situated behind the Tate Modern on London's South Bank.

To help achieve its sustainability targets, the scheme used the platform approach to design, manufacture and assembly (P-DfMA).

P-DfMA uses standardised components assembled using a 'kit of parts' methodology, whereby most elements are fabricated off site in repeatable sections.

By utilising this ground-breaking construction

method, the job was completed 40% faster than a similar-sized commercial scheme using more traditional construction techniques.

The Forge's P-DfMA method used a hybrid steel and concrete framing solution to construct the buildings. Steelwork was chosen for the primary structure due to its speed of delivery and because the beams and columns can be fabricated off site, in line with the project's industrialised construction-based philosophy.

Severfield fabricated, supplied and erected 1,000 tonnes of steelwork for the scheme.

▼ The Forge used a hybrid steel and concrete system







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# Home help with light-gauge steelwork

A new light-gauge steel specification offers help for housebuilders looking to accelerate delivery. By **Nick Barrett**



**M**odern methods of construction (MMC) will be invaluable in tackling the UK's housing shortages, and light-gauge steel will have a key role to play.

Pioneers of MMC have of course been pushing the merits of light-gauge steel for many years, and can point to long track records of successful projects. Specific

standards for the production and use of light-gauge, cold-formed, steel have been lacking, however. A new specification has just been launched that aims to fill that gap.

The British Constructional Steelwork Association's (BCSA) National Light-Gauge Steelwork Specification (NLSS) aims to support more widespread use of light-gauge steel by giving the industry

▲ Wavensmere Homes' Nightingale Quarter in Derby features light-gauge steel framing

documents that can be incorporated into construction contracts. It is expected that the specification will be incorporated into the individual project specification, and thus be part of the total building contract.

"The new specification has been developed with input from the wider construction as well as the light steel manufacturing industry and will give the supply chain confidence that the

steel on their projects is a quality assured product, manufactured and used to the highest regulatory standards,” says BCSA CEO Jonathan Clemens.

Light-gauge steel frame structures use galvanized cold-formed steel sections as the primary structural components, assembled off site into prefabricated panels. The material is strong, lightweight and has proven to be durable.

The specification sets out a framework of requirements to reassure designers, clients and contractors that the light-gauge steelwork industry is able to establish and maintain high standards in all areas of its operations. It establishes what the high standards are exactly and delivers clarity of expectations, outputs and outcomes.

### Greater transparency

When the specification comes into force from April 2025, it will harmonise the approach to the use of light-gauge steel and provide definitions of the common terms used in the industry. This transparency will reduce risk, improve communication and lead to raised quality standards.

The information to be included in a project specification is spelled out for the first time, covering areas such as the materials to be used, transfer of design information, manufacture and assembly,



**The new specification will give the supply chain confidence that the steel on their projects is a quality assured product**

**Jonathan Clemens, BCSA**

## Light-gauge steel creates landmark neighbourhood

Derbyshire residential project demonstrates effectiveness of new specification



▲ HadleyFrame designed and installed the project's light-gauge steel system

Wavensmere Homes is demonstrating how housebuilders can benefit from the increased assurance that the new light-gauge steel specification will bring.

The 925-unit Nightingale Quarter development on the former 7.5ha Derbyshire Royal Infirmary site is being built for Wavensmere by light-gauge specialist HadleyFrame, which designs, engineers, details, manufactures and installs its system using Hadley profiles.

The development overall comprises 800 apartments and 125 houses. Currently under construction is the five-storey Block E6. Block E6 comprises 95 apartments, using 164 tonnes of cold-rolled steel and 42.5 tonnes of hot-rolled.

The facade is of traditional masonry. Offsite-manufactured, pre-panelised load-bearing

light-gauge steel framing is being used for the block. External panels with sheathing board and breathable membrane were constructed off site in factory conditions.

Stephen Hall, technical fellow with Hadley Construction Technology, who was involved in developing the new specification, says: “When working with advanced construction technologies it is crucial that our works match the state of the art. With that in mind, and knowing that the publication of the specification was on the horizon, aligning with the proposed requirements was at the forefront of our minds on this project.

“The specification provided us with guidance covering everything from exchange of information to material and component compliance, and a suite of stringent execution tolerances. Having these requirements within a single resource streamlined our quality compliance and provided a consistent framework that we adhered to at Derby and will continue to do so across future schemes.”

Matt Brighton, commercial director at Wavensmere Homes, says: “The demand for housing continues to rise and steel-frame MMC is an excellent way to meet that demand, allowing us to achieve requirements for engineering, performance and programme. The HadleyFrame pre-panelised system is perfect for our projects as we build up to 15 storeys and need follow-on trades on site at the earliest opportunity.

“E6 is the final phase of the Nightingale Quarter development, and we have occupants in the first phase where the units outperformed building standards for acoustics and airtightness, so our residents have comfortable, low-energy homes.”

installation, requirements for protective treatment and quality management.

The specification provides a uniform set of requirements for the manufacture and construction of light-gauge steel structures in compliance with the requirements of European standards. The specification also includes a section on quality management,

which requires the designers, manufacturers and installers for light-gauge steel structures to have the necessary facilities, skills and quality management systems in place.

“The specification will initially be voluntary, but support is being given by all the relevant key trade associations, so its use is expected to be widespread,” says Clemens. ●



# Australia's building defects library

In New South Wales, Australia, the Building Commission hopes to improve construction quality by standardising the language of build defects. By **Rod Sweet**

**T**he Australian state of New South Wales has taken a novel approach to improving the quality and productivity of its construction sector.

Its Building Commission, the regulator for residential construction, has compiled a Building Defects Library to help the industry move on from making the same mistakes over and over again.

It's a booklet in downloadable PDF form with text and images describing around 40 of the most common defects building inspectors find in five categories: fire safety; waterproofing; structure; building envelope; and building services (gas, plumbing and electric). It pertains to apartment buildings, dormitory-style buildings and residential care homes.

It aims to standardise the words used to describe defects because, until now, inspectors have been free to describe defects as they saw fit, which leads to differing interpretations in the construction supply chain until, by a process of Chinese whispers, no one can be sure what exactly the defects are.

"If we're talking about the same thing, let's use the same words," Matt Press, acting building commissioner, told CM\*.

He said a common "taxonomy" of building defects was needed because there were so many ways to describe a defect that communicating with industry about the most common ones was difficult.



▲ Aerial view of Sydney: New South Wales has around 100 variations on the national code

"We could say the number one defect is waterproofing, which is fascinating, but to be meaningful to the supply chain, you need to go down to a granular level about what we're talking about. Are we talking about interior, or exterior, bathrooms, particular walling systems, roofs, moisture management? We need to be specific."

## A user-friendly rule book

The problem is made worse by the complex nature of building codes. Australia has a National Construction Code giving performance criteria and deemed-to-satisfy criteria. The code then refers to the title of the relevant set of Australia/New Zealand standards, but does not reproduce them. To complicate

The booklet describes around 40 of the most common defects

40

matters further, New South Wales has around 100 of its own variations on the national code.

