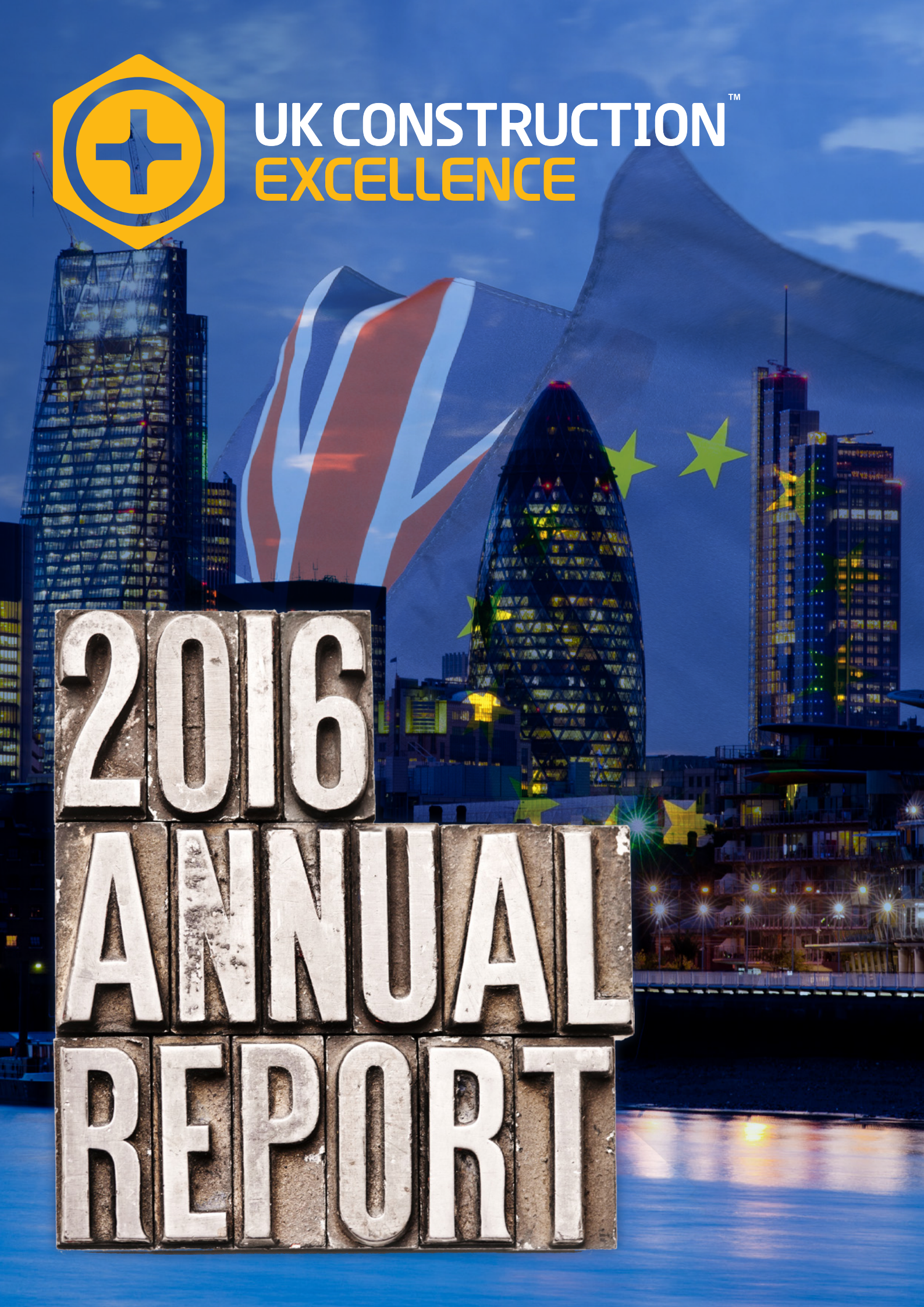




UK CONSTRUCTIONTM
EXCELLENCE

2016
ANNUAL
REPORT



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BEFORE



AFTER



ACRYPOL+ roof coating was specifically developed to provide a solution for carrying out the day to day maintenance requirements of those involved in roof waterproofing protection. As with most water penetration problems associated with leaking roofs, the need to carry out remedial repairs is very rarely possible during long spells of inclement weather. This is mainly due to the fact that in order to carry out an effective long term repair to leaking roofs, it is generally necessary to ensure that the surfaces to be treated are completely dry.



BEFORE

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AFTER

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WELCOME

from the editor

The Year That Was...

And so, 2016 draws to a close. No year in recent memory has defied expectation quite so spectacularly.

This was the year of the Brexit – once a mere formality, now a fundamental game-changer. Across the Atlantic, it was the year of the Donald – the

bouffant billionaire underdog, soon-to-be Leader of the Free World.

In stark contrast, David Cameron resigned, taking with him his ill-fated cabinet mid-Parliament – so long, George Osborne – while Theresa May took centre stage. Today, certainties are more uncertain than ever before and the UK

construction industry is no exception.

In this year's annual review, we take a look at 2016 as it happened and recap some of the biggest stories from the past 12 months.

Robert Atherton
Publications Editor

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW:
**Paul Morrell gives his verdict
on the construction industry**

UK Construction Excellence's Matt Brown talks to Paul Morrell OBE - former Chief Government Construction Advisor - about his views on how the 2011 - 2016 Government Construction Strategy was implemented; the BIM Level 2 mandate; the skills shortage and Digital Construction Week.

A chartered Quantity Surveyor and formerly a Senior Partner of Davis Langton until his retirement in 2007, Paul is now an independent consultant on the economics of construction and procurement.



HAS THE 2011 - 2016 GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY BEEN DELIVERED IN THE WAY YOU ORIGINALLY ENVISAGED?

Well, of course I haven't been there to see it from the inside since the end of 2012, and you can believe me when I say that the view from outside is at best partial, and sometimes just plain wrong. At that time, however, although things were obviously patchy with some departments acting as genuinely inspiring pathfinders, whilst others remained mired in years of embedded habits or weighed down by departmental baggage, I would say the general trend was encouraging.

The key to the Government Construction Strategy was that it had all three components of something that can legitimately claim to be a strategy: a diagnosis of the problem, the identification of a number of changes that would bring about improvement, and (above all) a practical plan for implementing those changes. Diagnosis and prescription had been done to death by 2012, and I would not claim any originality in the thoughts and ideas that formed the background to the strategy. Indeed, I would claim familiarity as one of its strengths.

The difference was therefore in Government using its buying power to persuade its suppliers that there needed to be a new bargain, based on the Government improving its practice as a client, and the industry then improving the value it could deliver in meeting public needs. And this was, by the way, at a time when Government's other instruments of bringing about change - through fiscal measures or regulation - were either unavailable or disfavoured. The guiding principle, though, was that you cannot change an industry by exhortation and waving your arms around. Instead, change comes from changing the drivers of the businesses that make up the industry - and, even in an industry as reactive as construction, one of those drivers has to be the preferences and demands of customers.

As I say, I'm not there to see it from the inside anymore, but occasional messages from friends at the front are encouraging (and I am, for example, frankly astonished that all departments got themselves "BIM ready" by this year's deadline), and I am also encouraged by seeing that the reissued strategy builds on the previous

one, rather than falling into the usual Governmental trap of reinvention and casting around desperately for something new to announce.

HISTORICALLY, THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAS PROVEN SLOW TO EMBRACE INNOVATION. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS?

The answer to that question is relevant context for the answer to almost any question about the industry: in short, nobody owns the whole process. Doubtless if anybody did own the whole process, that would bring problems of its own - particularly if they lacked either the right skills, instincts or motivation for the role.

But just one consequence of the current fragmentation of roles, and the fragmentation of demand - so that you never know what the next phone call is going to bring, is that there is little incentive to innovate. Who, after all, is going to invest in finding a better solution to a problem that they'll never be asked to solve again? So the problem is structural.

The other factors are the lack of international competition that has forced improvements in practice and productivity in other industries, and the lack of a feedback loop by which lessons can be learned on one project and applied on the next, so that user experience is properly represented at the inception of a project.

So the glib answer as to why the industry isn't better at innovation is therefore because it doesn't have to be (because of the lack of competition) and because it can't be (because of a lack of integration and, in a world of "big data" because we don't capture the lessons - let alone learn them).

HOW SUCCESSFUL DO YOU FEEL THE BIM MANDATE HAS BEEN SO FAR? IN RETROSPECT, DO YOU FEEL THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY HAS PROGRESSED AS MUCH AS YOU HAD INITIALLY HOPED?

I think the bandwagon effect of BIM is now unstoppable, and as the number of businesses that are exploring its benefits catches up the number of interviews, magazine articles and conferences dedicated to the subject, its impact can only grow. That is fundamentally because of its merits,



and without the tangible benefits that it is already bringing to businesses and projects it would have been stillborn, notwithstanding the undeniable (and entirely welcome) hype. I think the service performed by the mandate was therefore to get people's attention, and to change the question away from "whether" or "when" to explore BIM's potential to "how".

As for the amount of progress made, you would need to be very naïve indeed to believe that everything would change overnight. It's a cliché to say that it isn't a silver bullet (although clichés become that for a reason), and you can't buy everything that BIM can be or do in a box. Structural and behavioural change is inevitably slower - but by comparison with other forces for change that I've witnessed over a lifetime in and around the industry, the pace of change is, in relative terms, as close to "overnight" as it could be.

It was never the expectation that every client and every company in the industry would immediately see the benefits of BIM to the extent that it would transform their own way of doing business. Instead, the belief was that the gains made by those who did

make the greatest use of it would be such that competition would force the rest to follow, so that in time it becomes the normal way of doing business. Measured against that reality, I think the amount of progress made is nothing short of spectacular.

DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE WERE GETTING TOO BOGGED DOWN WITH THE BIM LEVEL 2 MANDATE AND THE DEADLINE?

Not really. As the coverage of BIM has exploded, there were bound to be some who would seek to put themselves on a superior plane by claiming that it isn't all that it's cracked up to be, or that it's time to forget Cobie, or Level 2 - or whatever. But there's always had to be a balance between making sure that the leading edge could carry on innovating and leading, whilst the peloton of the industry had a clear answer to the question "so where do I start?"

For that, as for any project, there needed to be a definition of what it meant, and a budget and a timetable to get there.

Back in 2011, one of the definitions of Level 2 was "stuff we know how to do now" and it therefore presented the industry with

something that was known to be deliverable; and the development of standards and protocols around it also encouraged convergence, and avoided the trap of there being so much choice that nobody wanted to choose a direction for their own business.

