

TOPIC FOCUS 2019

Quarter 1: INFRASTRUCTURE

With a national infrastructure pipeline around £600Bn, infrastructure is hugely important to the construction sector. With a number of major infrastructure projects underway in the UK, this quarter CO investigates the developments within infrastructure, digitisation, sustainability and project focusses.

- Rail
- Roads
- Transport
- Utilities - cabling, water - AMP programmes, waste water
- Energy - nuclear, wind, solar, offshore, HS2
- Thames Tideway
- Crossrail
- Waterways
- Government transforming infrastructure performance plan
- National Infrastructure Pipeline,
- Digital infrastructure - 5G, fibre broadband, smart homes, smart motorways etc,
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation
- SUDS
- Flooding, flood defences, tidal flood schemes
- Housing infrastructure / social infrastructure
- Supply chain logistics

Quarter 2: SKILLS

The construction industry is in the middle of a skills crisis. Recent research from City & Guilds Group shows that one in 20 construction companies believe their workforce doesn't have the necessary skills for now or the future, and the need for a comprehensive policy addressing the issue is sought industry-wide.

- Apprentices/apprenticeships – national apprenticeship week (march)
- Skills shortage – Brexit, EU workers
- Professional development
- Upskilling
- Health & safety
- Software
- Brexit
- Mental health

Quarter 3: DIGITISATION/TECHNOLOGY

Use of new technology and Modern Methods of Construction are being highly promoted within the construction sector. Government reports have identified problems in production and processes and want construction to follow a more manufacturing model for building. The introduction of the Construction Sector Deal is set to bring the industry into the 21st century.

- New technologies
- Software
- Drones
- Manufacturing
- Offsite manufacturing
- BIM
- IOT
- Cloud software
- Cyber security
- Site security
- Intelligent buildings
- Supply chain
- AR
- VR

Quarter 4: SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability has become an ever-increasing priority in recent years but it has rocketed to the top of the agenda following the IPCC's dramatic report on climate change. Every sector needs to relook at working practices in order to promote sustainable development. With Modern Methods of Construction being promoted to help tackle the housing crisis, and digital technology leading to greater energy savings, construction has the opportunity to lead the green agenda, supporting the Clean Growth Strategy.

- Offsite manufacture
- Energy consumption
- Intelligent buildings
- Supply chain
- Suds
- Flooding
- Energy/ carbon footprint
- Clean growth plan
- Plant – old plant is a big environmental challenge
- Materials
- Construction waste and recycling

Other topics to be covered:

- Housing and housing crisis
- Transport
- Health & Safety
- Energy/utilities
- Regionality – devolution investment from Midlands Engine, Northern Powerhouse, etc.
- Brexit