"Before, the rules existed in different places, and no one goes to the sources to check. If you asked someone on a building site when they last read an Australian standard, you'd get a pretty blank look," Press said, adding that the library is a "user-friendly rule book".

"We're able to present the top defects with the code and standards hierarchy brought together on a single page," he added.

"It means we can say to a building surveyor, how about you use this type of language to describe defects in your inspections? For their part, builders can use the library to prepare for inspections. It's useful for them to know the 40 or so defects we as the regulator see 80% or 90% of the time, so they can avoid those pitfalls."

He said that developers, contractors, certifiers, inspectors, designers and engineers will all find the library useful.

The commission launched the library in the second quarter of 2024. It is meant for building inspectors and certifiers to use first, because the construction supply chain tends to adopt the language they use.

The next link in the transmission chain would be main contractors, which naturally have an interest in the work being done for them all down the subcontracting chain to the people holding the tools.



**If we're talking about the same thing, let's use the same words**

**Matt Press,  
NSW Building Commission**



◀ **Matt Press:**  
"Builders can use the library to prepare for inspections"

Press said it can take people some time to understand what the library and its purpose are, but that the penny drops quickly when they see it. The commission has promoted it in education sessions with developers, councils and consultants. He said take-up has been good, and two universities now teach it.

#### **Sloppy language**

Press said the commission wants to use the knowledge it has about defects to improve the industry's productivity, which has long been low compared to other sectors.

Its fragmented and siloed nature is a contributing factor that sloppy language can exacerbate.

The small size of companies building in New South Wales is also a factor, with some 80% of firms doing high-rise construction in the state comprising fewer than 10 people.

"We're not talking about big corporates that have heavy investments in internal learning, systems and processes, so the more we can do to help beyond landing on a project and finding a defect, the better," he said.

Press said the library will only be doing its job if it evolves, because it will show the industry is improving.

"It highlights where we're taking our eye off the ball today, refocusing people's attention on the mistakes that are creating the most damage," he said.

"Then in six months' time, maybe a third of the top defects are new, because some issues we've cracked and we've got that embedded in practices and behaviour, so we take them off the list and here are the new ones where people are making mistakes, which could relate to new requirements, like electric vehicle charging installations, or new facade systems."

"If it records the same defects year after year, we might as well shut up shop and go home," he said. ●

*\* Matt Press spoke to CM in his capacity as acting building commissioner. Subsequently, James Sherrard assumed the role of permanent building commissioner on 5 December.*





**David Birne**  
Begbies Traynor

# Will a 'winding-up' petition force a main contractor to pay up?

This month's contract clinic comes from an aggrieved subcontractor whose main contractor client is refusing to pay invoices. **David Birne** from Begbies Traynor explains whether a 'winding-up' petition is a sensible strategy

## THE QUESTION:

**Our client, a main contractor, is refusing to pay our invoices. I've heard that it's possible to issue a 'winding-up' petition to force them to pay. Is that possible and how successful would it be?**

## THE ANSWER

With the current cash crisis in the construction industry, many employers, contractors and subcontractors are in arrears with agreed payment terms or negotiated time to pay arrangements. So what can suppliers do to elicit payment and move their claim to the top of the outstanding payables pile?

There are limited formal routes available to collect an outstanding debt. Once the friendly approach through demand letters and telephone calls has been tried and has failed, a more robust route may be required.

### In this situation should a winding-up petition be issued?

It is common practice to issue a statutory demand to warn the

debtor that you intend to issue a winding-up petition. However, this is not legally necessary if you have clear evidence of the debtor's insolvency. It is hoped that a statutory demand brings the debtor to the table, as they are aware that a winding-up petition can be issued 21 days later.

In 2022 the Caseboard.io website was launched and this provides near instant access to court records. As a result, when a petition is issued at the court this appears on Caseboard and the effect is immediate, potentially leading to the freezing of the debtor's bank account/funding sources and potential reputational damage.

In some cases, the debtor only finds out about the petition from their bank or other creditors as it has not yet been served on them.

However, this may not produce the desired effect. Claimants may lose any leverage to get paid. This is because the Insolvency Act 1986 kicks in on issue of the petition, preventing debtors making payments without a court order.



**The Insolvency Act 1986 kicks in on issue of the petition, preventing debtors making payments without a court order**

The debtor may also very quickly find that any intentions they have to pay the petition debt are further derailed as other creditors quickly support the petition, making the prospect of payment or at least a payment plan unrealistic.

### Costs and prospects of a dividend

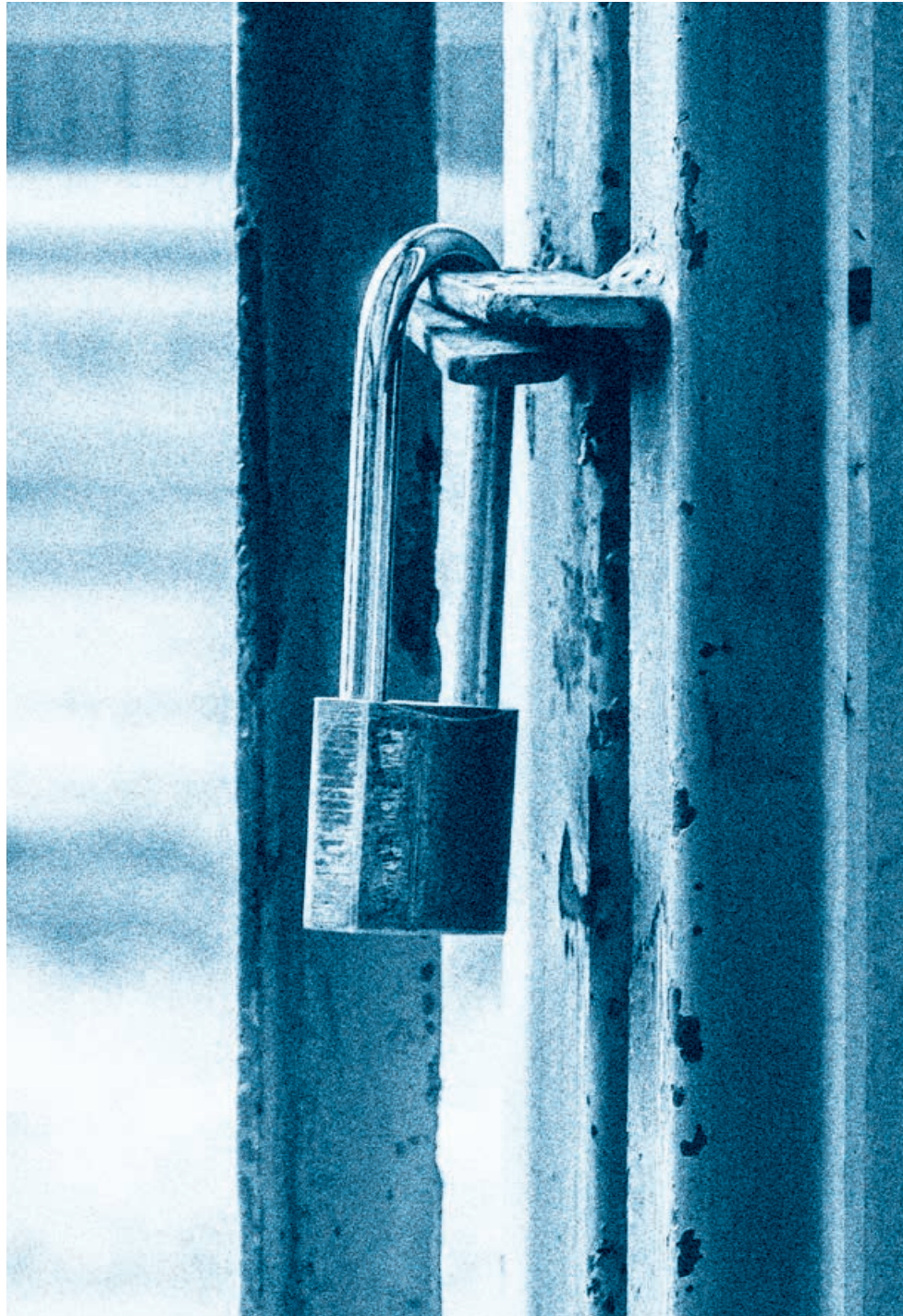
The costs of issuing the petition should also be taken into account. In 2022 the deposit required for a petition increased from £1,600 to £2,600. Combined with the petition fee and solicitor's costs, this results in a minimum outlay of £5,000-£6,000 plus VAT.