Indeed, I think one of the challenges of moving BIM on has been finding an equivalent definition of the next level, as BIM expands from 3D modelling to genuine collaboration; from design and construction into operations; from individual buildings to cities and their systems; and onto wherever digitising the built environment (at last!) may take us.

IS BIM AS MUCH ABOUT CHANGING MIND-SETS AS IT IS ABOUT THE TECHNOLOGY?

A modified version Lyndon Johnson's advice about how to move hearts and minds is probably relevant here: first grab them by the profit and loss account.

However, yes - I do think it's now widely understood that technology is the lesser part of BIM, and that the bigger changes are behavioural. Again, that change isn't going to be

bought about by preaching about better ways of behaving. The move beyond sharing data to genuine collaboration, and then on to integration of delivery will only come about if clients can be persuaded that it delivers projects closer to their own criteria for success, and if all of those involved in the supply chain can see that it enables them to work at their best and to do so profitably. That may require an act of faith by some actors on both the supply and demand sides of the industry, but if the business drivers are right, mind-set will soon follow, and those who see collaboration as something blameworthy that you do with the enemy will soon be marginalised.

WHAT'S YOUR TAKE ON THE SKILLS SHORTAGE IN THE INDUSTRY?

That it too is a consequence of the structural issue that I've already referred to. If anyone owned the whole process, then they would keep looking ahead to the resources they would need to serve the market, rather than never looking beyond the next phone call. But because of fragmentation, and because the industry has become wholly reactive as a consequence, when the phone calls start to come in again, an industry that has previously concentrated on downsizing turns around, wonders where the resources are - and inevitably blames the Government.

As it happens, I think the Government could have done better. It was clear back in 2011 that the industry was becoming dangerously hollowed out and that the consequences of any return of demand would be that a bigger share of future investment would go straight into inflation. Given the dependence of so many public services upon effective economic and social infrastructure, Governments should have a vested interest in maintaining capacity in the interest - but sadly the Treasury looks no further into the future than the industry does - and we live with

the consequences today.

Setting that aside, though, I think we'll know when we have a grown up industry when it regards its own problems as being for it to solve; and there can be few issues more pressing than a strategic look at the people and skills we will need in the future and how to attract and develop them.

WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHALLENGES FACING FURTHER PROGRESS WITH THE GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BIM?

Challenges, like sorrows, don't come as single spies but in battalions - but I would just point to two.

From the Government point of view, the question is whether it has the will and the wherewithal to stick at it and follow Winston Churchill's advice to those confronting a challenging task to "keep on bugging on". One consequence of a smaller civil service is that it needs to become more generalist, so people will move around even more than they do now, specialist knowledge will be lost, and every question will be addressed as if it has never been asked before - compounding the habit of new Governments to want to rebadge everything. This is not helped by the suspicion in the senior civil service of specialists who might make good the lack of sector-specific knowledge. We therefore need civil servants who stay in post long enough to deliver their programmes, reporting to ministers who understand and are supportive of the longer term objectives.

From the point of view of the industry, I think the major challenge is who wants to be the integrator? The natural candidates should be tier one contractors, but my fear is that they've become so used to grinding their margin out of either their customers (in good times) or their supply chain (in bad times) that managing that margin has now become their core business - and that the challenges of putting together

an integrated proposition for a client, for which they might be held accountable, lacks appeal. Fortunately (for the customers) there are some major players who take the opposite approach, and who are organising themselves to offer a more integrated approach. Unfortunately (for the nation) these tend not to be British owned - and the risk is therefore that those who don't "get with the programme" will either be competed out or bought out.

THINKING ABOUT DIGITAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK, HAVE YOU SEEN ANY NEW TECHNOLOGY RECENTLY THAT HAS GOT YOU EXCITED IN TERMS OF HOW IT COULD BE APPLIED TO THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY?

You are talking to probably the least tech-savvy person with whom you'll ever swap thoughts on BIM, and I'm therefore the wrong person to ask. Also, as above, this isn't principally about technology - and if we get the general direction of travel right, then I'll have confidence that the software houses will develop the right products for the right jobs.

The excitement therefore comes from witnessing the human ingenuity shown in finding new possibilities created by a digital world.

Having said that, although I would generally regard upgrades as a curse (given that they usually come along just when I've learnt how to use a previous version), I have said before that if anyone comes along with a program that upgrades human behaviour towards a genuine desire to collaborate, then I'll be its first customer!



Industry reacts to Autumn Statement

THE Chancellor Philip Hammond has delivered his first Autumn Statement as he set out his stall to prepare the UK economy for the impact of leaving the European Union.

UK Construction Media has gauged reaction to the measures outlined on Wednesday 23rd November to see if those involved in the industry believe they will be beneficial.

The mini budget covered the Government's plans to reinvigorate its house building programme that would see one million new homes built over the course of this Parliament.

Letting agents in England are also to be banned from charging fees to tenants in a move to make renting more affordable and ease the housing crisis. Currently tenants are liable to

pay a range of administration fees including references, credits and immigration checks.

Jeremy Blackburn, Head of UK Policy at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) said the Chancellor had delivered a "wait-and-see" statement but appeared to demonstrate a greater understanding of the housing sector than his predecessors.

He commented: "With increasingly unaffordable house prices, the majority of British households will be relying on the rental sector in the future. Now it seems that through the relaxation on grants to deliver a wider range of housing types, Hammond will drive an affordable rental agenda and can get Britain building in a way that benefits a cross section of society, not just the fortunate few."

Peter Vinden, Managing Director of The Vinden Partnership – a leading multi-disciplinary consultant company to the built environment – said that there was a great deal of work to do if the Government was to achieve its ambitious housebuilding targets.

He said: "The Chancellor confirmed the infrastructure and housing spending that we have



been expecting for a few weeks now. These are positive steps but there is still major work to be done if the Government is to hit its target of building one million new homes by the end of this Parliament.

"The Autumn Statement probably won't do too much to sway those decision makers within the industry from sitting on their hands but improved infrastructure, both transport and digital, should help to improve regional economies and create employment.

"Such is the nature of politics that the Government can't reveal its hand too much on Brexit negotiations and we are unlikely to find out too many details until the process gets underway. That being the case, the uncertainty that clouds the UK economy is unlikely to lift anytime soon."

Shraga Stern, Director of construction firm Decorean, called for a "real change" in the Government's approach to housebuilding citing the need to overhaul the planning system. He said: "The Government must enforce changes to the planning system and regulations, which act as a stumbling block for many smaller developers. As the UK's population continues to grow, we echo Mr Hammond's thoughts that for many 'the goal of home ownership is out of reach'. However, we have heard this all before and hope that this Autumn Statement acts as a stepping stone to providing a shelter over people's heads and somewhere comfortable and affordable to call home."

IEMA's Chief Policy Advisor Martin Baxter felt there was little to shout about in terms of environment and sustainability policy but broadly welcomed the investment in infrastructure,

industry and skills.

He said: "Today's Autumn Statement has provided some level of confidence for business in terms of investment at a time of uncertainty, which is a welcome move. Investment in infrastructure, industry and skills is a strong trinity of themes that together, will bolster the UK's resilience, competitiveness and productivity. Given this direction, we are looking to the Government to ensure that environment and sustainability skills are absolutely central to this programme. We are disappointed that this hasn't thus far appeared to be prominent. We look forward to seeing this come through in the imminent industrial strategy, the emissions reduction plan and the 25-year environment plan."

Richard Steer, Chairman of Gleeds, felt there was little to get excited about as Brexit uncertainty and party politics left the Chancellor slightly hamstrung. He said: "This was a budget produced by a Chancellor who has one hand tied behind his back by the Brexit result and the other by the PM trying to keep her party in line. There is still so much economic uncertainty that it is difficult to be excited by re-heated announcements of increased infrastructure spending and more housebuilding.

"Mr Hammond announced a National Productivity Investment Fund of £23Bn to be spent on innovation and infrastructure over the next five years. By closing the UK's productivity gap, the Chancellor plans to create the "high wage, high skill economy we want".

Mr Steer said that the new productivity fund sounded attractive on face value but was concerned that the measure may

prove to be just rhetoric. He said: "The new productivity fund sounds good but we have heard this type of thing before and, whilst it is argued that it will be funded by increased borrowing, the main issue is confidence in the UK and this was not a budget that is going to help enhance the value in the sterling which effects costs, or persuade private sector funders to invest.

Mr Steer felt that the jury would remain out on the housebuilding initiatives with the measures being little more than a "wish list" without knowing whether UK would have free access to skilled labour.

David Hawkes, the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) Policy Manager commended the Chancellor for placing productivity at the centre of his Autumn Statement.

He said: "It's clear that the Chancellor recognises that improving productivity is vital to economic prosperity. In construction, we know what can be done to improve productivity, but require certainty for firms to invest in innovation, skills and training in order to support it. For this reason, we welcome the £23Bn National Productivity Investment Fund, to be spent on improving innovation and infrastructure over the next five years."

He also welcomed the regional investment outlined by Mr Hammond, saying that reducing the investment and productivity gap between London and the rest of the UK was vital to the success of the economy.

Mr Hawkes added that this would be only be successful if the investment was tied to training and job creation.



What does a Trump administration mean for the UK construction industry?

AS the world comes to terms with Donald Trump's shock election win, which will see him become the 45th President of the United States of America, it would appear that his triumph is the most divisive since Richard Nixon secured his second term in 1972.

After a long and bitter campaign, during which much of Mr Trump's rhetoric seemed to alienate as many voters as it appealed to, people are now trying to anticipate what the reality of a Trump administration will be.

Domestically, spending on infrastructure will play a significant role in boosting the US economy. Trump has made a big play on this policy, commenting: "We're going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become second to none. We will put millions of our people to work as we rebuild it."

There is of course nothing revolutionary about this. China is financing over \$720Bn on 303 transport infrastructure projects over the next three years.

As we know, Britain too is investing heavily in infrastructure with projects such as the Heathrow expansion, Hinkley Point and HS2.

In his victory speech, the President-elect said: "We have a great economic plan; we will double our growth and have the strongest economy anywhere in the world."

SO WHAT WILL THIS PLEDGE MEAN FOR THE UK CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY?

Following the Brexit vote, outgoing President Barak Obama suggested that Britain would be "at the back of the queue" on any trade deals. Mrs Clinton said she would have taken a similar stance to that of President Obama.

Mr Trump, however, has been far more receptive to the idea of striking a trade deal with the UK once it leaves the European Union.