Although the petition costs are repaid by the liquidator out of first realisations, you may have to wait a long time for this to happen and the underlying debt itself only ranks as an unsecured creditor equally with other suppliers.

In December 2020 HMRC regained its preferential status, meaning that VAT, PAYE/NI and CIS must be repaid in priority to unsecured creditors. As a result, the prospects of getting even a



Question for contract clinic? Email  
construction-management@atompublishing.co.uk



**Although the petition costs are repaid by the liquidator out of first realisations, you may have to wait a long time for this to happen** ”

small dividend depend on the value of the debtor's assets, the level of HMRC debt and any secured creditor obligations. As Companies House data is generally out of date it is very difficult to make a call on asset value and creditor levels.

### Investigations

There may be other reasons to petition, including a concern that the debtor has moved assets or personally withdrawn significant monies.

In this case a liquidator has significant powers to investigate transactions and demand key stakeholders provide information and assistance. A liquidator is also able to access litigation funding to support the taking of legal action making a settlement more likely..

The decision whether to issue a petition or not is a difficult one. In some cases, it has the desired effect and payment is received. In others it will just result in wasted costs.

As each claim is individual, before making a decision please speak to your lawyer or an insolvency practitioner who may be able to guide you through the pros and cons, and allow an informed decision to be made. ●

**David Birne is an insolvency director at Begbies Traynor.**



## What you will learn in this CPD

- ▶ Challenges in high-moisture settings
- ▶ Regulations relevant to products used in these environments
- ▶ How Knauf's AQUAPANEL® cement board addresses these challenges

# CPD: Addressing moisture challenges

This CPD, in association with Knauf, focuses on the problems arising in moisture-laden environments. By **Paul Midgley**



REINSCH FOTODESIGN

**H**igh-moisture settings such as wet rooms, swimming pools and bathrooms

present significant challenges for construction materials.

Exposure to constant humidity, water and, in some cases, chlorine can compromise structural integrity, lead to mould growth and escalate maintenance costs.

Builders and designers are tasked with meeting these issues while adhering to strict building regulations and ensuring long-term performance.

### The challenge

Designing and building in spaces consistently exposed to water and humidity requires materials that resist degradation and maintain structural integrity over time. Traditional construction materials like gypsum boards or wood often struggle in these environments. Problems such as swelling, warping and mould growth not only affect the building's durability but can also pose significant health risks.

Commercial settings such as swimming pools can worsen these challenges due to their large-scale exposure to water, humidity and, in certain circumstances, chlorine. Similarly, residential bathrooms with power showers require materials that can handle high levels of moisture without frequent repairs.

**Exposure to constant humidity, water and, in some cases, chlorine can compromise structural integrity, lead to mould growth and escalate maintenance costs**



Addressing these issues while remaining compliant with industry standards is critical for ensuring well-functioning facilities.

### Meeting regulations

There are several standards and guidelines in the UK that products must meet to ensure that materials used in wet environments perform reliably. These include:

- EN 13501-1:2018: This standard provides the reaction to fire classification procedure for all construction products, including products incorporated within building elements (except for power, control and communication cables, which are covered by EN 13501-6). The standard's parameters evaluate ignitability, flame spread, heat release, smoke production and propensity for producing flaming droplets or particles.
- EN 12467:2012+A2:2018: This standard specifies the performance requirements and test methods for fibre-cement flat sheets, including resistance to bending, frost and

moisture. Compliance with this standard ensures durability in challenging conditions.

● NHBC Technical Guidance Update 9.2/06: This technical guidance from the National House Building Council (NHBC) outlines the requirements for residential constructions to gain an NHBC warranty. It ensures materials are suitable when used in bathroom environments with or without power showers.

Materials used in wet environments must meet the above standards and guidance to ensure safety, durability and compliance with best practices.



▲ A score-and-snap cutting method simplifies board installation

◀ Residential bathrooms require materials that are moisture resistant

▼ AQUAPANEL® Indoor is lightweight but able to support heavy tiling

### Knauf's AQUAPANEL® cement board

Knauf's AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor addresses the challenges described above by providing a durable, water-resistant solution designed to withstand these challenging conditions. It has been engineered to address the specific demands of moisture-laden spaces.

The board is compliant with EN 13501-1, EN 12467 and NHBC guidance and is suitable for residential and commercial projects. During EN 13501-1 tests it achieved A1 fire classification, which means it is completely non-combustible.

The board also has high resistance to impact and wear. Its lightweight design (11kg/sq m) makes it easy to handle and install, reducing structural load while maintaining high robustness.

The AQUAPANEL® board accommodates curved designs thanks to its maximum bending radius of 1m. Its ability to support heavy tiling (up to 50kg/sq m with standard methods or 120kg/sq m with specific build-ups) makes it versatile as well. ►



PAUL PAINTER



▲ Environments such as West Coventry Academy's new swimming pool facility require water-resistant materials

## Bowmer + Kirkland's school project

Knauf worked with Bowmer + Kirkland during the construction of the West Coventry Academy, one of the UK government's flagship net zero carbon in operation schools.

The £38m rebuild project included a new school building, sports centre and outdoor sports pitches.

Among the most challenging parts of the project were the swimming pool facilities. These environments required materials that could withstand these conditions over the long term without warping or deteriorating.