Back in May, he said: "Britain's been a great ally. They've been such a great ally they've gone into things they shouldn't have gone into - for example, going into Iraq. With me, they'll always be treated fantastically.

"I'm not going to say front of the queue but it wouldn't make any difference to me whether they were in the EU or not. You would certainly not be back of the queue, that I can tell you."

The UK currently exports more than £30Bn worth of goods and services to the United States and represents one of Britain's most significant markets.

There is growing talk of the possibility that Britain could join USA, Canada and Mexico in a new free trade area as an associate member of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA).

The President-elect was vocal in his criticisms of NAFTA during his campaign making it inevitable that the deal will be significantly reformed.

The man tipped to be the Secretary of State in the new Trump administration, Newt Gingrich, first put forward the idea of the UK joining such an agreement in 1998.

The idea was backed by Conservative MP, Jacob Rees-Mogg, who said: "What could be bad about it? As long as it does not stop us doing free trade deals with other people too.

"This is one of the great virtues of Brexit - we can look at all these things and if we think they are good we can tag along."

Whether, the picture would be this rosy for Britain remains unclear. Undoubtedly, Trump policy is to put America first and he has been very critical of free trade.

Any deal with the UK would certainly depend on whether there would be any adverse effect on American employment. However, Trump will not see Britain in the same way he views Mexico - a low wage threat to American employment.

This is clearly something that troubles the President-elect, given his pledge to build a wall on the border with Mexico to curb immigration.

Another advantage the UK is likely to have is that the American public would appear to be far more receptive to striking a trade deal with Britain, making the job of getting such a deal through Congress that much easier.

Trump's seemingly close relationship to Nigel Farage, who

for now remains acting leader of the UK Independence Party, might indicate a willingness to strike a favourable trade deal with UK once it eventually leaves the European Union.

There have been calls for Mr Farage to act an informal ambassador to the President-elect given his access to Trump's inner circle.

Graham Brady, Chairman of the influential backbench Tory 1922 committee, felt that the idea had merit and Mr Farage's closeness to Mr Trump shouldn't viewed as a negative thing.

Speaking to the University College London Conservative Society, Mr Brady commented: "Do I think it's a bad thing if Nigel Farage is spending time in Washington encouraging them to be pro-British? No I don't. I am quite relaxed about it."

Mr Brady did, however, rule out the interim UKIP leader being given an official role.

He also suggested that Trump's win was perhaps more in Britain's favour than if Hilary Clinton had succeeded in becoming the first female president as his victory made easier trade negotiations more likely.

For some the idea of dealing with Donald Trump is distasteful but one thing is for certain - Britain must engage fully with the Trump administration if it is to secure and hopefully enhance its relationship with its biggest market.

The construction industry will be hoping that the handwringing can be put to one side so that the Government can get on with the task of securing the best deal possible.

Heathrow expansion approved

IN a major boost to the UK economy, the Government has announced its support for a new runway at Heathrow, with the scheme taken forward in the form of a draft 'National Policy Statement' (NPS) for consultation.

Heathrow's expansion has remained the majority favourite throughout, though the decision faces a potential year-long consultation before it becomes final.

A study last year, led by Sir Howard Davies, recommended a third runway at Heathrow but other options included a new runway at Gatwick or an extension of one of Heathrow's existing runways. Sir Howard Davies said that the case for expanding Heathrow had "strengthened in recent months" and that the advantages were now "overwhelming".

A new runway at Heathrow will bring economic benefits to passengers and the wider economy, worth up to £61Bn. More than 77,000 additional local jobs are expected to be generated over the next 14 years, and the airport has committed to create 5,000 new apprenticeships over the same period.

There are strong divisions within the Government however,

with Theresa May telling the Commons during Prime Minister's Questions that the subject had been "debated, discussed and speculated on for 40 years".

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said: "The step that Government is taking today is truly momentous. I am proud that after years of discussion and delay this Government is taking decisive action to secure the UK's place in the global aviation market - securing jobs and business opportunities for the next decade and beyond.

"A new runway at Heathrow will improve connectivity in the UK itself and crucially boost our connections with the rest of the world, supporting exports, trade and job opportunities. This isn't just a great deal for business, it's a great deal for passengers who will also benefit from access to more airlines, destinations and flights.

"This is an important issue for the whole country. That is why the Government's preferred scheme will be subject to full and fair public consultation. Of course, it is also hugely important for those living near the airport. That is why we have made clear that expansion will only be allowed to

proceed on the basis of a world-class package of compensation and mitigation worth up to £2.6Bn, including community support, insulation, and respite from noise - balancing the benefits and the impacts of expansion."

Airlines and business groups favour expansion of Heathrow - Britain's busiest airport - which currently operates at 98%. Heathrow offers more direct connections than Gatwick and handles more freight.

Mrs May has given ministers "exceptional and limited" freedom to criticise the Government's final decision, although they will not be allowed to campaign against it - a move being seen as evidence a third runway at Heathrow will be backed.

Recently, Mrs May told ministers at a cabinet meeting that a decision on increasing airport capacity in the South East of England had been "delayed for too long".

Construction is not likely to begin until 2020 or 2021, the Airports Commission has said.

Education Secretary Justine Greening and Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson strongly oppose Heathrow's expansion.

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Getting the best deal for Britain

THE fallout from the result of the EU referendum could hardly have been more dramatic with numerous political casualties including both the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

However, the issue of who will become the next Conservative leader and Prime Minister was resolved far sooner than expected.

This turn of events has helped to minimise the political and economic uncertainty surrounding the UK and, in turn, the construction industry.

The new Prime Minister Theresa May outlined her position on how the country should now begin to move forward: "Brexit means Brexit – and we're going to make a success of it. It will be the responsibility of everyone sitting

around the Cabinet table to make Brexit work for Britain."

In her campaign to become the new Prime Minister, Theresa May promised to create a new government department to conduct negotiations with the European Union. She said: "I will create a new government department responsible for conducting Britain's negotiation with the EU and for supporting the rest of Whitehall in its European work. That department will be led by a senior Secretary of State – and I will make sure that the position is taken by a Member of Parliament who campaigned for Britain to leave the EU."

As Prime Minister, one of her first acts was to make good on this pledge, appointing David Davis the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union. Mr Davis, a former shadow Home Secretary,

had campaigned for Britain to leave the EU in the run-up to the referendum.

Mr Davis has echoed the thoughts of Mrs May and doesn't want to trigger Article 50 before the end of the year. In an article written a few days prior to his appointment he wrote: "We need to take a brisk but measured approach to Brexit. This would involve concluding consultations and laying out the detailed plans in the next few months. In conjunction with the high intensity negotiating free trade round this increase in certainty will stabilise the markets.

"As the free trade round and associated economic policies progress, we should see a material increase in foreign direct investment and domestic capital expenditure to take advantage of the opportunities that are



created. This means that some of the economic benefits of Brexit will materialise even before the probable formal departure from the EU around December 2018."

Mrs May has met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and again confirmed that the UK would not commence official negotiations to leave the EU this year.

She said: "I understand this timescale will not please everyone but I think it is important to provide clarity on that now."

However, the Prime Minister moved to reassure that Britain wished to maintain close ties to Europe, and Germany in particular: "I want to be clear today that we are not walking away from our European friends. Britain will remain an outward-looking country and Germany will remain a valued partner and friend to us."

The new Prime Minister has also met with her French counterpart,

President Hollande, in Paris. The French president urged Mrs May to activate Article 50, the official mechanism to trigger leaving, as soon as possible.

Mrs May responded by saying: "I have said to President Hollande I want Britain to continue to work with our European partners to boost trade and economic growth in both our countries.

"This matters to both of us so as the UK leaves the EU we will have to determine how to maintain the closest possible economic relationship between our countries.

"It will take time to prepare for those negotiations. I understand the need for certainty and confidence in the markets and that is why I have already been clear the UK will not invoke article 50 before the end of this year."

New Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, who played a key role in campaigning for Britain to leave the EU, has stressed that despite the Brexit vote, Britain will remain

committed to playing a lead role in European affairs and continue to trade successfully on the continent.

Mr Johnson said: "There is every cause for optimism; a Britain rebooted, reset, renewed and able to engage with the whole world."

He played down fears surrounding Britain's exit, saying they are being "wildly overdone" while the positives of withdrawing are being largely ignored.

He said: "The fundamentals of the UK economy are outstandingly strong – a dynamic and outward-looking economy with an ever-improving skills base, and with a big lead in some of the key growth sectors of the 21st century."

On striking a trading deal with other member states, Mr Johnson said: "It is overwhelmingly in the economic interests of the other EU countries to do a free-trade deal, with zero tariffs and quotas, while we extricate ourselves from the EU law-making system."

Construction industry rallies after EU referendum

REPRESENTING specific sectors within the construction industry and giving their members a voice, trade associations have responded cautiously to the Brexit vote with many looking first for a period of evaluation.

A constant amongst the reaction from bodies across the construction industry has been the call for stability and strong leadership from the Government. Also fundamental is the need to engage with industry to find the right path to restoring productivity and confidence to the sector.

The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) President Jane Duncan was quick to back the talent that exist in Britain: "UK architecture talent is incredibly resilient and we will continue to ensure that our profession has a bright future, whatever the operating environment.

"Clearly there is uncertainty about the timescales and impacts on a range of issues important to our industry including free movement in the EU for architects as well as students, trading and material sourcing, inward investment relationships, EU procurement rules and the effect on the

construction sector if restrictions are placed on EU migration.

"In common with other UK businesses and organisations, the RIBA is assessing the short and longer term effect of the withdrawal on our members and the Institute will provide further guidance in due course.

"Most importantly, we will work with colleagues in industry and government to ensure that architects have a strong voice in the coming weeks, months and years".

Chris Blythe, CIOB Chief Executive, reassured CIOB members that the Brexit vote wouldn't impact upon the global standing of their qualifications: "Even though we are UK-based, membership of the CIOB continues to be a guarantee of high professional standards and provides access to international markets. In this regard, the global status of our members' qualifications remains unaffected."

The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) declined to take sides on the EU referendum but remains committed to maintaining an open dialogue between the construction industry and the government as it plans for life

outside the European Union.

Mr Blythe commented: "The CIOB will be discussing the implications of EU withdrawal on the construction industry and built environment with policy makers. This includes understanding the views of our members as well as taking into account the public interest as part of our Royal Charter objectives. We will also continue to commit to working with other professional bodies to ensure a consistent cross-profession voice is presented.

"As it currently stands, and in common with other organisations, the CIOB is assessing the impacts of withdrawal from the EU and will provide further advice to members in due course. From Government, it is essential that stability, clear leadership and a recognised plan of action are put in place as soon as possible in order to dispel any uncertainty and provide the industry with the confidence to continue with 'business-as-usual'."

Representing the UK joinery and woodworking sector, the British Woodworking Federation (BWF) struck a positive tone in their response and accepted that



there would inevitably be a short-term period instability.

Iain McIlwee, Chief Executive of the BWF said: "For the UK, its people and its economy, we are entering a new chapter in history. What matters now is that firms are well informed and well prepared to assess risk and opportunity. From that position of preparedness, businesses will be able to ride through the inevitable period of change ahead with greater confidence and optimism.

"Some of the risks will be immediate, such as fluctuating currency. For example, the impact on material and component imports must be factored into joinery estimates and companies must ensure they are not caught out on projects that they have already quoted on, but materials have not been secured. "Some of the opportunities could come through more tax breaks, incentives to employ, and light touch legislation. We also hope to see public sector procurement, now unfettered by EU policies, very carefully measuring and taking into account the socioeconomic impact of

decisions within specification."

The Construction Products Association (CPA) said that businesses will no doubt be concerned by the uncertainty following Brexit but pledged to work closely with the Government to ensure CPA members interests are properly represented: "Whilst the CPA's own survey of our members before the vote did not indicate a consensus either to remain or leave, there is no doubt that the uncertainty around this issue has weighed on decision-making across both the manufacturing and construction industries.

"Many businesses will be concerned about the implications for themselves and their markets, but this will take considerable time and effort to resolve. The CPA will be at the centre of these efforts, particularly with relevant government policy makers, to represent and protect our members' interests.

"In turn, we will work closely with our members to shape and communicate the future of the construction products industry and provide insights to allow

companies to plan for the future."

With close ties to the construction industry, the automotive industry is represented by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). Its Chief Executive, Mike Hawes, said it was crucial that the Government maintained access to free trade across Europe. He commented: "The British public has chosen a new future out of Europe. Government must now maintain economic stability and secure a deal with the EU, which safeguards UK automotive interests.

"This includes securing tariff-free access to European and other global markets, ensuring we can recruit talent from the EU and the rest of the world and making the UK the most competitive place in Europe for automotive investment."

What is clear from these responses is a real sense of determination to do everything possible to make sure that the voices of over two million people who work in the construction industry are heard and are given the opportunity to thrive in the new landscape.





The Importance of Apprenticeships:

An Exclusive Interview with Graham Nicholson, Chair of TAC

UK Construction Excellence speak exclusively with Graham Nicholson on the importance of apprenticeships in the construction industry.

Graham Nicholson is a Chartered Structural and Civil Engineer. He is the Executive Managing Director of Tony Gee and Partners and has over 30 years' experience of working for the specialist consultancy practice.

Graham chairs the Firm's Executive Board and is responsible for leading the strategic direction of the business. He became a Partner in 1992 and in 2003 took the lead role in the practice. Since then the Company has grown from 100 to 400 staff. He has a passion for bridge engineering and has been responsible for the design of some extremely interesting and innovative structures, in

particular the Dornoch Firth Bridge and Ceiriog Viaduct, which were the longest incrementally launched bridges in the UK at the time. He was Chairman of the Association for Consultancy and Engineering in 2011 and remains on the ACE board responsible for chairing another great passion - the Technician Apprenticeship Consortium (TAC).

HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU FEEL APPRENTICESHIPS ARE TO THE UK CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AT THE MOMENT?

They are very important. We have a skills shortage and there's a need to bring in new blood into the industry, and a very good way of doing that is with apprenticeships. As we know, infrastructure plays a vital role in the industry and we need to bring as many people in as possible.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN BENEFITS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL WHO MAKES THE DECISION TO BEGIN AN APPRENTICESHIP?

It's a work based route into engineering and it's limitless. By taking on an apprenticeship, with suitable capabilities, you can gain those qualifications and effectively reach the very top of the industry. An apprentice can, with suitable qualifications and training, become a chartered engineer. The main benefit is that, during their training, they are earning money and gaining very valuable on-the-job training.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK APPRENTICESHIPS ARE SUCCESSFUL IN TEACHING THE CORRECT SKILLS, AND ARE THEREFORE HAVING A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IN ENTERING THE WORKPLACE ONCE THE APPRENTICESHIP IS OVER?

I think that it's for the industry to teach apprentices what they want them to do. It can be very tailored. Our particular business has a very specific set of needs and skills, and we are able to teach our apprentices the skills that match our requirements, thus leading to a successful career.

WHAT IMPACT HAVE APPRENTICESHIPS HAD ON THE SKILLS SHORTAGE THAT THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS CURRENTLY FACING?

When I think of TAC, we've taken on over 1,000 young people and put them through an apprenticeship now. That is 1,000 people that perhaps wouldn't have come into the industry that we've managed to encourage in through this route, so TAC has had an impact. We still need to bring more and more apprentices in, so we are hoping the TAC programme and the Government will meet the targets, which currently far exceeds what we have at the moment, but it is a work in progress. There is still a huge challenge in trying to attract people into the industry. This is still something we have to work hard at.

WHAT REASONS ARE THERE FOR WHY SOMETIMES APPRENTICES DON'T COMPLETE THEIR APPRENTICESHIP?

You have to bear in mind that some of these apprentices come in at the age of 16 and have no experience of the workplace or work in engineering. For some people, they might find that the industry doesn't suit what they want. This is usually down to the individual apprentices. We've had two out of 20 drop out and that's primarily because they've come in and said it isn't what they thought it was. I think that's inevitable if you're going to bring people in that are 16/17 years old who have very little exposure to it. You aren't going to win them all. But the rest of them think it's a fantastic career, get really stuck in and have done very well.

Companies give them time to

go and study, support them financially and help with their training. Inevitably, I think the fact that you're taking people in at such a young age means you can't expect to get 100% record of retaining everyone. They start with an idea of what they think an engineering apprenticeship is, but once they discover that it's not quite what they thought, they may decide to go and do something different. I think that's understandable and provided it is only a small level of loss, then it's something that our industry should be able to accept.

WHAT MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO ALLOW THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF AN APPRENTICESHIP?

It's about mentoring and taking care of the apprentices. If you spend time with them and support them, then they should feel like a very vital part of the workforce. There's a very specific training programme set out now in the apprenticeship route. There are specific requirements for gaining experiences in different parts of the business. It's a matter of being able to expose them to this and make sure they can reach all of the objectives that they need to be able to get their qualification. It's important that the companies take the training of their apprentices very seriously and not think that it's just down to the apprentice to do the work.

To become an engineering technician through the ICE route there are some very clear objectives and attributes that the apprentices have to achieve. The college will teach them some basic principles but they won't get experience of managing projects or being able to demonstrate creative thought or being able to work off their own initiative. All of this is something that, when placed in a working environment, the apprentice can then demonstrate that they have the ability to work on their own, and to work in teams and make a real impact. By having a mentor, someone can sit down with the

apprentice and talk about what they have achieved, and what they hope to achieve - planning out where they are going to do their experience and ensuring they are moved around and get a variety of experience.

DO YOU THINK THAT LEAVING THE EU WILL HAVE ANY IMPACT ON APPRENTICESHIPS?

I don't think we will change what we are doing with apprenticeships because we are leaving the EU. The fundamental thing for the industry at the moment is to ensure our investment in infrastructure is protected. We need to keep our industry busy by building vital infrastructure, which is needed now more than ever as we need to create better connectivity with everyone. However, this will still leave us with the issue of the skills shortage.

Apprenticeships will be a very important way of dealing with that. Not just in short term. Apprenticeships are really building skills for the future. You can take in another 5,000 apprentices now and they will become very valuable people in the next four or five years' time. It won't directly affect anything in the next one or two years.

I'm optimistic that something positive will come out of this, even if it wasn't what we initially wanted. It is what is it is, and we will have to work hard to make it work.

There's a lot of disruption that's going to come but we just need to be clever and innovative and find ways to deal with it. I think we're a very resourceful industry and country and we will find a way through this. Who knows, maybe in five years' time we will look back and think that it wasn't such a bad thing after all?



Is a National Housing Service the solution to the UK's residential shortfall?

JAMES Knight, Head of Residential at Arcadis, speaks to UK Construction Media about the global design and consultancy firm's innovative new report - 'Solving the housing crisis: THE BIG IDEA' - and the prospect of a National Housing Service.

ARCADIS RECENTLY RELEASED AN AMBITIOUS NEW REPORT - 'SOLVING THE HOUSING CRISIS: THE BIG IDEA'. COULD YOU PROVIDE A BIT OF BACKGROUND TO THIS? WHAT WAS THE REASONING BEHIND THE REPORT?

Over the last 12 months, Arcadis has seen the industry's focus shift

towards the capacity issues that the residential sector is currently experiencing. At the moment the industry is building around 140,000 units per year. Depending on who you want to believe, we need to build between 220,000 and 320,000 - a lot more than we have built for a number of years.

Looking at the total completions since 1969, you don't need to be a statistician to work out that there's a trend; they're going down, and even if you remove the blips, the underlying trend is decreasing numbers.

As a country, we've had a very strong public housing sector. In

times of recession, when private unit completions have tumbled for obvious reasons, the public sector has stepped in and ramped up delivery, and if you look at our research that's quite clearly shown. Historically, this was done through a number of vehicles including local authorities, the GLA and registered providers with access to social housing grants.

Previously, in London you could get anything up to a £120,000-a-unit social housing grant to build social rental properties. This has gradually diminished to basically nothing. In fact, the social housing grant is now at such a paltry level



that the developing housing associations would almost rather not have it so as not to be bound by the onerous compliance that comes with it. Many of the big providers have instead become property developers in their own right - using the funds from their programme of private delivery to reinvest in social housing.

This is well documented, everyone talks about it and the discussion is not just restricted to people in the industry - its everyday news. The thinking behind the report was to do something game-changing - something substantial yet sustainable.

Whether the National House Service is a solution or not, it's a bit of thought leadership that's aimed at provoking people into thinking about the issue on a national rather than local level.

COULD YOU EXPLAIN THE NATIONAL HOUSING SERVICE CONCEPT? HOW WOULD THE AGENCY WORK IN PRACTICE?

The recognition is that it would have to be self-sustaining. It's the worst time ever to suggest creating a quango, which some might say the National Housing Service is. The Government is currently trying to do away with quangos and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is diminishing in power, almost by design. This is different.