Bowmer + Kirkland approached Knauf for its product range, including the AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor and performance plasterboard,

which were installed on a timber frame.

The AQUAPANEL® board maintained its structural integrity despite continuous exposure to water and chlorinated air. It remained durable and resisted mechanical impacts, ensuring long-term performance in high-traffic areas.

Because the AQUAPANEL® board meets the EN 12467 standard, it also fulfilled both regulatory and project-specific requirements.

Architect Gavin Dungan of Stride Treglown said: "AQUAPANEL® performed incredibly well in high-moisture areas. Its excellent dimensional stability and water resistance ensure durability and reduce maintenance costs."

**The board is resistant to mould growth, which helps ensure hygiene and health in damp environments**



The score-and-snap cutting method simplifies installation, eliminating pre-drilling and reducing dust on site. Additionally, its 12.5mm thickness makes it easy to align with UK plasterboards, removing the need for packers and streamlining transitions.

The board is made from inorganic materials – chemical compounds that contain no carbon – and is not affected by water. Unlike gypsum boards or wood, it does not swell, deteriorate or lose integrity when exposed to moisture, making it a suitable option for wet rooms, bathrooms and swimming pools.

It is also resistant to mould growth, which helps ensure hygiene and health in damp environments. This is an essential measure in spaces such as residential bathrooms, where prolonged exposure to moisture can promote mould formation. ●

**Paul Midgley is a product owner at Knauf.**

## Useful resources

- EN 13501-1:2018: <https://knowledge.bsigroup.com>
- EN 12467:2012+A2:2018: <https://knowledge.bsigroup.com>
- NHBC Technical Guidance Update 9.2/06: [www.nhbc.co.uk/binaries/content/assets/nhbc/tech-guidance/9.2.06-substrates-for-tiling-bath-and-shower-enclosures-2024.pdf](http://www.nhbc.co.uk/binaries/content/assets/nhbc/tech-guidance/9.2.06-substrates-for-tiling-bath-and-shower-enclosures-2024.pdf)

## CPD Questions

- 1) What does EN 12467:2012+A2:2018 standard evaluate in construction materials?
  - a) Water absorption and freeze-thaw durability
  - b) Fire resistance and reaction to fire
  - c) Impact resistance and mechanical strength only
- 2) Which fire safety standard applies to Knauf's AQUAPANEL® Cement Board Indoor?
  - a) EN 12467:2012+A2:2018
  - b) EN 13501-1:2018
  - c) ISO 9001:2015
- 3) The NHBC Technical Guidance Update 9.2/06 ensures that, to meet NHBC standards, materials used in bathrooms or wet rooms must:
  - a) Supports all types of tiles without additional preparation
  - b) Require additional thickness for heavy tile installations
  - c) Be suitable for environments with or without power showers
- 4) What is one key performance aspect evaluated under the EN 13501-1:2018 standard?
  - a) Reaction to fire classification
  - b) Mould resistance under high humidity
  - c) Dimension stability in wet environments
- 5) Which of the following characteristics ensures compliance with EN 12467:2012+A2:2018?
  - a) The material must be compatible with all types of finishing options
  - b) The material must allow for pre-drilling during installation
  - c) The material must not deteriorate after prolonged water exposure

To test yourself on the questions above, go to [www.constructionmanagement.co.uk/cpd-modules](http://www.constructionmanagement.co.uk/cpd-modules)



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# 'The research aims to give SMEs a stronger collective voice'

Dr Graeme Larsen FCIQB, associate dean (sustainability), University College of Estate Management, on opening up the current discourse around healthy communities

## What are you working on at present?

I am working on a number of initiatives, with the key focus being strategic and operational sustainability. This relates to the development of new taught programmes at the University College of Estate Management (UCEM), along with research projects, publications and the organisation of the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB) Tri-Annual World Building Congress.

With my core team, I recently developed and launched an innovative new MSc programme, entitled Innovation in Sustainable Built Environments (IISBE). That programme is IEMA accredited and can also be undertaken through an apprenticeship route. It looks to really challenge the way professionals think about sustainability.

We are now working on the development of other programmes to further meet the needs of the sector around sustainability.

We have a number of research projects resonating with the theme of sustainability and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These are with a range of partners, looking at issues from how sustainability is reshaping project management process to knowledge co-production between consultants and clients to create innovative sustainability strategies.



One is an Innovate UK funded Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP), valued at £178,000, which I am leading for UCEM, partnering with the King's Foundation and number of key sector stakeholders. That project is looking at regional building hubs, providing support for SMEs to build better, healthier communities through placemaking.

I am always keen to hear from sector practitioners wishing to explore opportunities and understand how we as academics can contribute.

### Why is it important to the construction industry now?

The new MSc iISBE is important because we need to stop doing the same thing and then wondering why things aren't improving.

The MSc iISBE looks to target decision-makers (those aspiring or those seeking additional legitimacy) to challenge a range of assumptions, really questioning what we are doing and why, drawing on environmental philosophy while aligned with a socio-technical systems perspective.

After all, neither isolated technical or management approaches can address our sustainability challenges. The MSc iISBE gives legitimacy for instigating change, seeing it as an opportunity and understanding sustainability through a fresh lens.

The feedback from students (often already chartered and in fairly senior positions) has been fantastic,

### CV: Dr Graeme Larsen

● Associate dean (sustainability), University College of Estate Management, 2021 to present

● Visiting professor, RMIT University, Australia, 2020 to present

● Associate professor – school director of post graduate research studies, University of Reading, 2001-21

● Site and project manager for large international contracting companies

welcoming the new concepts and, in their words, totally reframing what they thought they knew about sustainability.

In terms of the research, the KTP with the King's Foundation is opening up the current discourse around healthy communities, often largely dominated by the national housebuilders. The research aims to support SMEs and stakeholders giving them a stronger collective voice. SMEs have much to offer our sector, especially from a regional perspective, yet they have been in decline for a number of years.

### Are you working with any construction companies so they can apply your research/innovation on their projects?

I am, yes, along with a number of colleagues at UCEM. The KTP project mentioned earlier involves a cross-section of stakeholders involved in the sector, from SME construction companies, to suppliers, land owners, planners, financiers and developers.

I am also working with a key multidisciplinary consultancy providing sustainable solutions, funded by the Harold Samuel Research Prize, looking at how new and innovative strategies can be co-created with specific clients to meet their bespoke needs.

I am really mindful of the importance of rigour in our research but that must always be tensioned against

**It's essential the sector is always engaged in the research process and the outcomes have practical application**  
Dr Graeme Larsen, UCEM



'relevance' for the sector. It's essential the sector is always engaged in the research process and the outcomes have practical application.

### What areas of research do you think are most crucial for academics to focus on now to meet industry challenges?

The structural nature of the sector is a key theme. Few would perhaps design a sector, drawing upon a range of different industries, in the manner in which the construction sector is structured today.