As an example, London and Quadrant (L&Q) is a top five, if not top three, London developer of any residential units by unit number. In their own right, they are a big player in the development market. They're credible - they deliver a lot of units and they enter into a lot of joint ventures with the likes of Bellway, Barratt and Taylor Wimpey.

In 2007, L&Q realised that they needed to rework their business

model and proceeded to re-structure the organisation into separate arms, just as a developer would. Acting as a developer, they have delivered significant numbers of units and reinvested the proceeds in new sites and acquisitions. This has also helped them to deliver affordable housing that is not reliant on the HCA or government grants.

Our idea is; what if we scaled this up to create a National Housing Association, not paid for by the Government but independently financed with the profits from development reinvested - a not for profit organisation.

HOW HAS THE BIG IDEA BEEN RECEIVED?

It's been pretty well received. The Housing Finance Institute was very interested to hear what we had to say and we've been speaking with them quite closely. There is an element of cynicism around 'What do the HCA do?' however. I suppose that's the immediate reaction - 'Isn't this just the HCA?' - which it's not.

But I think the general acceptance is that, if you could create an organisation that brought some of those essential ingredients together - whether it's the National Housing Service or something different - then it would be a sustainable long-term solution to a problem that desperately needs it. This isn't something you can fix in a single political cycle.

I think one of the biggest drivers behind THE BIG IDEA is the lack of capacity. We estimate that anything up to 250,000 people could have left the industry since 2007, through early retirement during the credit crunch or a lack of new graduates. This has filtered down to the trades as well. You can't scale up the industry again to deliver the capacity that you need in a short space of time. It may

take five years or more to get an additional 100,000 people into the industry.

The recognition that there needs to be a more holistic approach is certainly there. I'm not sure we're saying that we have the right answer, but what we do have are some ideas that have been tested and may have some of the ingredients of a potential solution.

ARE WE ANY CLOSER TO THE NATIONAL HOUSING SERVICE BECOMING A REALITY?

I think that something relatively major will be done in the next three years. Whether it's a National Housing Service or a holistic coordinated approach to training and recruitment remains to be seen.

The recent merger between L&Q, Hyde Group and East Thames is just one example of how things are going to start being done differently. The move makes them one of the country's top four housebuilders and signals a real step-change in delivery mechanisms.

The Government also recently announced a £1.3Bn fund to remediate brownfield sites. Should they invest in a training academy or would a number of major developing registered providers group together to set up their own manufacturing facility? That's something that I could see happening. The restricting factors would be the practicalities associated with different organisations working together. How would you get them to talk to each other? How would they share delivery from that facility? If they were able to share regionally, it might be achievable; and if Legal and General has done it, someone else will.

Redefining Best Practice:

An exclusive interview with Mark Bew MBE, BIM Task Group

WHETHER we realise it or not, Building Information Modelling (BIM) is redefining industry best practice. Decades of entrenched process is being streamlined to create a more collaborative and efficient way of working, though the transition itself has been anything but easy.

In a UK Construction Excellence exclusive, Mark Bew - Chairman of the BIM Task Group - offers a retrospective look at the Government's BIM Level 2 mandate, his thoughts on Level 3 and beyond, and an appraisal of the industry's current progression towards digitalisation.

HOW DO YOU FEEL THE INDUSTRY IS PROGRESSING IN TERMS OF ITS BIM ADOPTION? HAS THE BIM LEVEL 2 MANDATE HELPED TO KICK-START THE PROCESS?

It's very easy for those in the UK to look at what we've achieved, forgetting where we started from four years ago. I've spent a fair amount of time out of the country looking at other nations - in Europe and Australia, for example - and it's only when you go elsewhere that you realise just

how far we've come. Bill Gates once said: "We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten". That very much applies to BIM, I think. We've made a staggering improvement - a step change - but the more you look around, the more you realise that BIM and the digital transformation is happening and that we're taking it for granted.

The Government's intervention, the technology becoming ubiquitous, the younger generations coming out of universities with an iPad underneath each arm - each of these factors have come together to form a perfect moment.

If you look at our BIM journey and the mandate intervention, most surveys reckon that we're 40% to 60% through the process. If those surveys are to be believed, we've moved across all of the public sector plus a lot of the private sector market.

We know that there's a massive tail in construction, from Tier 1 contractors to smaller companies, but the reality is that it's unlikely that jobbing builders are going to join into BIM in our

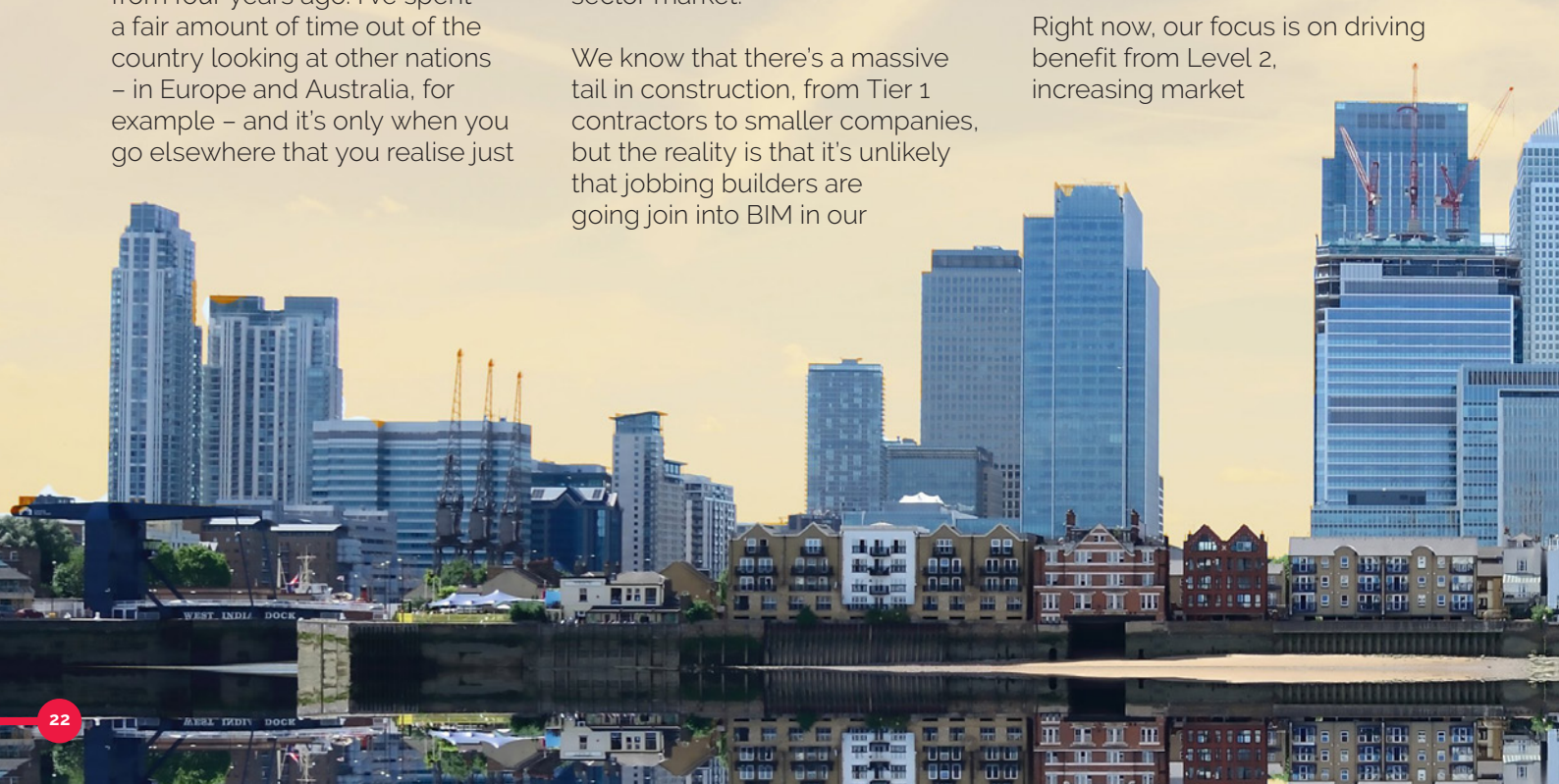
career lifetime because there are no barriers to entry. If, in the future, we start to see planning regulations change as they have done in Singapore - where you now have to submit a model to receive planning permission - things will move even further.

Where we are right now is pretty much where I'd like to be however; probably better than I had hoped in many ways.

WITH THE MANDATE NOW FIRMLY BEHIND US, WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE INDUSTRY IN TERMS OF BIM IMPLEMENTATION? DO YOU THINK LEVEL 3 WILL BE MANDATED AS LEVEL 2 WAS, FOR INSTANCE?

We're committed to setting a date at some point in the future, though we can't mandate something without knowing what it is. Once I have that clarity in my own mind, along with the support of the public sector, we can make another intervention.

Right now, our focus is on driving benefit from Level 2, increasing market



capacity and growing exports, while also ramping up the Level 3 Digital Built Britain team. We've started to put that team into place and I'm hopeful that the contract for the first piece of feasibility design will be out fairly soon.

Level 3 is a quantum of scale larger than Level 2. It's going to be a lot more complex but we'll also have five times more budget per year to ensure that it's done professionally, as Level 2 was.

Contractors often risk falling into the trap of thinking "I'm here to build this" rather than "I'm building an environment for people to thrive in". It's an idea that the industry has yet to get its head around. It's not good enough to just throw buildings up. You need to build something that adds lasting value to businesses and lives. The social impact is much more critical than the cost of the building itself.

I think the construction industry will have a Volkswagen moment in the next decade. The public will

suddenly realise that the things we're building don't work very well, and there will be enough data available publically for someone to create an app and hold the industry accountable. That data will drive the bad practice out.

BROADLY SPEAKING, ARE THE 'BIM4' ORGANISATIONS – BIM4SMES FOR INSTANCE – SUCCEEDING IN ENGAGING WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE SECTORS?

The supply chain coming together to create the BIM4s is, in my view, essential – though it's a shame that the big Tier 1 contractors haven't been able to find a bit of money to engage the public and the supply chain in the process. A little investment would drive massive amounts of goodwill, I think.

The BIM Task Group has spent a lot of time kick-starting and supporting the BIM4s, but it would be wrong for a public client or government to actually fund them.

I'm currently working with two or three groups including the UK BIM Alliance to find out what things might look like when the market takes ownership of Level 2. At that point, there needs to be some sort of coalition inside the supply chain that can help bring together responses and messaging.

Using what we've learnt over the last four years, this should be possible.

ARE SMES IN DANGER OF BEING LEFT BEHIND? WHAT HAS THE BIM TASK GROUP DONE TO BOLSTER THEIR UPTAKE?

We've spoken to people in businesses with 1 to 100 employees and their feedback is that the Government doesn't listen, provide access or pay on time. In truth, the same is true of most clients or organisations, whether you're a Tier 1 or a one-man band. The problem we've got is the impact of those behaviours on smaller businesses.

Ultimately, BIM isn't going to help with that but if we can use BIM as a Trojan Horse to articulate the problem further up the tree, we may start to see some traction. Project bank accounts have made sure that SMEs are paid on time, for example, while free access to the BIM4s has improved SME inclusion and diversity. It's never perfect for everyone but we've tried to break down any barriers where possible.

HOW IMPORTANT IS EDUCATION IN MAKING BIM STANDARD PRACTICE?

There are two parts to this, the first



being 'is Level 2 possible?' In 2011, we set the standard and established our perspective on how the industry might get there. The challenge is now 'how can we get everyone doing it?' The major role of education is to grow capacity so that we can follow through with what we've set out and consistently deliver on those 15% to 20% savings. The fact that we have a clear methodology around strategy, process, training, delivery and support has given us an edge over other nations.

There is another role around education, which is research. Universities are already investigating Level 3 which is absolutely crucial. We need those brains because they will be the ones improving capacity at the bottom of the pile.

We're also on what is now our third iteration of the Learning Outcomes Framework. We've given complete clarity to the market as to what our expectations are for learning, and

we have engaged the education sector to chair and run that piece of work with our help and support.

Finally, we are looking at an accreditation programme for all training and delivery services to maintain quality and consistency.

TO DATE, BIM UPTAKE HAS BEEN DRIVEN BY THE PUBLIC SECTOR. ENGAGING PRIVATE SECTOR CLIENTS IS CRUCIAL HOWEVER. IS THE PRIVATE SECTOR AMENABLE TO CHANGE? ARE CLIENTS BEGINNING TO SPECIFY BIM LEVEL 2 FOR THEIR PROJECTS?

For sure. We've worked with a lot of developers – in London especially – and, as we all know, they're a hardnosed and financially focused bunch. They wouldn't specify BIM without reason. According to Great Portland Estates, for every pound spent they have received two in return. That kind of commitment to BIM shows what's possible. It's the same with the Tier

1's – some of them are doing spectacular things with BIM. I was with a Tier 1 the other day and over half of their projects are now Level 2 compliant from a portfolio some three or four hundred strong.

No-one – including the Government or client – is perfect at this at the moment, but we're much better than we were four years ago and we're going to be even better in four years' time. That is the nature of the journey we're on.

I recently chaired a session at an ICE (Institution of Civil Engineers) event. The room was full of government clients, designers, consultants and contractors. It was amazing. That cohort of individuals would never have entertained a conversation about data two or three years ago and yet, all of a sudden, it's at the top of their agenda. That shift has come about so quickly. It's hugely exciting, and the fact that the UK is leading the way is a real opportunity for us all.

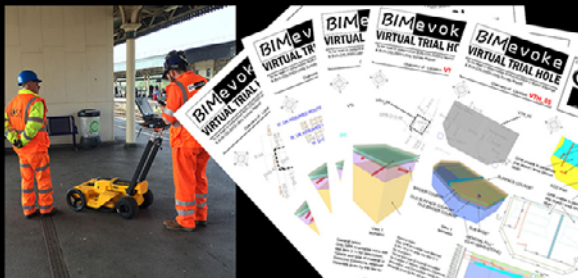
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The BIM Proposition:

An exclusive interview with David Philp

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE SCOTTISH BIM PROGRAMME?

A key recommendation within Scottish Government's Construction Procurement review was the implementation of Building Information Modelling (BIM) to Level 2 by April 2017. The review set out the following recommendation which was endorsed by Scottish Ministers:

'The use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) should be introduced in central government with a view to encouraging its adoption across the entire public sector. The objective should be that, where appropriate, construction projects across the public sector in Scotland adopt a BIM Level 2 approach by April 2017.'

The Scottish Future Trust (SFT) are supporting the delivery of these requirements and have created a BIM Implementation Plan, Scottish BIM Delivery Group to support procuring authorities within Scotland to implement BIM Level 2 from April 2017. This roadmap sets out a combination of focused actions including:

- Pathfinder Projects,
- Guidance,
- Training,
- Research

DOES THE UK'S BIM MANDATE MAKE IT EASIER IN A SENSE TO GET SCOTTISH FIRMS ON THE BIM JOURNEY?

Undoubtedly the HM Government mandate and the creation of the BSI suite of BIM standards has helped create a firm foundation for industry. The BIM requirements of the Scottish Government will further advance this journey in Scotland and create appropriate digital journeys for the Scottish Public Sector procurer.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT HOW SCOTTISH BIM IMPLEMENTATION WILL PRACTICALLY BE APPLIED?

We have developed a three stage approach to implementation in Scotland. Firstly the public sector client will, early in the procurement process, utilise the SFT BIM Grading tool to determine the appropriate Level of BIM maturity for their project, either Level 1 or 2. Secondly they use the Return on Investment (ROI) calculator to help inform the business before finally the "How?" which is informed by our departmental specific BIM navigator portal.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SCOTTISH FIRMS LOOKING TO TAKE THEIR FIRST STEP ON THE BIM JOURNEY BUT AREN'T SURE WHERE TO BEGIN?

Get to know the British Standards in relation to BIM, they are free to download and are available via <http://bim-level2.org/en/>. Make sure that you target Level 1 BIM maturity as your first milestone, it is imperative that this foundation is in place before proceeding towards Level 2. Benchmark where you already are in your journey. The SFT are promoting the BIM Compass <http://bim.knowledgesmart.net/sft/> as a useful and agnostic way of doing this. Have a strategy based upon where BIM will give you and your customer's added value.

IS IT THE CASE THAT BIM IS AS MUCH ABOUT CHANGING PEOPLE'S MIND-SETS AS IT IS ABOUT THE TECHNOLOGY?

Yes, it is important that BIM implementation is seen as much about improving behaviours and ensuring better ways of delivery

than it is about the technology. Creating more collaborative ways of managing and delivering information is at the heart of BIM. BIM in its various guises is becoming a metaphor for industry change. The client "pull" is helping drive innovation and set a compelling vision of what a digitised sector would look like using computer readable data.

That said, the technology is the vital enabler and should be given equal consideration. It should however always be appropriate to the outcomes that an organisation wishes to achieve – don't by authoring tools when all you need is a free viewer. Understand what plays you need, create a functional requirement and work from there.

ARE THERE ANY NEW TECHNOLOGIES THAT YOU HAVE SEEN RECENTLY THAT HAVE GOT YOU EXCITED?

I have seen a lot of improvement in AR/VR offerings which is great. However, I have witnessed some incredible examples of machine learning and cognitive workflows especially around generative design that got me real excited.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON DIGITAL CONSTRUCTION WEEK (DCW) AND WHAT INVOLVEMENT DID YOU HAVE?

I was doing a talk on the improved functionality that Level 3 might offer and the benefits that it could enable especially in the operational delivery and how real time data and analytics can support. It was noticeable at this year's DCW that as well as the BIM discussions there was more of a wider zoom out and embracing of a general digitisation of construction, which was refreshing.



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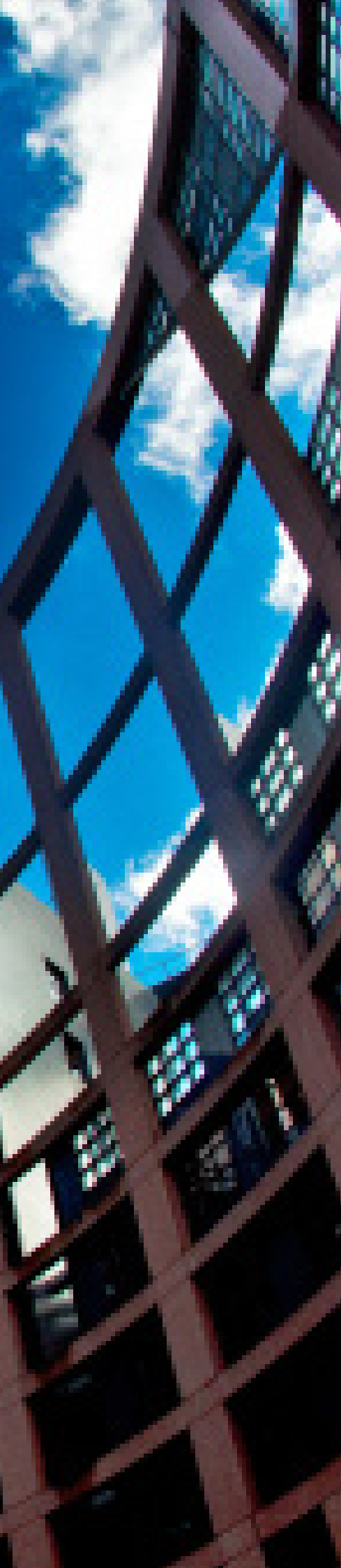
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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW:

Adam Matthews, Chairman of EU BIM Task Group

ABIGAIL Burr talks exclusively to Adam Matthews - Chairman of the European Union BIM Task Group - about the UK's placement within the construction industry, the European Common Network, the drive for BIM, and how other countries are progressing on their BIM journey following Brexit.

Adam Matthews is Chairman of the European Union BIM Task Group which is a network of public sector stakeholders from over 20 nations and co-funded by the European Commission. He is also Director of International Development for the UK Government's BIM Task Group, and has more than 24 years of experience in information technology and change management in various industrial sectors. Adam holds an MBA from Kingston University which focused on sustainability and public policy for the construction sector.



SINCE THE LEVEL 2 MANDATE IN APRIL 2016, HOW WELL PLACED DO YOU THINK THE UK CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IS?

'Standing aside' from my UK role and just looking at the evidence from surveys, conferences, institutes and associations would suggest that most of the industry has at least started on the journey towards BIM Level 2. That includes those just beginning to understand what BIM Level 2 is, to those that have immersed their Organisation's procedures as supporting Level 2 and the collaborative use of data.

We can also say that the industry has a much greater awareness and capability in "collaborative BIM" (the original phrase under the Construction Strategy 2011) than five years ago. This is a big step forward for the UK industry and it should be recognised for how enthusiastically it has embraced this change.