The professional and craft silos 'we' have created, nurtured and often defend seem, at times, to adversely affect our desired vision of a better sector. Then we have the production model of build, sell, build, sell, and that needs unpacking while looking to create alternative business models that are perhaps more responsible and sustainable.

Perhaps a final element is the manner in which the activity of the construction sector, and what it produces, has been woven into a number of financial products for our society to function, rather than serving their initial purpose. Much of this relates to understanding the transitions of a sector as it seeks to respond to a changing world. ●

**If you're interested in academic membership visit [www.ciob.org/membership/become-a-member/educator](http://www.ciob.org/membership/become-a-member/educator).**



## Job spotlight:

Frank O'Hare, construction manager, Balfour Beatty Vinci

Following his recent recognition at Balfour Beatty's Icon Awards, Frank O'Hare shares with **Nadine Buddoo** his experience of carving a successful career while supporting the next generation of talent

### What was your route into construction?

I started in the industry at age 17 as an apprentice, working in the land surveying department of a civil engineering consultancy. From there, I moved to a dedicated land surveying company before joining Alfred McAlpine as a setting-out engineer.

Each step gave me invaluable experience in the field, laying the foundations for my current role at Balfour Beatty Vinci – HS2's main works civils contractor for the West Midlands – in construction management.

### What is a typical day in your job?

No two days are the same, but my duties generally involve a mix of site visits, planning, coordination and onsite work.

While I am responsible for the team and managing the work, I certainly don't do it alone; it's thanks to my team's dedication and effort that we achieve our goals. Our fantastic, collaborative approach – including with the client – is essential to our success.

I work closely with our client and our designer partners on planning, scheduling and resource allocation, maintaining open communication to align expectations and address any concerns early.



▲ Frank O'Hare of Balfour Beatty Vinci and (right) on site with the HS2 team



**Guiding and supporting the next generation allows me to share my experience and help them navigate challenges**

Frank O'Hare, Balfour Beatty Vinci



This collaboration extends to coordinating the timely ordering of equipment and materials, ensuring that every decision reflects the client's priorities.

### What do you enjoy most about your role?

It goes without saying that seeing a project through from start to finish is a great accomplishment, working with various subcontractors, designers and the broader Balfour Beatty Vinci team. There's a sense of pride in driving past completed structures and being able to tell my grandkids: "Your Grandad built that."

For me, watching young engineers grow in confidence and competence as the project progresses is particularly rewarding, which is why I decided to become a mentor.

Guiding and supporting the next generation allows me to share my experience, help them

navigate challenges and foster their development into skilled professionals.

### You were recently recognised at Balfour Beatty's inaugural Icon Awards for your commitment to bringing on early talent. What advice would you give to other construction leaders who want to better support young professionals?

My advice to leaders would be to offer new professionals the chance to shadow experienced team members. They can learn an incredible amount just by observing.

In the past, new apprentices were often expected to figure things out on their own. Today, we recognise the value of a more supportive approach. Gradually increasing responsibility allows them to build confidence and develop their skills at a steady pace, ensuring they feel empowered rather than overwhelmed. ●

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# Can AI create the perfect construction CV?

AI writing tools, such as ChatGPT, are gaining popularity among job applicants. But there are common pitfalls construction professionals should avoid in order to stand out from the crowd. By **Nadine Buddoo**

In today's fast-paced job market, many applicants make the mistake of relying too heavily on AI to help create CVs and complete job applications.

Guy Thornton, founder of Practice Aptitude Tests, believes these tools can be useful for tasks such as fact-checking and proofreading – but should be used properly and with caution.

Instead of expecting AI to do all the heavy lifting, Thornton insists research should be at the heart of the job application process, allowing applicants to tailor their CV to each construction company.

"Not only does it help your application stand out, but it also helps you confirm if the role is really right for you," he says.

"Take some time to look into the company's values and work culture.

Knowing these can help you decide if they match your own values and give you an idea of what skills and qualities to emphasise on your CV."

He adds: "Employers usually favour candidates who clearly care about their company and the role. It's easy for them to spot applicants who have done their research versus those who have not."

Thornton explains that many construction employers are overwhelmed with AI-written applications – making it difficult for your CV to stand out. Often, AI-generated content can feel generic or overly polished, without the specific examples or personal touch a candidate should bring.

"To succeed, you need to show individuality and demonstrate skills beyond just copy-pasting," he says. ●

## Here are some top tips for creating a stellar CV:

- 1 Idea generation:** Use AI to brainstorm skills and achievements, then refine them to reflect your unique experience.
- 2 Structure suggestions:** Struggling with structure? AI can suggest a professional layout for your CV, which you can then personalise.
- 3 Proofreading:** AI tools are useful for spotting grammar and phrasing errors, helping you polish the final draft.
- 4 Conciseness:** You can use AI to streamline lengthy sentences at the end, ensuring each word contributes.







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# CIOB Community



**We're already looking at solutions for all sorts of other property types with a broader range of measures and over a longer delivery period**

Adam Denny, Citizen



The Wave 2.1 project began in September 2023. It entails installing multiple decarbonisation measures, all in accordance with the PAS 2030/2035 standards.

Adhering to best practice and a fabric-first approach, it includes improving the thermal performance of the homes by installing external wall insulation and fitting energy-efficient double-glazed doors and windows. Some properties are also benefiting from loft insulation.

The aim is for every property to achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of at least C by the time the project ends in 2025.

Over 2,000 homes have already reported benefits and Citizen is researching energy improvements it hopes to build upon in Wave 3.

Adam Denny, asset and planning manager for Citizen, said: "We're already looking at the opportunities that Wave 3 will bring, looking at solutions for all sorts of other property types with a broader range of measures and over a longer delivery period to deliver at scale." ●

## CIOB TP plays key role in Coventry housing decarbonisation plan

Citizen is working to improve the thermal performance of homes in the city by installing energy-efficient insulation and glazing

### Social housing association Citizen

– a CIOB training partner (TP) – is working with Coventry City Council and the Department for Energy and Net Zero on a social housing decarbonisation project in the city.

Launched in 2022, the One Coventry Plan is a vision for the city around tackling inequality, economic prosperity and climate change. It

also sits at the heart of the council's net zero strategy. Now in Wave 2, the £67.6m programme is partly funded by the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).

The latest scheme aims to improve the energy efficiency of various solid-walled property archetypes, reducing energy costs for nearly 1,600 people, along with CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

▲ Citizen is providing energy improvements to houses throughout the city

## CIOB Ireland Awards recognise most talented professionals

Nominations now open for members and non-members

CIOB will host an awards ceremony for talented construction professionals across Ireland in September 2025.

The event will be held at Croke Park, Dublin, and nominations are now open. Aspiring winners can enter online, with categories covering Client of the Year, Team of the Year and Rising Star.

Awards are open to both CIOB members and non-members and CIOB is urging as many construction professionals as possible to put their names forward.