On a personal note, I think it must rank as one of the greatest national collaborative efforts the construction sector has seen. A building services engineer said to me once that BIM was one of the best things to happen in the sector in his lifetime, and that the UK Government's BIM programme was the best thing Government had done for the industry (with the notable exception of H&S improvements). I wouldn't disagree with his assessment.

To help the industry equip itself on Level 2, there are guides to explain and adopt the Level 2 approach which will be delivered shortly on: www.bim-level2.org/guidance

There is more to do, but we should also celebrate the progress we have made in a relatively short period of time. The CIC should also be

congratulated for their leadership and ownership of the programme since its launch at the end of 2011.

HOW IS THE EUROPEAN COMMON NETWORK DEVELOPING?

The UK with Norway started the group in late 2013 with 12 other European countries by holding a get-to-know-you session in Brussels. Since it formed as the EU BIM Task Group, it has grown to over 20 European nations with support and co-funding from the European Commission. The aim of the group is simple - create a common understanding of BIM in Europe and aim to spread common practice across public clients introducing BIM to public policy or public works. We launched our website in early 2016 - www.eubim.eu - and updates on our progress will be issued there.

We have just completed a survey of European practices by public stakeholders and now starting to draft a guide for public procurers on BIM. This BIM handbook will make recommendations for good practice based on the current European experience.

DO YOU THINK THE EU WOULD EVER HAVE A BIM MANDATE?

Mandate is a strong word. Technically the UK BIM 'mandate' is policy encouragement to the UK's public construction client group to require the delivery of BIM information on centrally funded projects. It is not easy to see how a single BIM mandate would be applied across Europe - however, do I see common approaches and requirements for BIM being adopted by European governments and public clients? Yes, absolutely. And looking forward, I see these requirements aligning across Europe.

Over the next three to five years



BREAKING DOWN MEP BIM

Building Information Modelling (BIM) is about much more than software and hardware. It is a revolution that's shaping the way the AEC industry works.

More than just a 3D model, BIM is founded on consultation and shared information. Essentially, BIM is a philosophy that defines different ways of thinking and working at all stages in a building's lifecycle.

As BIM adoption becomes increasingly widespread globally, it's ever more important to understand how collaborative working transforms the way buildings are designed and managed. BIM is beginning to change the way buildings look, the way they function and the way in which different stakeholders engage in how they are designed, built and operated. It is also determining how the MEP sector wins contracts, completes projects and quality checks its work.

For businesses still struggling to get to grips with BIM terminology or worried about having to make

a substantial investment in technology and staff training, BIM adoption can feel like a leap into the unknown. MEP companies often find themselves asking how they can differentiate between hard, fast, factual and relevant information and more convoluted, academic discussion that doesn't always translate directly, or obviously, into the building process. As well as concerns about cost, there's also a widely-held belief that – if clients haven't specifically requested BIM – than there's no requirement, or benefit, to use it on projects.

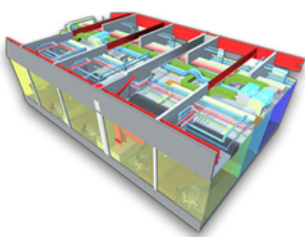
Following on from the UK Government's April 2016 BIM mandate, whereby all publically procured projects must now conform to BIM Level 2 standards, there's a snowballing awareness within the sector of the eventual inevitability for MEP stakeholders to take up the reigns in the BIM race. However, there remains a distinct reluctance to moving away from long-held ideology and time-tested practice and towards committing fully to BIM processes.

As well as supplying ground-breaking software and hardware solutions that help businesses achieve greater efficiencies and rapid ROI, Trimble MEP is also renowned for its expertise and experience in working with clients to help them find the perfect, bespoke, individual pathway towards BIM adoption.

As well as offering hardware, including robotic total stations and 3D laser scanners, and software including brand-new ProDesign 3D (enabling, for the first time in the UK, electrical design – fully in compliance with UK regulations – directly in a 3D Revit model), Trimble MEP also provides a comprehensive package of VDC services, including 3D laser scanning, modelling from point cloud and 3D model evaluation. As engineers and contractors strive to adopt increasingly sophisticated levels of BIM, Trimble MEP sees these services playing a vital role in helping people transition wholly into new ways of working, winning bigger and better contracts and reaping the rewards presented by such an exciting industry evolution.

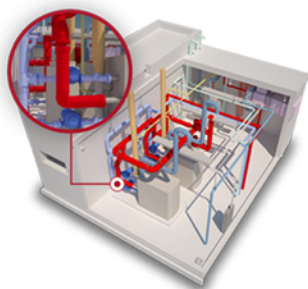
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it is likely there will be a growing momentum of consistent BIM requirements in public tenders at national and public estate levels. We are beginning to see this already. Clients are recognising it is not enough simply to request "It should be BIM" in public tenders: they want to specify standard digital information datasets at key project milestones.

IN TERMS OF THE EU, IS THE DRIVE FOR BIM COMING FROM THE PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SECTOR?

Both, but at some stage in a number of countries - the public stakeholders are taking a leadership role to help create the necessary conditions to deliver joint economic and environmental benefits for both the public sector and for industry.

WHAT IMPACT WILL BREXIT HAVE

ON CLOSER COLLABORATION WITH BIM IN EUROPE?

In my view, the collaboration has been a European exercise, not just EU - it actually includes members of the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) such as Norway (a leading partner in the project) and Iceland.

With regards to Brexit, the EU BIM Task Group is a two year project until end of 2017 which would mean the UK will be a full EU member at that time. And the goal of the group is to align the European approach to introduction of BIM. Beyond Europe, there is recognition that BIM is a global language - construction will transform to a global 'digital construction' sector over the next five to ten years. The Group is collaborating to place the European sector to compete effectively in this

market.

I would add that it is a European success - nations sharing approaches and implementation descriptions in order to agree a common performance level to describe what BIM is to encourage trade across borders. It continues to be a positive and collaborative experience.

WHERE WOULD YOU SAY THE MAJORITY OF COUNTRIES ARE ON THEIR BIM JOURNEY?

This will be answered more fully in the report of the survey recently conducted. I wouldn't want to pre-empt its findings and conclusions. However, the group recognises that there is a full range from those just starting to explore what BIM means to a public stakeholder/client to those like Norway, UK and Netherlands that



are implementing their programme with industry. What is remarkable has been the journey since 2013, where we started the group with a just handful of nations with active programmes to now - with over 20 nations involved and the European Commission on-board. I think that speaks volumes about the recognition of the value proposition of BIM to the public sector.

WHAT COUNTRIES WOULD YOU SAY ARE FURTHER ALONG ON THEIR BIM JOURNEYS?

There is no hard and fast rule here to describe 'furthest along'. For example, the UK programme has the goal to engage the whole value chain transformation of its construction sector, which

employs near three million. Whereas Finland, a country of five million people, has adopted a highly detailed approach to prescribing specific technical operations at the 'atomic level'. Which is furthest along?

What is easier to say is the group agrees that we are all heading in the same direction, along similar journeys but going at different speeds. Another important point is to encourage trading opportunities: no country is so far ahead that they can't be brought on to a common path with others to support common trading practice across borders. This for me is the real test for the group.

For me, one of the most impressive things about the EU BIM Task Group is that all nations are approaching with an open mind and prepared to debate different aspects of adoption and there is no sense at this time of protecting national positions to the detriment of harmonisation.

After all, BIM is just part of a broader digital transition across governments, across Europe and across the world.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HELP COUNTRIES THAT ARE NOT AS PROGRESSED?

Approximately one third of the group have a BIM programme or are in the process of developing one, so this group is actually aimed to share practice with those nations that have yet to start developing a BIM programme.

The survey I mentioned will collate experience from around Europe on the public introduction of BIM and from this with a series of meetings and workshops will help to inform a general recommendation. This recommendation will be made available publicly as a handbook to inform public estate owners,

public procurers and policy makers across Europe.

Looking globally, I think it fair to say that outside a few notable exceptions including China, Singapore and Hong Kong many countries are still evolving their response to BIM. So this handbook has a wider audience possibly.

WHAT IS BRITAIN'S ROLE IN THIS?

The UK is the lead coordinator of the EU BIM Task Group as it was nominated by others to have the funding contract with the European Commission for the project. This contract is administered by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The UK provides a small project office to coordinate the programme and my time is provided to Chair. However, I do not represent the UK interest in the group, this is done by others from the UK BIM Task Group. My role is to independently represent the group members and the programme to the European Commission and to the lead coordinator.

WILL BREXIT AFFECT BRITAIN'S ROLE?

No, not in this immediate project. The project has a two year timeframe, and we are already over eight months in - and the UK will remain a full EU member for two years after its exit is formally triggered.

I cannot say that Brexit would have no effect on the UK's involvement in the future, however while I would accept there is naturally some uncertainty - I firmly believe that this project is part of a European agenda. I would very much hope the support received from the UK and towards the UK would continue in support of this vital work.



BIFM:

An exclusive interview with Julie Kortens

FOR THE UNINITIATED, WHAT WOULD YOU IDENTIFY AS BEING THE CORE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE BIFM?

At our heart is working with Facilities Management (FM) professionals to equip them with all they need to deliver exceptional FM for their organisation. But hand-in-hand with that is to raise the profile of FM as a profession and educate business leaders and other professions about the value and impact that FM can make to operational performance, for the benefit of business, the economy and society.

WHAT IS YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL HISTORY? HOW DID YOU BECOME CHAIRMAN OF THE BIFM?

Having spent several years working in HR, I took up my first role in facilities management in 1998 and have never looked back. It is an amazing profession, accessible to people from all cultures, all levels of experience and all academic backgrounds and I have been proud to play an active role in the development of the profession. I have volunteered in many capacities for BIFM, chaired the Women in FM special interest group, acted as a Non-Executive Director and have had the privilege of being Chairman since 2014.

HOW IS THE BIFM ABLE TO SUPPORT MEMBER COMPANIES?

We work with employers to develop their facilities management people. The FM professional standards framework maps out the competences required for FM professionals at every stage of their career and through membership, qualifications and training employers can build up true staff development programmes to help develop the skills and expertise of their employees.

We have many group members and are working closely to develop true strategic partnerships, helping them tailor and adapt our framework to provide the professional rigour of our standards but also adapt to their corporate goals and priorities.

We also work with businesses operating in the FM space to raise the profile of key issues, conduct research and, as corporate members, they can work with our communities and share specialist knowledge through our special interest groups.

THE BIFM'S CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP SPANS A WIDE RANGE OF SECTORS. ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT THE SAME IRRESPECTIVE OF THE INDUSTRY?