Caroline Gumble, CEO at CIOB, said: "I am always delighted when this important industry has an opportunity to showcase the talent,

hard work and achievements of the people creating and maintaining our built environment.

"The CIOB Ireland Awards is a great platform for the incredible things industry professionals are doing and I'm very much looking forward to hearing all those stories."

More information can be found at [www.ciob.me/irelandawards](http://www.ciob.me/irelandawards).

# Silica safety toolkit receives CIOB award

Dr Scott McGibbon's work on the dangers of silica dust is the first winner of the Paul Dockerill Award



**A toolkit raising awareness of the dangers of silica dust has won CIOB's first Paul Dockerill Award.**

The award celebrates a respected built environment professional and CIOB fellow and trustee who died in November 2022. It gives up to £10,000 in funding for research projects focused on skills development, fire safety and resident engagement.

The first recipient, Dr Scott McGibbon (pictured right), will use the funds to develop a targeted toolkit and playbook to inform construction professionals, clients and residents about best practices when dealing with respirable crystalline silica (RCS). It is expected to launch in 2026.

Silica is found in construction materials such as sandstone, asphalt, brick, cement and concrete. It is the second biggest risk to construction workers after asbestos, according to the Health and Safety Executive.

McGibbon is driven by his own experience as a former stonemason who had to deal with RCS daily.

"I have dealt personally with close work colleagues who contracted silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and in some instances death. I've witnessed the devastating impacts of RCS – both on the individual and their families – which has been the key personal driver behind the project.

"I am grateful to the CIOB for setting up the Paul Dockerill Award to support projects like mine and I am delighted to be its first recipient. The funding will go a long way in helping the project take flight."

**Entries for the 2025 award will be accepted between 1 February and 30 June. See [www.ciob.org/learning/scholarships/the-paul-dockerill-award](http://www.ciob.org/learning/scholarships/the-paul-dockerill-award).**



**I've witnessed the devastating impacts of RCS – both on the individual and their families – which has been the key personal driver behind the project**  
Dr Scott McGibbon

## CIOB apprentice of the month

Ava Parnell, assistant estimator, McCarthy Stone

**What was your biggest challenge during your apprenticeship?**

Going straight from sixth form to a setting that's highly professional was really quite daunting, especially as a woman.

But, after a few weeks, days even, I realised that being thrown in at the deep end is the best way to learn. You adapt quickly. I spent four months on site as part of my first-year rotation and that was quite a challenge.

Going on to site as a female in a male-dominated industry, I was a bit concerned. But everyone welcomed me and helped me in every single way that they could.

There were two female apprentices taken on in my cohort and we've been discussing going into secondary schools to talk because all of us went to girls-only secondary schools and construction was never offered to us.

**What is your favourite stage of a project and why?**

As an immediate answer, I would say build start because in my current position I'm involved in the project straight from the feasibility studies, so it's a real sense of success seeing teamwork come together to start the build.

I've also really enjoyed the handover. The site that I was involved in in my first year, I was involved

from the groundworks to handover. You really get to see the sense of joy that we bring to homeowners.

**What would be your dream project to work on in the future?**

I've always been fascinated by sustainability and modular construction and I'm really interested in Passivhaus. So I can see myself going into a small housebuilder who focus on sustainability and energy efficiency in a niche market.

**Which technical advances in the sector are you most excited about?**

I've been following quite a few. Firstly, health and safety: we really need to use tech technology advances to our advantage.

I've seen little devices being trialled for operators who work in confined spaces that can alert them when gas levels are too high, when the temperature is too high, and I think that's great. Also the work of BIM really interests me.

► Parnell: 'I've always been fascinated by sustainability'





▼ Dorchester's Corn Exchange with its 1864 clock turret



## Chartered member to upgrade Dorchester Corn Exchange

Greendale Construction will remodel the Grade II\*-listed 19th century building to restore its original layout

The renovation will create a new community meeting area, transforming the foyer into a welcoming, bright space, with a new accessible reception and box office

### Chartered company Greendale

Construction has started a 34-week project at Dorchester Corn Exchange in Dorset, which will see the historic Victorian building benefit from improvement and remodelling works.

The renovation will restore the original layout and create a new community meeting area, transforming the foyer into a welcoming, bright space for visitors, with a new accessible reception and box office.

The works are due for completion at the end of March 2025, with the building remaining largely open for business for Dorchester Arts' performance schedule.

Dorchester Corn Exchange is a Grade II\*-listed building of two storeys with walls of Broadmayne brick with Bath and Portland stone dressings, and a tile of slate roof.

It was designed by Benjamin Ferrey and erected in 1847-48 by Samuel Slade. Originally comprising a corn exchange, assembly hall and council chamber, a new market and police station were added later in the century. The clock turret was added in 1864. ●

### TechCIOB eligible for CSCS cards

CSCS Professionally Qualified Persons card provides proof of qualifications on site

TechCIOB members are now eligible for the CSCS Professionally Qualified Persons (PQP) card.

CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working on site have the appropriate training and qualifications for the job they do – helping to improve standards and safety in UK construction.

Holding a CSCS card is not a legislative requirement, however, most principal contractors and major housebuilders require workers to hold a valid CSCS card before they are allowed on site.

For further details see [www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards](http://www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards).



# Industry experts deliver careers advice in West Yorkshire

Students and early-career professionals benefited from the helpful information on offer at the second Enhance Your Career event

**Young professionals and** construction students in West Yorkshire gained valuable careers tips and advice at a joint industry event organised by the CIOB West Yorkshire Hub.

Enhance Your Career, which is now in its second year, included participation from the Association for Project Management, the Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE), the Chartered Institute of Building Service Engineers (CIBSE) and the Institute of Leadership (InstL), as well as industry partners Elexion, Gleeds, Hawkswell Kilvington, Michael Dyson Associates, Morgan Sindall, Promoting Construction West

**The day included three panel discussions featuring leading professionals with Q&A sessions and a presentation on the use of virtual reality and augmented reality**

Yorkshire, Rider Levett Bucknall, Tilbury Douglas and Vision Cooling Solutions.

Students from Barnsley College, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds College of Building, the University of Huddersfield, the University of Leeds, Wakefield College and York College attended, alongside young professionals already working within the industry, to take full advantage of the expert line-up.

The day included three panel discussions featuring leading professionals with Q&A sessions. Other highlights were an interactive presentation and demonstration from Mark Paddock of FocusXR on the use of virtual reality and augmented reality in the construction industry; a workshop on social media from Nick Bramley of Impactus; another workshop delivered by Simon Owen of Calibre, on CV writing; and a keynote speech on leadership and leading change by Geoff Prudence. ●

▼ Panel discussions with leading professionals were a highlight of the event



## Learning and networking in Midlands

**CIOB Midland Hubs brought together the built environment community for an evening of learning, networking, drinks and pizza in the autumn.**

Guests learned about Berkeley Group's urban brownfield regeneration masterplan then gained valuable tips on career pathways and professional growth from leading organisations including Winvic, Diales, Shoosmiths, JAB Design, Quantem, Derry Building Services, Colemans, Gleeds, Fitzgerald Contractors, Cundall, Rider Levett Bucknall RLB, Morgan Sindall Construction, Berkeley Group, Stanmore Contractors, Wates Group and Tilbury Douglas.

The event was sponsored by Stanmore Contractors.

## One to watch

Rohit Malhotra, NEC project manager, AtkinsRéalis



**What made you choose a career in construction? What else might you have done?**

Growing up in Dubai, surrounded by iconic structures like the Burj Al Arab and Burj Khalifa, my passion for construction began at a young age. I would look at these skyscrapers and dream of building them.

I wanted to contribute to shaping the world around us and create spaces that improve people's lives while also leaving behind a legacy. My father, who has been my inspiration in the professional world, has also been working within the construction sector.

If not for construction, I might have pursued a career in psychology or teaching.

**What career ambitions do you have?**

My intention is to build a career within contracts management since I am particularly interested in NEC contracts and dispute resolution. I aim to leave a tangible mark on the industry, leaving it in a better place than I found it.

**What one change would you like to see in the industry?**

Greater emphasis on sustainability and innovation. As we face increasing environmental challenges, it's essential to adopt greener building practices using eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient technologies. Additionally, embracing automation and digitalisation can improve efficiency and safety. I would also like to see more diversity, particularly encouraging more women to pursue careers in construction.

**What do you do in your spare time?**

I try to stay active by swimming, cycling and playing sports like cricket and table tennis. I like giving back to the construction community as a Tomorrow's Leaders Champion with CIOB. I also deliver university guest lectures and get involved in careers fairs.



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## Members watch demo of sustainable demolition

Swindon's AR shows techniques employed on live site tour

CIOB members saw a demonstration of sustainable demolition at a recent presentation from AR, the Swindon-based specialist in demolition and enabling works.

Members had the opportunity to experience first hand the complexities and sustainable practices involved in the demolition of a 150ha industrial site being redeveloped into Panattoni Park Swindon.

AR's presentation delved into various critical stages of the demolition, from the initial planning phases to the hands-on methods and machinery used to tackle the large-scale deconstruction of the site's structures.

Attendees learned about the advanced techniques employed to maximise recycling and reuse of materials, reducing waste and contributing to a circular economy. Key points included sorting and separating materials on site, ensuring minimal landfill use, and the innovative approaches used to dismantle structures while prioritising environmental management.

CIOB members were guided through a live site tour, witnessing the demolition activities up close, including an in-depth look at equipment in action and the safety protocols of operating in an active demolition environment.

The event concluded with a Q&A session, where attendees engaged with the team, seeking insights on best practices, challenges and future trends in sustainable demolition.

## CIOB London Tomorrow's Leaders spearheads two career events

Panel event with Hays followed by joint networking with RICS and JCT YPG

**When faced with rejection, young professionals should persevere, get as many qualifications and training as they can and say yes to every opportunity.**

These were some of the insights offered by an industry panel at a careers event organised by CIOB London Tomorrow's Leaders with Hays.

Hosted at Hays' Cheapside offices, the event saw numerous construction professionals come to network and gain valuable insights, tips and advice.

The panel – comprising Daniel K Poku-Davies, architectural designer, Foster + Partners; Stuart Wallis, associate director – industrial relations, Mace; Lauren Rimmer,

founder and CEO, Construct Change; and Jessica Haskett, design manager, Kier Group – shared its wisdom and took questions from the floor.

CIOB London Tomorrow's Leaders also joined RICS and JCT's Young Professional Group (YPG) in the second joint networking event between the three groups and KPMG in November.

Expanding on last year's event, this year featured representation from a number of other industry groups and enabled members from across the various networks to meet informally, discuss ideas and relevant topics and gain the perspective of other young professionals working across all areas of the built environment. ●

▲ Tomorrow's Leaders took part in a joint networking event in November

▼ CIOB London TL hosted a careers event at Hays' offices, Cheapside



# Sustainable water management: CIOB chairs discussion

Expert panel discuss water at Nottingham event



▲ Julia Allen, far right, chaired the panel of water management experts

**Industry experts and stakeholders** gathered at Nottingham Trent University to address sustainable water management in new developments.

Joining CIOB in conversation were the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the Landscape Institute (LI).

In a panel discussion chaired by Nottingham Hub chair Julia Allen, five panellists presented on sustainable water practices, emphasising the importance of collective expertise.

Abigail Milioto from Severn Trent Water opened with a detailed explanation of regulation, adoption, government targets and a nature-based approach, citing the Green Plan in Mansfield as an innovative example to reduce flood risk.

Mott MacDonald Bentley's Daniel Buxton followed with a focus on "our most precious resource", the heavily energy-intensive antiquated

flush process desperately in need of modernisation and the importance decarbonising this process.

Andrew Booth of East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) spoke about the policies ELDC adopts within its large rural/coastal region, using a collaborative approach and encouraging the formal pre-application process and early intervention with developers.

Becky Phillips-Melhuish, of Lincolnshire County Council, focused on sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and their role in creating functional, community-centred water assets.

David Singleton, of DSA Environment & Design, introduced the CAPE (clear, accessible, playful, engaging) approach for making water management integral within high-quality urban design.

The discussion concluded with a Q&A session, emphasising early intervention, regulatory support and collaborative efforts.



## Expert publishes new book on damp and health

A new book by CIOB fellow and ambassador Professor Michael Parrett, a distinguished expert in building pathology, is now available.

*Building Defects and Your Health* addresses building failures surrounding mould and damp and is very relevant in the context of Awaab's Law and Grenfell. All proceeds will go to charity.

Parrett is a former trustee of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and founder and principal director of Michael Parrett Associates, a building pathology consultancy practice. *Building Defects and Your Health* is available through [www.myhometruths.co.uk](http://www.myhometruths.co.uk).

## Report focuses on Welsh SMEs

CIOB's David Kirby looks at economic pressures

A construction skills crisis coupled with over-complicated tender processes and a lack of local government support have been blamed for a rising number of Welsh construction firms facing administration.

A report from CIOB has revealed that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) struggle to compete with larger businesses when applying for work, despite making up 99% of the Welsh construction industry.

*The SME Construction Landscape in Wales: Risk factor analysis* says many SMEs feel forced to take the work even though they know it will involve taking a financial hit, just to ensure they have a pipeline of work to keep their business afloat.

David Kirby, CIOB's policy lead for Wales and author of the report, said: "With economic pressures like high inflation driving up material costs, an extremely competitive labour market, and persistent skills gaps in the sector, there is little surprise so many construction SMEs in Wales have experienced significant failures in recent years.

"The effects of these failures are not only felt by the owner and employees of the business, but also their clients and the wider supply chain."

CIOB has long called on the government to work closely with the construction sector to develop long-term policy thinking, giving SMEs more confidence to upskill their staff and take on more projects.