We have in our membership both the client and supply side

of the profession. For instance, the FM professionals operating in businesses across the economy where the core purpose of the organisation might be anything from educating pupils, to discovering a cure for cancer or producing best in class products. On the supply side we also work with FM service providers and a range of specialist organisations that supply into the FM market, with organisations from interior design, maintenance and waste management.

From my experience I can see that the core of successful FM is management expertise (financial, people and project) and as such many of these skills are transferable across sectors and specialisms. Similarly because of the range of responsibilities FM's invariably have, there is an inherent need for excellent communication and interpersonal skills to be able to manage the expectations and needs of a range of different stakeholders.

In different sectors there are always different skills and challenges and, as with any profession, you take your core professional skills and adapt them to the environment you are operating in. FM is no different. For example a soft service, customer facing FM role will have different skills requirement than someone who has a building engineering based role.

With the support of an amazing volunteer network we are also able to support a range of specialisms and sector specific professionals. We have special interest groups focusing on core FM specialisms such as Health and Safety, Workplace or Risk and Business Continuity and also sector based communities for example in Retail and Education.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS BEING THE CURRENT ISSUES WITHIN FACILITIES MANAGEMENT? WHAT STRATEGIES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THESE ISSUES?

I prefer to describe these as challenges rather than issues because facilities management has come such a long way in recent years. We are valued business partners in most organisations and our impact on overall business performance is increasingly recognised by the C-Suite. However, it is still apparent that in some sectors there continues to be a focus on cost-based procurement processes which do not recognise that it is people, strong partnering relationships and knowledge that deliver the value.

Collaboration with our colleagues in human resources, IT and finance is still a priority for us all. Working together to embed values and business imperatives is essential and FM has a key role to play in this arena. Our BIFM annual conference, ThinkFM, has focused on collaboration and productivity over the past few years to emphasise the role that we can play to create competitive advantage in business and add impact on society.

IN YOUR EXPERIENCE, DO PEOPLE FULLY UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT AND THE INFLUENCE IT HAS ON WORK ENVIRONMENT AND EFFICIENCY?

I think understanding has improved significantly over the past few years. People talk about FM being a young industry, but the understanding of the impact and value that FM can

have on organisational performance and productivity, ultimately delivering value to the bottom line, has increased.

However, as with any profession this varies across organisations depending on their understanding of how to leverage FM as part of their strategy. For example we see pioneering companies creating work environments built, sustained and managed with the sole purpose of helping create happy, healthy, empowered individuals. These environments have great workspaces fostering appropriate cultures and collaboration within their business.

However, for others this is not on top of their priority list – perhaps due to other struggles or due to a lack of understanding of the difference FM can make. In businesses where the customer experience is fundamental to the organisations' success you often see far more buy-in to the role and importance of FM.

Obviously, there is still work to be done recognising the full remit and opportunities that FM provides. But, as well as the institute engaging in cross industry groups, I think it's so important that BIFM also helps equip FM professionals with the skills and knowledge to be able to champion the value of their teams and the services they provide within their own organisations.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU HAVE FOR COMPANIES LOOKING TO IMPLEMENT A FACILITIES MANAGEMENT STRATEGY?

A facilities management strategy must link directly to and generally underpin the strategy of the business. Understanding the values and needs of the business is essential. I think that it's sometimes forgotten that the facilities management team is often the voice and face of the business, meeting and greeting clients and the public and providing the working environment which is the embodiment of the culture and

values of the business.

HOW IS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BUILDING INFORMATION MODELLING (BIM) IMPACTING FACILITIES MANAGEMENT? WHAT ADVANTAGES DOES BIM AFFORD FACILITIES MANAGERS INDUSTRY-WIDE?

Although the BIM agenda has been driven by the public sector in recent years, in my experience there is also an awareness and understanding across the private sector. I believe that many feel that the working practices promoted by BIM already exist, particularly on new build projects. That said it will be interesting to see how this pans out. The good news is that it will continue to raise the profile and understanding of FM as a profession with other construction professionals across the built environment.

Many believe that long-term increased usage of BIM will provide better opportunities for FM professionals to maintain and engage with asset data which will potentially help expand a building's lifecycle and increase operational efficiencies. This should also provide metrics that can help record and demonstrate the value that FM offers.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE BIFM CONTINUING TO DEVELOP IN THE MONTHS AND YEARS TO COME?

In the immediate future we will be continuing our work with FM employers to develop strategic partnerships through the institute's learning and development opportunities, and look at ways in which we can progress and advance the skills-base across the sector using our professional standards.

We're also delighted to have been contacted by an increasing number of international FM professionals and employers, all seeking to take up training and development for their teams, raising standards across the globe and taking full advantage of the BIFM offering.



The Education State: Theresa May doubles down on free schools commitment

THOUGH the players have changed, the Government's free schools agenda continues unabated. In recent months, Justine Greening - Theresa May's newly-appointed Secretary of State for Education - announced thousands of free school places, with the intention of giving parents greater choice over where to send their children.

Meanwhile, 56 previously approved schools - including a specialist performing arts college,

which counts Sir Paul McCartney among its patrons - opened their doors to autumn's new intake.

Under Mrs May's stewardship, the Department for Education (DfE) looks set to continue the work of her predecessor. It was David Cameron who, during the divisive Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition, brought the free schools agenda to the fore - last year pledging 500 more by the end of his ill-fated parliament.

So far, Theresa May has made good on that commitment - encouraging new and existing free schools to open and expand, and compelling universities and independent institutions to consider supporting or setting up new schools.

"For too long we have tolerated a system that contains an arbitrary rule preventing selective schools from being established - sacrificing children's potential because of dogma and ideology,"

the Prime Minister stated.

"The truth is that we already have selection in our school system - and its selection by house price, selection by wealth. That is simply unfair.

"That is why I am announcing an ambitious package of education reforms to ensure that every child has the chance to go to a good school. As well as allowing new selective schools we will bring forward a new requirement that means universities who want to charge higher fees will be required to establish a new school or sponsor an existing underperforming school."

For the uninitiated, free schools are autonomous Government-funded institutions operating outside the bounds of local authority management. Typically, they are established by parents, teachers, charitable organisations or local businesses - those with a vested interest in the community - in response to public demand. There might be a shortage of places in a given area for instance, or dissatisfaction with the places currently on offer.

To date, 74% of mainstream free schools can be found in areas where there is a clear need for more school places, with around half situated in some of the most deprived communities in the country.

According to the Government, free schools are more likely to be rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted than state schools, and research has shown that their introduction is helping to raise standards in neighbouring schools by encouraging fresh ideas and competition.

Being independently-led, free schools are exempt from teaching the national curriculum - a bone

of contention for many - and afforded greater latitude with regard to term times and teacher wages. Free schools still answer to Ofsted however, and - as 'all-ability' institutions - they are prohibited from using any form of academic selection.

The free schools blueprint is not without its detractors however. Critics claim that the Government's endorsement will serve only to weaken existing institutions, while local authorities are wary of a system that effectively strips them of power, leaving councils with little or no say as to where new free schools are placed. Moreover, how well governed are they really? Is the system at all vulnerable to extremist agendas?

The DfE remains undeterred however. In September, 77 new free schools were approved to create in total 46,493 new school places. These include:

- Cumbria Academy for Autism: A special school, led by the parents of autistic children.
- The Saracens High School: A secondary school for Barnet in London - the result of an innovative partnership between rugby Premiership and European Cup winners, Saracens, and Ashmole Academy - an Ofsted-rated 'Outstanding' secondary school.
- The REAch2 Academy Trust: The largest primary-only academy trust in the country is set to open a further 22 primary schools, providing over 10,000 additional primary places by 2020.
- The Harris Federation: The Federation will open three new secondaries and a primary school. These will

join the Trust's 37 existing schools, all of which have been rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.

Nigel Wray, Chairman, Saracens Rugby Club had this to say: "What a marvellous opportunity we have been given! At the Saracens High School we will combine our sporting beliefs to create a unique school environment where every individual student matters, academic achievement is important and a real emphasis is placed on teamwork and the creation of great memories. The hard work starts from this point."

Sir Steve Lancashire, Chief Executive Officer of REAch2 Academy Trust, added: "We are delighted to be given the green light for 22 new free schools, which we will open over the next few years. Free schools and academies are making a huge difference to the quality of education right across the country and we very much look forward to establishing these new schools so that we can offer exceptional opportunities for learning to even more children."

Ms Greening also confirmed that 56 new schools opened their doors for the first time in September, including 42 new free schools, 11 new university technical colleges and three studio schools. At full capacity, these will provide around 35,000 more school places.

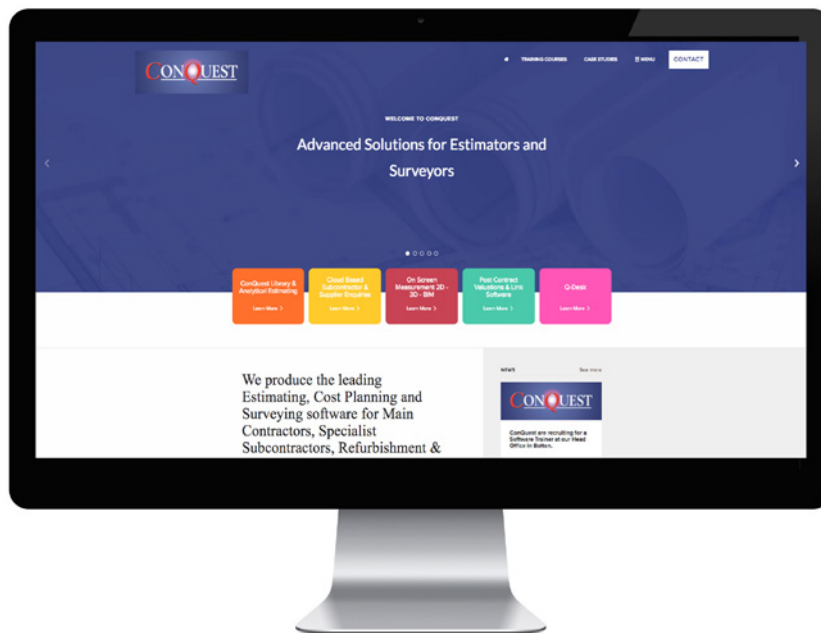
But what of the future? It's heartening to hear that first-class education provision remains so fundamental to the Government's aspirations, and the Department for Education continues to work at a fanatical pace. With population growth a concern, fast action is required. But only time will tell as to whether free schools can truly ready the UK for an uncertain future to come.



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