The professional body also revealed SMEs struggle to keep up with ever-changing regulations across the sector.

Other recommendations for members of the Senedd include more devolution of powers to local governments across the country, affording them more control over their funding and the freedom to plug holes in resource gaps.

The report was handed to members of the Senedd in October.

Read the report in full at [www.ciob.me/welshsme](http://www.ciob.me/welshsme).





# A year of opportunity

Make 2025 the year you advance your career with CIOB events

**C**IOB has designed a series of events and activities to inspire and support built environment professionals in advancing their careers – whatever stage they are at. These are created to inspire growth and development, from CPD to tailored support for company members.

Aligned with the key themes of our corporate plan, they offer a diverse array of opportunities, including specialist conferences, customised CPD programmes and celebrations of success, including recognising those who achieve chartership and honouring finalists at our CIOB Awards.

With many exciting conferences and activities planned, we have sponsorship packages available for each event. ●

**For more information, please visit [www.ciob.org/sponsorships](http://www.ciob.org/sponsorships) or email [sponsorship@ciob.org.uk](mailto:sponsorship@ciob.org.uk).**

## **Tomorrow's Leaders Student Challenge, various dates and locations**

Replacing the Global Student Challenge, this competition open to students from around the world is now run at a local level. Designed as a regional face-to-face challenge, it can be run by CIOB staff members, hub committees or the CIOB Tomorrow's Leaders community. It welcomes participation from both college and university students and gives the challengers the opportunity to connect and engage with likeminded students.

## **CIOB Student Festival, 5 and 6 March, virtual**

Established in 2021, this dynamic event brings together students, industry experts, thought leaders and academics from around the world. It explores the world of construction innovation and encourages knowledge sharing and career advancement. It provides a platform for networking, collaborative learning and gaining insights into future opportunities within the industry.

## **CIOB Heritage Conference, 12 March, Congress Centre, London**

Our annual heritage conference has been a staple in our calendar for over 15 years. It delivers the latest in thought leadership for the conservation sector. This year the conference will focus around the people driving this specialised sector and will explore the essential skills that are needed to shape its future, while acknowledging other key challenges and opportunities in the heritage sector.

## **CIOB Awards, 15 May, London Hilton Metropole**

With a legacy of over 40 years, CMYA has evolved into the CIOB Awards. This has seen an expansion in the number of awards, allowing us to honour even more exceptional talent.

Our finalists gain the attention of the industry. Sponsorship means you'll be part of our awards marketing initiative, including finalists' announcements and table sales, and your branding will be across the campaign, culminating in an evening at the awards to join the celebrations.

## **CIOB Graduation Ceremonies, 30 May, 12 September, 12 December, Drapers' Hall, London**

Held in London, our graduations provide a momentous occasion for new individual and company members to commemorate their significant accomplishments of attaining CIOB membership.

## **Sustainability Conference, 11 September, virtual**

With the commitment to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, we discuss the drive to carbon neutrality with policymakers, experts and leaders in the sector.

## **EDI, October, virtual**

Sector leaders and experts explore the status of building a healthier and inclusive construction industry, discussing the skills gap, mental health and inclusive construction.

**Sponsoring one of the CIOB's activities demonstrates your alignment with our core values of modern professionalism. It offers opportunities to enhance your marketing efforts by elevating your brand, positioning your organisation as a trusted expert in your field and connecting directly with our engaged community of members.**



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## Diary dates

Highlights of the CIOB  
Calendar for the coming month

### Site visit: Coughton Court, Through the Roof project, phase 4 ► 21 January, 9.30am-12pm, Warwickshire

The National Trust is reroofing Grade I-listed Coughton Court in North Warwickshire. The Tudor house is currently undergoing a £3m conservation project which will see repairs across the entire property. This includes significant reroofing, window repairs, masonry and stonework repair.

The tour will explore the interior of the mansion, which has been adapted throughout the project, including the reinstatement of the Edwardian vaulted ceiling to the panelled drawing room, and access to construction of phase 4 of the project on the eastern side of the south wing.

**Contact:** [skearns@ciob.org](mailto:skearns@ciob.org)

### Site visit: Catterick Integrated Care Centre

► 28 January 11am-1pm, Yorkshire

The Catterick Integrated Care Centre is a first-of-its-kind integration between the MOD and NHS and will deliver transformative integrated health and care services to the military and civilian communities in North Yorkshire.

The collaboration will enable shared facilities, expertise and learning to optimise the health and care services for people across Catterick and the wider Richmondshire areas, significantly enhancing the quality of care available in the region.

**Contact:** [msimons@ciob.org.uk](mailto:msimons@ciob.org.uk)

### Working at Height – Panacea Blunder

► 28 January, 7-9.30pm,  
Maidstone

Work at height remains one of the most challenging safety issues in construction. A solution in one scenario does not necessarily apply to another.

Coupled with the widespread reliance upon the supply chain to 'manage themselves', there is no such thing as a panacea in work at height.

Rob Harris from 3 Education and Rob Lowe from Nationwide Platforms will highlight some of

the common misunderstandings that will help the audience to make informed solution choices and enjoy a safer working environment.  
**Contact:** [blawrence@ciob.org.uk](mailto:blawrence@ciob.org.uk)

### Building a Better Tomorrow: Championing Circular Economy in Construction

► 29 January, 12-1pm, online

In this webinar, Timothy Clement, director of social value and sustainability, and Kane Greenough, senior sustainability manager, from Morgan Sindall Construction, will provide a clear understanding of what a circular economy means for construction, how it can be implemented and the changes required to make it effective.

Attendees will gain practical insights, key takeaways on sustainable product use and actionable steps to apply these principles in real-world construction practices.

**Contact:** [byounis@ciob.org.uk](mailto:byounis@ciob.org.uk)

### Site visit and social: Great Charles Street

► 30 January, 3-6pm, Birmingham

Join us for this site visit and social to learn more about the £300m Great Charles Street Neighbourhood project in Birmingham, led by John Sisk.

Attendees will get an inside look at the cutting-edge construction and hear about the innovative 4D planning process for this major development, which will deliver 722 best-in-class rental homes with breathtaking city views and world-class amenities.

After the site visit, we would be delighted if you could join us for drinks and further networking.

**Contact:** [gflloyd@ciob.org.uk](mailto:gflloyd@ciob.org.uk)

### Site visit: Brooklands Development tour

► 30 January, 4-5.30pm,  
Cambridge

Join us for an exclusive presentation and tour of the Brooklands Development – a new 6,225 sq m business campus in central Cambridge.

The scheme is divided into two buildings: Block B was completed in February 2024, while Block A is due for completion by the end of 2025.

This tour will offer an opportunity to visit the completed Block B scheme and view the progression of Block A.

**Contact:** [skearns@ciob.org](mailto:skearns@ciob.org)

**For a full list of events and to register visit** [www.ciob.org/events](http://www.ciob.org/events).



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